

《中国要求美国就对澳大利亚军事计划作出解释》

中美双方高层军事官员在北京会面举行年度防御磋商会谈。中国专家称北京方面很想让华盛顿就美军对澳大利亚的军事计划作出解释。

As high-ranking military officers from China and the United States meet in Beijing on Wednesday for their annual defense consultative talks (DCT), Chinese experts said Beijing is likely to ask Washington to explain its plans to base US forces in Australia.

The meeting will also serve as a barometer to show how bilateral military ties have recovered since the US decision to sell arms to Taiwan in October cast a shadow over exchanges between the two armed forces, said US analysts.

Major General Luo Yuan, from the People's Liberation Army(PLA) Academy of Military Science said that the US has always asked China to be transparent about its strategy but it is the US who should make its intentions clear.

He was referring to frequent US military activities around China this year, including joint military exercises with countries having territorial disputes with China in the South China Sea.

Among the most recent moves, US President Barack Obama and Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard announced in mid-November in Canberra that up to 2,500 US Marines would be deployed in the northern Australian port of Darwin from mid-2012.

Obama said the plan showed Washington's "commitment to the entire Asia-Pacific region", during his nine-day trip to the region that ended on Nov 19.

The move, however, drew concern from neighboring countries such as Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Liu Qing, director of the Department for American Studies of the China Institute of International Studies, believes that Australia is just a pawn in the arrangement, while the US is really controlling the situation behind the scenes.

The 12th defense consultative talks meeting will be the first high-level meeting between the militaries of the two sides since the Obama administration announced a \$5.85-billion weapons sale to Taiwan despite strong objections from Beijing.

"US arms sales to Taiwan is the most important issue in military relations between the two sides. The US will be asked to respond to China's concern on that," Liu said.

The DCT was established in 1997 and has been held 11 times since its inception.