

Xi Jinping Delivers Speech on Centenary of Chinese Communist Party's Founding

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OE Watch Commentary

1 July 2021 marked the centenary of the founding of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Speaking at Tiananmen at an event commemorating the event, CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping outlined the CCP's successes in leading China and reiterated his vision for China's future.

Notable highlights, excerpted below, emphasize his particular focus on three central areas: the continuing supremacy of the CCP, further developing China's armed forces, and achieving full reunification of China through extending PRC rule over Taiwan.

In particular, Xi highlights the need for "greater capacity and more reliable means for safeguarding our national sovereignty, security, and development interests." China has already significantly expanded its naval, air, ground and missile forces over the past 20 years and Xi's continued emphasis indicates this is unlikely to slow. Within this broader growth of capabilities and expanded units, forces that would be critical to an amphibious invasion of Taiwan such as People's Liberation Army (PLA) Ground Force amphibious units and PLA Navy Marine Corps as well as the supporting transports are seeing significant growth.

While there are no policy shifts announced in this speech, consistency in its attention to these three areas itself is noteworthy, as China faces other challenges in the form of COVID-19, natural disasters, and significant economic development issues that might otherwise have resulted in a shifting of priorities. As Xi makes clear, economic development is only one half of his vision of a strong China; it must also be accompanied by a strong military fully capable of defending what it regards as core interests.



Xi Jinping portrait 2019.

Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Xi_Jinping_portrait_2019_\(cropped\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Xi_Jinping_portrait_2019_(cropped).jpg), Kremlin.ru https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Attribution:CC_x_4.0

“We will elevate our people's armed forces to world-class standards so that we are equipped with greater capacity and more reliable means for safeguarding our national sovereignty, security, and development interests.”

Source: 习近平：在庆祝中国共产党成立100周年大会上的讲话 (Xi Jinping: Speech at a Ceremony Marking the Centenary of the Communist Party of China), *Xinhua* (Chinese State News Agency), 15 July 2021. http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2021-07/15/c_1127658385.htm

Today, the first of July, is a great and solemn day in the history of both the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Chinese nation. We gather here to join all Party members and Chinese people of all ethnic groups around the country in celebrating the centenary of the Party, looking back on the glorious journey the Party has traveled over 100 years of struggle, and looking ahead to the bright prospects for the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation...

We must uphold the firm leadership of the Party. China's success hinges on the Party. The more than 180-year-long modern history of the Chinese nation, the 100-year-long history of the Party, and the more than 70-year-long history of the People's Republic of China all provide ample evidence that without the Communist Party of China, there would be no new China and no national rejuvenation....

We must accelerate the modernization of national defense and the armed forces. A strong country must have a strong military, as only then can it guarantee the security of the nation. Through its own experiences with violent struggle the Party came to recognize the irrefutable truth that it must command the gun and build a people's military of its own. The people's military has made indelible achievements on behalf of the Party and the people. It is a strong pillar for safeguarding our socialist country and preserving national dignity, and a powerful force for protecting peace in our region and beyond.

On the journey ahead, we must fully implement the Party's thinking on strengthening the military in the new era as well as our military strategy for the new era, maintain the Party's absolute leadership over the people's armed forces, and follow a Chinese path to military development. We will take comprehensive measures to enhance the political loyalty of the armed forces, to strengthen them through reform and technology and the training of competent personnel, and to run them in accordance with the law. We will elevate our people's armed forces to world-class standards so that we are equipped with greater capacity and more reliable means for safeguarding our national sovereignty, security, and development interests.

Resolving the Taiwan question and realizing China's complete reunification is a historic mission and an unshakable commitment of the Communist Party of China. It is also a shared aspiration of all the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation. We will uphold the one-China principle and the 1992 Consensus, and advance peaceful national reunification...No one should underestimate the resolve, the will, and the ability of the Chinese people to defend their national sovereignty and territorial integrity.