

《Beijing issues clearer guidelines to ease peninsula tensions》

Tensions on the Korean Peninsula continue to rise. The US Navy conducts exercises in the area. President Donald Trump calls for the UN Security Council to impose stricter sanctions.

"This is a real threat to the world. North Korea is a big world problem," US President Donald Trump said.

The DPRK has warned of catastrophic consequences from what it calls US provocation. It's also threatened to hit the US carrier group. China is calling for peace and reason.

"The current situation on the Korean Peninsula is complex, sensitive and highly intense. We urge all parties concerned to keep calm," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang said.

China's relationship with the DPRK has deteriorated as Beijing implements punitive UN sanctions.

Foreign Minister Wang Yi has repeatedly said the key to resolving the nuclear issue is not in China's hand.

"There's been enough confrontational acts of rhetoric recently. What we need is a voice of reason and peaceful solutions," Wang said.

China knows that it is unrealistic to assume that denuclearization could be achieved simply by pressure from Beijing. And that it cannot be solely responsible for bringing about a nuclear-free Peninsula.

As the DPRK's biggest neighbor, China has been viewed as a vital supporter. But its influence is becoming increasingly limited, as Pyongyang insists on its own agenda.

"I think on the Korean Peninsula, our top priority is China's own national interest," Chinese ambassador to the US Cui Tiankai said.

China used to regard the DPRK as a strategic buffer zone. Now, there have been debates about Pyongyang's role in its security. And there are mixed feelings about sanctions. But there also seems to be a growing consensus to adjust its relationship with the DPRK.

The government is taking a parallel-track approach, to support dialogue to engage, while using sanctions to pressure.

As the DPRK vows to continue nuclear tests, and the US pushes new actions, the risk of open conflict on the peninsula is high.

