

China's new Round of Disarmament: Catching Up with the Pace for World's New Military Revolution

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At the grand gathering in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People's Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-fascist War, President Xi Jinping solemnly announced that China will cut the number of its troops by 300,000. This reflects the Chinese people's excellent tradition and character of pursuing justice and cherishing peace, and the Chinese government's strong will and determination to safeguard the world peace as its duty.

The Chinese government attaches great importance to arms control and disarmament. In June 1950, when the new China was founded soon, the government made the decision to cut its troops from 5,500,000 to 4,000,000, and reduced over 20,000 that year. In November 1951, while the war to resist U.S. aggression was not over yet, China made the decision to cut its troops down to 3,000,000.

By the end of 1958, the number of Chinese troops was reduced by more than 60% compared to that in the early days of new China. According to the decision of the Central Military Commission in January 1957, China continued the process of disarmament, and eventually maintained its troops around 2,500,000.

Between 1975 and 1976, China announced the 5th round of disarmament, the goal of which was to reduce troops by 60,000 in 3 years, but this reorganization task was not fully realized due to certain circumstances. Since the reform and opening up, China has 3 rounds of consecutive disarmament, and the most influential one is the 1 million cut in the middle of the 1980s. Having presided over disarmament, Deng Xiaoping, noted at that time, "Unless we reduce 'bloatedness', we won't be able to raise the army's combat

effectiveness and work efficiency." The essence of the disarmament is to solve the bloated, redundant overlapping and low efficiency problems of the army. At the turn of the century, China carried out two rounds of disarmament, a total reduction of 700,000 men. The Chinese army has gradually strived to make the transition from a numerically superior type to a qualitatively efficient type and from a manpower-intensive type to a technology-intensive type.

Arms control which takes disarmament as its main content is a common concern of the international community. China is actively engaged in arms control and disarmament, and makes efforts to promote the process of arms control and disarmament in the world. After its lawful seat resumed in the United Nations in 1971, China has been seriously involved in the United Nations and its relevant bodies on disarmament issues and negotiations, not only participated in the first committee of the United Nations General Assembly to discuss disarmament and security issues every year, but also sent delegations to join the United Nations Conference on Disarmament in 1978, 1982 and 1987.

Since 1980, China has participated in the activities of the United Nations Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and its committees and working groups. In addition, China has donated money to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, "World Disarmament Campaign", etc. From 1986 to 1990, the Chinese delegation continuously made substantive proposals on nuclear disarmament and conventional disarmament in the United Nations, which was unanimously adopted. As a co-sponsor along with other countries, China also put forward proposals on "report of the

Disarmament Commission", "peace and disarmament in Asia, Africa and Latin America", "prevention of an arms race in outer space" and others, all of which were passed. China and the United Nations held international disarmament seminars in Beijing in 1987 and Shanghai in 1992. China's support for the world's arms control and disarmament is real and visible.

Considering peace and development still the theme of the era, the basic demands of cooperation and win-win and the world military development trend are increasingly conspicuous; China has begun a new round of disarmament. As the world's number one military power, the United States is constantly on disarmament based on international pressure and other reasons, and its military number is roughly 1,400,000. In 2014, the United States announced a cut by 100,000 in the next 3 years, and the number of its army will be cut down to the size of 1940. The Marine Corps will also be cut sharply. Russia is also the world's military power. The number of Soviet-based Russian troops was initially about 2,500,000, but was cut to 1,200,000 in 1999, and will be reduced to 1,000,000 eventually.

In terms of overall military strength, China is inferior to the United States and far from Russia in some respects, but the China military personnel is far more than that of either the United States or Russia. The proportion of the army is too large, the command is irrational, logistics and security departments are complex, military institutions and other non-combat units are too many and the problems are prominent. In addition, the Chinese armed forces also perform some of the tasks undertaken by the public security, armed police and other departments. It will be imperative to catch up with the wave of world military revolution, reduce redundancies, grasp the quality of the army, and focus on the construction of the navy and the air force, the special and technical forces and new branches such as cyber troops and space forces.

China's announced disarmament of 300,000 men is aimed at showing the world

peace will, reducing and eliminating "China Threat" advocated by people with ulterior motives. The international community believes that the announcement is significant and impactful and speak highly of it generally. But some stress that China's disarmament and military system reform and strategic adjustment are closely linked with the overall planning of military modernization construction.

There is no need to deny that China's disarmament should take the continuous upgrading of country's overall military strength and continuous strengthening of combat effectiveness as the precondition. Because the world is not peaceful and the sword of Damocles is still hanging over us. To faithfully perform the dual duty of defending the homeland security and safeguarding world peace, the Chinese army must keep up with the world's new military revolution step by step, achieve distinct advantages on remote, precise, intelligent, stealth, unmanned weapon equipments and so on, and firmly grasp the new strategic competition areas such as space and cyberspace.

At present, the world's major countries are committed to the adjustment of national security strategy, preparedness strategy and military power. Although the United States is also on disarmament, the level of the United States military equipment, mobile capabilities and command system are still leading in the world. The United States still tries to ensure its naval and air superiority while reduces land forces, and greatly enhances the Special Forces. The path Russia chooses is also improving military quality.

To adapt to the trend of the times and China's own interest, China tightly integrates the overall situation of economic and social development with the overall planning of military reform, safeguarding national security with maintaining world peace. We believe that after modest cuts and reasonable adjustment, Chinese forces will be more refined with high morale, and its capability to safeguard comprehensive rejuvenation of the Chinese nation will be greatly enhanced.