



China Praises Cooperation with Belarus and Its Special Forces

OE Watch Commentary: On 6 July the Chinese-language website *sohu.com* published the accompanying excerpted article on a special unit of honor guards of the Chinese Army that visited Belarus. They were sent there to participate in the Belarus National Day celebration. The article notes that Belarusian soldiers similarly have been sent to China in recent years to participate in Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) military exercises. The article emphasizes that part of the importance of these exchanges is that they are a form of solidarity between Belarus and China, which are both subject to various forms of pressures or sanctions from Western countries.

The article also praises Belarusian special forces, noting that they stand on par with Russian special forces. It also praises Belarusian military management concepts and tactical ideas. This is why the article says that even though the West refers to Belarus as a dictatorship, no country dares to attack it. Lastly, the article suggests that it is a strategic interest for China to expand the relationship because Belarus represents the westernmost European country that cooperates militarily with China.

Belarus, according to this article's perspective, is aligned with China because they have common strategic competitors. While China's military is certainly larger than Belarus' military, the article also states that in certain areas the Chinese military still can learn from Belarus, such as special forces and management. The SCO is certainly one forum where this knowledge and learning transfer may take place. **End OE Watch Commentary (Zenn)**

“Some experts say that China and Belarus can strengthen the deep military cooperation between the two countries.”

Source: “时隔3年！我军一支特殊部队再次出征欧洲，专家：此举意义非凡 (After 3 years! A special unit of our army again went to Europe, Experts: the significance of this move is extraordinary),” *sohu.com*, 6 July 2018. http://www.sohu.com/a/239591247_619988

The Chinese armed forces' honor guards were invited to participate in the Belarusian National Day military parade. This is the 70th anniversary of Belarusia's commemoration of the Great Patriotic War. The important purpose is to strengthen military cooperation with the country. However, military cooperation between China and Belarus has been very frequent. Belarus has repeatedly sent military representatives to observe the many military exercises of the SCO.

China and Belarus have long been subject to Western blockades and sanctions. Since independence in 1991, [Belarus] has trained elite soldiers. The total strength of the Belarusian army is 80,000, of which the Air Force and the Army Special Forces are the sharpest swords. Some experts say that China and Belarus can strengthen the deep military cooperation between the two countries. Participating in military exercises can allow China to learn from Belarus' advanced military management concepts and tactical ideas, and can also expand China into Eastern Europe through military cooperation.



Chinese military honor guard.

Source: Linda D. Kozaryn, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chinese_military_honor_guard.jpg, CC-BY-2.0.