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Defense Ministry's regular press conference on April 30, 2015

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Senior Colonel Geng Yansheng, spokesman of the Ministry of National Defense (MND) of the People's Republic of China (PRC), answers reporters' questions at a regular press conference on April 30, 2015. (mod.gov.cn/Li Aiming)

(The following English text of the press conference is for reference. In case of any divergence of interpretations, the Chinese text shall prevail.)

Senior Colonel Geng Yansheng:

Friends from the media, good afternoon! Welcome to the press conference of the Ministry of National Defense (MND) of this month.

I will start by making an announcement.

After the devastating earthquake shook Nepal on April 25th, the Party Central Committee, the State Council, the Central Military Commission (CMC) and President Xi made timely overall arrangement for disaster relief. The General Headquarters and Departments of the military immediately launched the emergency response mechanism, worked closely with relevant government departments, organized the PLA and PAPF to lose no time in carrying out domestic disaster rescue, and took an active part in assisting Nepal's earthquake relief efforts.

Immediately after the earthquake hit, local troops of the Chengdu MAC and the PAPF stationed near the affected area in Tibet were sent to carry out quake relief missions and professional engineering and medical personnel and equipment were sent to join the rescue efforts one after another continuously.

The disaster relief troops always put saving people's lives as their top priority. They utilized professional forces and equipment to relocate trapped people, made all out efforts to treat the wounded, rush-repaired the roads, and helped the local people to take shelter. By 7 am April 30, the PLA and the

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PAPF had mobilized 6,083 officers and soldiers in active service (4,314 from the PLA and 1,769 from the PAPF), 895 militiamen, 895 pieces of vehicles and equipment for the earthquake relief effort. We have relocated 45,820 people, set up 2,107 tents, rush repaired 53.1km road, and transported more than 560 tons of materials. Employees of the Chinese company building a hydro-electric project for Nepal in China-Nepal border area were trapped after the earthquake. The Chengdu MAC immediately sent 3 sorties of helicopters to send water and food, and took back some of the Chinese citizens.

While engaging in domestic disaster relief, the Chinese armed forces also took an active part in assisting Nepal. Firstly, we provided 10 million RMB emergency disaster relief aid to Nepal. Secondly, we sent a rescue team and a medical team to join the rescue. Thirdly, we quickened the process of providing two sets of field hospital vehicles to Nepal in accordance with a previously signed agreement.

In accordance with the overall arrangement of the government, the Chinese international rescue team, manned mainly by the engineering regiment of the 38th Group Army of the Beijing MAC and the General Hospital of the PAPF, went to Nepal in the earliest possible time. Relevant department of the military mobilized the Chinese government's aid materials to Nepal and used PLAAF IL-76 transport aircraft to transport these materials.

A rescue team manned by the engineering regiment of the 14th Group Army and a medical team manned by the General Hospital and the disease control center of the Chengdu MAC, with 170 personnel in total, threw themselves into rescue, medical treatment and epidemic prevention immediately after they arrived in Nepal. By 7 am of April 30th, the PLA and the PAPF sent 222 officers and soldiers to Nepal. In Nepal, we have flown 10 sorties of IL-76 and 18 sorties of helicopters, rescued two people, provided medical treatment for 391 people, decontaminated areas of 30 thousand square meters, airlifted 260 wounded or trapped people, and transported 289 tons of relief materials through air. The 10 million RMB emergency disaster relief aid materials, including tents, medicines and water purification equipment, have been mobilized and are planned to be delivered starting from May 1st.

Next, the Chinese armed forces will continue to carry out domestic disaster relief operations and assist Nepal in accordance with the conditions in the disaster hit area and the needs for disaster relief.

Now, the floor is open for questions.

Question: During the regular press conference of the Ministry of National Defense (MND) in March, the spokesperson confirmed that the Chinese military would send a square to Russia to take part in the parade commemorating the 70th anniversary of the victory of Russia's Great Patriotic War. Could you please bring us up to date on this issue?

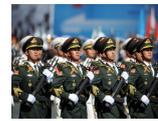
By now, altogether 3 batches of name lists of high-ranking military officers being investigated or prosecuted on charges of corruption have been released by the military. Among the name lists, 5 of the high-ranking officers are from the joint logistics departments. Does this show that supervision loopholes exist in this department?

Answer: As approved by President Xi and the Central Military Commission, a square consisting of 112 persons from the PLA Tri-Service Guard of Honor embarked on a trip to Moscow on April 25th to take part in the military parade marking the 70th anniversary of the victory of Russia's Great Patriotic War. In the past several days, the Chinese square has conducted adaptive training and joint training with the Russian side. On May 9th, the Chinese square will take part in the military parade and review ceremony in Moscow's Red Square.

China and Russia were the two main theaters during WWII in Asia and Europe respectively and made historical contributions to the victory over the Fascist forces and to bringing about world peace. This year marks the 70th anniversary of the victory of the world anti-Fascist war. China will make joint efforts with the international community, including Russia, in firmly safeguarding historical justice, the victorious outcome of WWII, and world peace, stability and prosperity.

On the issue of fighting corruption in the military, we have expressed our stance on many occasions. In accordance with the arrangement of the Party Central Committee, the military is pressing ahead with the anti-corruption campaign, and has investigated and prosecuted a number of major cases. The anti-corruption campaign should deal with both symptoms and the root causes. The military has also promulgated a number of laws and regulations, and established working mechanisms, combining inspection tours, disciplinary inspection, auditing and jurisdiction so as to build a system that prevents and discourages corruption and provides institutional guarantee for strengthening the military.

Question: The U.S.-Japan Foreign and Defense Ministers' 2 plus 2 meeting was held recently in New York. The two sides released the new version of the Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation, which claims to remove the "geographical limits" from the bilateral security and defense cooperation. Foreign ministers of the U.S. and Japan reiterated at a press conference that



the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty applies to all areas under Japan's administration, including the Diaoyu Islands. Defense ministers of the U.S. and Japan claimed that both sides have agreed to help southeast Asian nations to strengthen their capability of dealing with the South China Sea issue, and urged China to abide by international norms and play a coordinating role. What is your comment?

Answer: We pay close attention to the revised Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation and remarks made by the U.S. and Japanese high-ranking officials related to China recently. I'd like to make three points:

First, military alliance is an out-dated product which goes against the trends of times featuring peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit. By beefing up the U.S.-Japan military alliance and expand their defense cooperation to the whole world, what kind of impact will it have on the world and regional peace and stability? This is a question that needs to be asked by all sides.

Second, the U.S.-Japan alliance is a bilateral arrangement forged under the particular background of the cold war. It should be strictly limited to the bilateral scope and should not harm the interests of any third party. Any attempt to strength military power by forging military alliance, contain the development of other countries and seek selfish gains will turn out to be futile.

Third, the Chinese side always proposes to resolve disputes peacefully. At the same time, we firmly safeguard our country's territorial integrity and maritime rights and interests. We are opposed to countries out of the region to interfere with China's territorial and maritime disputes with neighboring countries. No one should underestimate our resolve and capability to safeguard our lawful rights and interests.

Question: The Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi, is expected to visit China next month. There are several issues that have been discussed between China and India in the recent past. My first question is that during every bilateral VIP visit between China and India in the recent past, whether it was Prime Minister Li Keqiang's visit in 2013 or President Xi Jinping's visit last year, there were problems at the border. There were aggressive patrolling resulting in tensions, overshadowing the visits. There are apprehensions that such an incident may take place this time, too. How would China's military, especially the PLA, look at this kind of apprehensions?

Secondly, the border issue, the differences are expected to come up during the talks. There are efforts to demarcate the line of actual control on the border that was from India's point of view. Can we see some progress on that front during this particular visit? And how the PLA or the Ministry of National Defense looks at this particular proposal from India?

Thirdly, I just would like to know that during the recent talks, during the visit of a high profile military delegation from India, reports said that General Sun Jianguo, the deputy chief of the General Staff of the Chinese PLA, has proposed that military officers on either side should attend courses specialized by military training academies. So, has this proposal been discussed that the training of officers in each other's academies is being looked at by the two militaries?

And also there are reports from Indian media saying that during the recent strategic defense dialogue, China has accepted to host the chief of India's Northern Military Command on a visit here. Could you confirm that?

Answer: On your first question, to maintain peace and tranquility in the China-Indian border area is in the common interests of both countries and is also the common aspiration of the people of the two countries. The Chinese border defense troops always strictly abide by the agreements reached by the two governments and are committed to safeguarding peace and stability along the border area. Through the border defense meeting mechanism, border defense troops of both China and India have conducted close coordination and consultation with each other. And we are willing to work together with the Indian side to strengthen the dialogue, exchange and cooperation in various fields and push forward mil-to-mil relationship.

On your second question, the China-Indian boundary issue is a problem left over from history. The governments of the two countries are conducting dialogue and negotiations on resolving this issue. Before the final settlement of the boundary issue, joining hands to maintain peace and tranquility in areas along the China-Indian border is the important consensus reached by both side. The Chinese defense troops have always been strictly abiding by the agreements reached by the two governments, and we hoped the Indian side can meet China half way.

On your third question, the 7th China-India Defense and Security Consultation was held in China on April 10th. The meeting was presided over by Deputy Chief of the General Staff, General Sun Jianguo from the Chinese side, and Indian Defense Secretary Mr. Mathur. During the dialogue, both sides exchanged views on regional security issues, relations between the two countries and the two militaries, and other

issues of common concern. The consensus that came out of the meeting was that such a dialogue mechanism has played a positive role in enhancing the mutual trust and cooperation between the two countries and the two militaries. To maintain peace and tranquility in the border areas is in the interests of both sides. And in principle, the two sides have agreed that exchanges between the two navies and the two air forces will be strengthened.

Here I'd like to make an additional comment. The militaries of China and India will have a lot of important exchanges and cooperation this year. For example, senior leaders of the two militaries will exchange visits and there will be meetings and cooperation between the border defense troops of the two sides to ensure peace and tranquility along the China-Indian border. And the 5th China-India joint army training will be held this year. These exchanges will be very important for enhancing strategic mutual trust between the two countries and will inject more positive elements into the bilateral relationship.

On your fourth question, China has consistent and clear stance on the issue of Kashmir. And on the specific arrangements of border defense exchanges, discussions between the two sides are still going on.

Question: Firstly, it is reported that the "Shoulder to Shoulder" U.S.-Philippines joint military exercise started from April 20th, 2015. It is reported to be the largest bilateral joint military exercise between the U.S. and the Philippines in 15 years. The spokesperson for the Philippine President said that the joint exercise is not related to territorial disputes and it is just a routine training exercise. What is your comment?

Secondly, it is only over four months away from the military parade to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression in September. Could you please give us more details about the latest preparation? And what kinds of new equipment will be demonstrated in the parade?

Answer: On your first question, the joint exercise that you have mentioned is indeed of very large scale. Relevant countries consolidate and deepen military alliance, conduct large-scale joint military exercise, and create tensions in the region. This does not accord with the trends of the times featuring peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit. To strengthen military alliance and show muscles will not contribute to the peace and stability in the region.

There are some people in the international community who are quite keen to hype up the so-called "China Threat". In the current situation, by conducting such a large-scale joint military exercise, we can not help but ask who is creating tensions in the region and who is threatening peace and stability in the region?

On the work related to military parade, what I can say at current stage is that preparation is going on smoothly in accordance with plan. And I do not have more information to release on the specific arrangement of the military parade.

Question: During the past 100 and more days, there are altogether 33 high high-ranking military officers being investigated and prosecuted. The media reports have disclosed some of the corruption cases which are really very serious and shocking. This has allowed some people to question the overall situation of the military. Is that true that there are some very huge problems in the overall development of the military? How do you comment?

Answer: The individual corruption cases of the military indeed have had some negative impacts on the military. But, they cannot negate the whole development of the Chinese armed forces and the sacrifices made by the overwhelming majority of the officers and men to build a strong military and defend their country.

The anti-corruption campaign itself demonstrates the strong determination of the Party Central Committee to enforce the strict discipline within the Party and within the military. It will play an important role in purifying the cadre team and the political ecology, and in bringing about a better atmosphere for the military.

Question: The 14th Asia Security Dialogue is to be held at the end of May. Will the Chinese Defense Minister Chang Wanquan attend the dialogue? And it is expected that the South China Sea issue will become a very hot topic during the dialogue. What message does China want to convey via the dialogue?

Answer: I think you are referring to the Shangri-la Dialogue which is going to be held in Singapore. As to the arrangement of the Chinese delegation to the dialogue, we are conducting close coordination with the host and relevant preparations are underway. We will release related information in an proper time.

Question: The Vietnamese military is currently installing missiles and its Kilo-class submarines that can be used to attack land's targets within the possibility that they could target Chinese coastal cities in the event of the conflict over the South China Sea. Is China concerned about these

missiles? Has China expressed this concern to the Vietnamese side?

Answer: Currently, the state-to-state and mil-to-mil relationship between China and Vietnam are on normal track. Not long ago, the leader of Vietnam paid a fruitful visit to China, during which the leaders of the two countries reached a lot of consensus on developing a friendly and cooperative bilateral relationship.

At the same time, the militaries of China and Vietnam also keep close interaction with each other. And we are confident that we can keep the bilateral relationship as well as the mil-to-mil relationship on the right track. And in accordance with the annual exchange plan between the two militaries, the Chinese and the Vietnamese militaries will carry out a number of exchange programs and mutual visits.

A few countries such as the Philippines and Vietnam have been building military facilities on China's maritime features of Nansha illegally seized by them. China is gravely concerned about and firmly opposed to these illegal activities.

Question: Recently, the U.S. Department of Defense released the newly revised report on cyber security strategy. The report laid out the missions and forces of the U.S. military in cyber space, and for the first time publicly declared the change from a defensive strategy to an offensive one. The report listed China, Russia, Iran and the DPRK as potential adversaries, accused China of developing advanced cyber capabilities, stealing the U.S. intellectual property, and compromising the economic competitiveness of the United States. What is your comment?

China has sent the PLA Tri-Service Guard of Honor to participate in the parade which is going to be held by Russia in the Red Square. Russian media reported that besides the PLA Tri-Service Guard of Honor, there are two more Chinese delegations. One is a delegation of retired generals and the other is a 1,000-strong square of veterans. Could you please confirm that?

According to Russian media reports, the navies of China and Russia will hold a joint military exercise near the Black Sea in May. Could you please confirm that?

Answer: We have noticed the report released by the U.S. side. The U.S. possesses the most advanced technology and controls most of the top layer resources in cyber space. It also has the strongest, most comprehensive and most capable cyber forces in the world. From such a dominant position, the U.S. is still publicly advocating an offensive cyber deterrence strategy. This is neither conducive to the joint efforts of the international community to strengthen cyber security, nor to controlling and removing existing differences. On the contrary, it will further escalate tensions and trigger an arms race in cyber space, which causes our concern and worries.

Besides, we are firmly opposed to the groundless accusations against China made in the report. China has been gravely threatened by hacker attacks and is firmly opposed to all kinds of hacking activities in the cyber space. The Prism Gate incident exposed the double standard of the U.S. in cyber security. It should explain its own problems to the world, rather than smear the image of other countries.

China advocates the development of a peaceful, secure, open and cooperative cyber space so that it can be completely utilized for the welfare of mankind. We are opposed to cyber warfare in any form and cyber arms race, and we hope the cyber space will not be turned into another battlefield. We urge the U.S., which has strong cyber capabilities, to play an exemplary role and do more for enhancing cyber security, promoting common security and mutual trust in cyber space, rather than seeking absolute security for itself.

The second question concerns the military parade to be held by Russia, and I don't have any information to release currently.

As for the third question, according to the annual military exchange plan between China and Russia, the navies of the two countries are going to conduct a joint exercise code-named "Joint Sea 2015-I" in the waters of the Mediterranean in mid-May. Nine surface ships from the Chinese and Russian navies will take part in the joint exercise. China will send three ships of 19th Chinese naval escort taskforce to take part in the joint exercise. The three ships, namely, the Linyi ship, Weifang ship as well as the Weishanhu ship, have just completed their escort mission in the Gulf of Aden and waters off the Somali coast.

The subject of the joint exercise is protection of navigation safety in the far seas. The drilling items in the exercise include maritime defense, maritime replenishment, escort actions, joint operations to safeguard navigation security as well as real weapon firing drill. The purpose of the exercise is to strengthen the pragmatic cooperation between China and Russia and to improve the capabilities of the two navies to deal with maritime threats. What needs to be stressed is that, the joint exercise is not targeting any third party and not related to the regional situation.

Question: Russian officials have publicly said that North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un will visit Moscow for the upcoming military parade. Of course, with North Korea, you never really know what will happen until the last minute. But I am just wondering, has the Chinese military had any contact

with its counterparts in North Korea about a possible route Kim Jong-Un may take?

Would he perhaps travel over land through Chinese territory, or perhaps fly over Chinese airspace? Have you had any discussions on this? And will you make any preparations for it?

Secondly, South Korean media reported that several North Korean soldiers went on the rampage in China in the border region recently. Is there anything you can tell us about the Chinese military's response to that? If there is any, and what it perhaps says about the condition of border defenses between China and North Korea?

Answer: On your first question, I do not have any information to release here.

On your second question, as far as I know, the spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs actually responded to this question yesterday. According to our knowledge, the public security department is investigating on this criminal case. From a military point of view, the Chinese border defense troops will closely assist the public security department in handling the security-related border issues and ensure the security and stability in the China-North Korean border area.

Question: Recently, Evan Medeiros, senior director of the White House National Security Council for Asian Affairs and special assistant to the U.S. President, mentioned China's military parade on the 70th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. He had questions about whether a large military parade would really send a signal of reconciliation or promote healing. Will that take a forward-oriented approach? These are the kinds of questions we have when we look at that, because what we want is for history to be history. Do you have any comment on Medeiros' remarks?

Answer: History should not be forgotten, justice needs to be upheld, and peace needs to be defended. The remarks of relevant U.S. people are wrong. If we do not face up to history, the same error might be recommitted and historical tragedies might be repeated.

On the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the victory of the world anti-Fascist war and the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, China, like many other countries, will hold a military parade. This is beyond reproach. And the purpose for holding such a military parade is to refresh people's memories of the past, pay tribute to national martyrs, cherish peace and create a better future, and demonstrate the Chinese people and international community's resolve and capability to safeguard world peace.

Question: Firstly, at the beginning of the year, the military publicized information that inspection teams of the Central Military Commission would conduct inspection tours of the party committees and their members of the PLA Navy, the Air Force, the Second Artillery Force and the People's Armed Police Force (PAPF) from February to April, so as to cover all the major units of the Chinese armed forces. Have the inspection tours been completed? Are there any new "tigers" in the military being investigated or prosecuted?

Secondly, the third plenary session of the 18th National Party Congress announced many plans, including deepening national defense and military reform. One and a half year has passed. How is the reform going on? The official media of the PLA carried an article recently which said that due to the negative impacts of the reform on the interests of some people in the military, they are slack in work, worry about gains and losses, and hesitate to move forward. Has this slowed the progress of the national defense and military reform?

Answer: On your first question, approved by the CMC, the CMC inspection teams conducted inspection tours of the party committees and party committee members of the PLA Navy, the Air Force, the Second Artillery Force and the People's Armed Police Force from February to April. The inspection teams have earnestly performed their responsibilities of supervision and inspection during the tours. They have put a lot of efforts into finding problems and clues and have achieved their goals. Currently, the inspection teams are handling the clues found in the inspection tours and ensure the results and clues of the inspection tours to be properly followed up.

On your second question, the military field is an area which witnessed the fiercest competition and confrontation. In order to have a strategic upper hand, we must deepen the national defense and military reform. Currently, all officers and men of the PLA resolutely support the reform of the military and are taking concrete actions to make contributions to pushing forward the smooth reform and accomplishing various missions.

Question: The Central Military Commission has issued twelve military orders consecutively to the whole armed forces by the end of this April, which involve matters of selecting officers for leadership positions and matters of discipline. What is the reason for the CMC to issue so many military orders in such a short period of time?

Answer: Recently, the Central Military Commission and the General Headquarters/Departments of the PLA have issued some new rules and regulations on strengthening military development and regularizing work in various aspects. These rules and regulations are the concrete measures taken by the PLA to enhance its overall development following the policy of running the military according to law and in a strict manner. As to the contents and significance of these rules and regulations, the media has given a very elaborate introduction and interpretation.

Question: You have briefed us on the Chinese military's rescue efforts in Nepal. We know that there were many Chinese people stranded there. Has the military given any assistance to those stranded Chinese citizens? We know that India has sent military planes to take back Indian nationals in Nepal. Why hasn't Chinese military sent any aircraft to take back any Chinese citizens?

Answer: On your first question, I think you can find the answer from the announcement that I have made at the start of the conference.

As to your second question, whether to use military aircraft to transport people from the disaster-stricken area is decided by various factors. After the earthquake hit Nepal, the Chinese government has organized a number of civilian and commercial air companies to evacuate the Chinese citizens stranded in Nepal. And also on April 28th, three helicopters from the Chengdu Military Area Command flew more than 10 sorties to Nepal and sent water and food to the Chinese employees trapped in the area and also brought back some Chinese citizens from Nepal.

Question: Regarding the naval exercise with Russia, is this the first time the Chinese and Russian navies to hold joint exercise in the waters of the Mediterranean? And is this exercise related to the situations in the countries such as Syria and Libya?

Answer: As far as I know, it is the first time for the navies of the two countries to conduct a joint exercise in that area. As I've mentioned in my previous answer that this joint exercise is to be held according to the annual exchange plan and is not related to regional situation and does not target any third party.

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