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Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Putin, Xi pledge friendship but talks yield no Ukraine breakthrough

March 21 (Reuters) - Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin emerged from two days of talks on Tuesday with warm words of friendship between China and Russia and joint criticism of the West, but no sign of a diplomatic breakthrough over Ukraine.

Xi's visit to Moscow - long touted by the Kremlin as a show of support from its most powerful friend - featured plenty of demonstrative bonhomie. The two leaders referred to each other as dear friends, promised economic cooperation and described their countries' relations as the best they have ever been.

A joint statement included familiar accusations against the West - that Washington was undermining global stability and NATO barging into the Asia-Pacific region.

On Ukraine, Putin praised Xi for a peace plan he proposed last month, and blamed Kyiv and the West for rejecting it.

"We believe that many of the provisions of the peace plan put forward by China are consonant with Russian approaches and can be taken as the basis for a peaceful settlement when they are ready for that in the West and in Kyiv. However, so far we see no such readiness from their side," Putin said.

But Xi barely mentioned the conflict at all, saying that China had an "impartial position" on it.

Responding to the meeting, the White House said China's position was not impartial, and urged Beijing to pressure Russia to withdraw from Ukraine's sovereign territory to end the war.

The summit, Putin's biggest display of diplomacy since he ordered his invasion of Ukraine a year ago, was partly upstaged in Kyiv, where Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida made an unannounced visit and met President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

The latest world leader to make the gruelling overland journey to show solidarity with Ukraine, Kishida toured Bucha on the capital's outskirts, left littered with dead last year by fleeing Russian troops. He lay a wreath by a church before observing a moment of silence and bowing.

"The world was astonished to see innocent civilians in Bucha killed one year ago. I really feel great anger at the atrocity upon visiting that very place here," Kishida said.

"NO LIMITS" Putin and Xi signed a "no limits" partnership agreement last year just weeks before Russia invaded Ukraine. Beijing has since declined to blame Moscow for the war and condemned Western sanctions on Russia, even as China has profited by securing discounts for oil and gas Russia no longer sells to Europe.

Russia's Putin holds talks with China's Xi in Moscow

The West has largely dismissed Xi's peace plan for Ukraine as at best too vague to make a difference, and at worst a ploy to buy time for Putin to rebuild his forces.

But Kyiv, perhaps hoping to keep China neutral, has been more circumspect, cautiously welcoming the plan when China unveiled it last month.

At his news conference with Kishida, Zelenskyy said Kyiv had invited China to sign on to Ukraine's own proposed peace plan but had received no reply. Zelenskyy has repeatedly called on Xi to speak to him.

Kyiv says there can be no peace talks with Russia unless it withdraws its troops. Moscow says Kyiv must accept territorial "realities" - a reference to its claim to have annexed nearly a fifth of Ukraine.

White House national security spokesperson John Kirby said a ceasefire right now would

freeze battle lines where they are - meaning Ukraine effectively ceding parts of its territory to the Russian invasion.

Washington has said over the past month that it is worried that Beijing could arm Russia, which China denies.

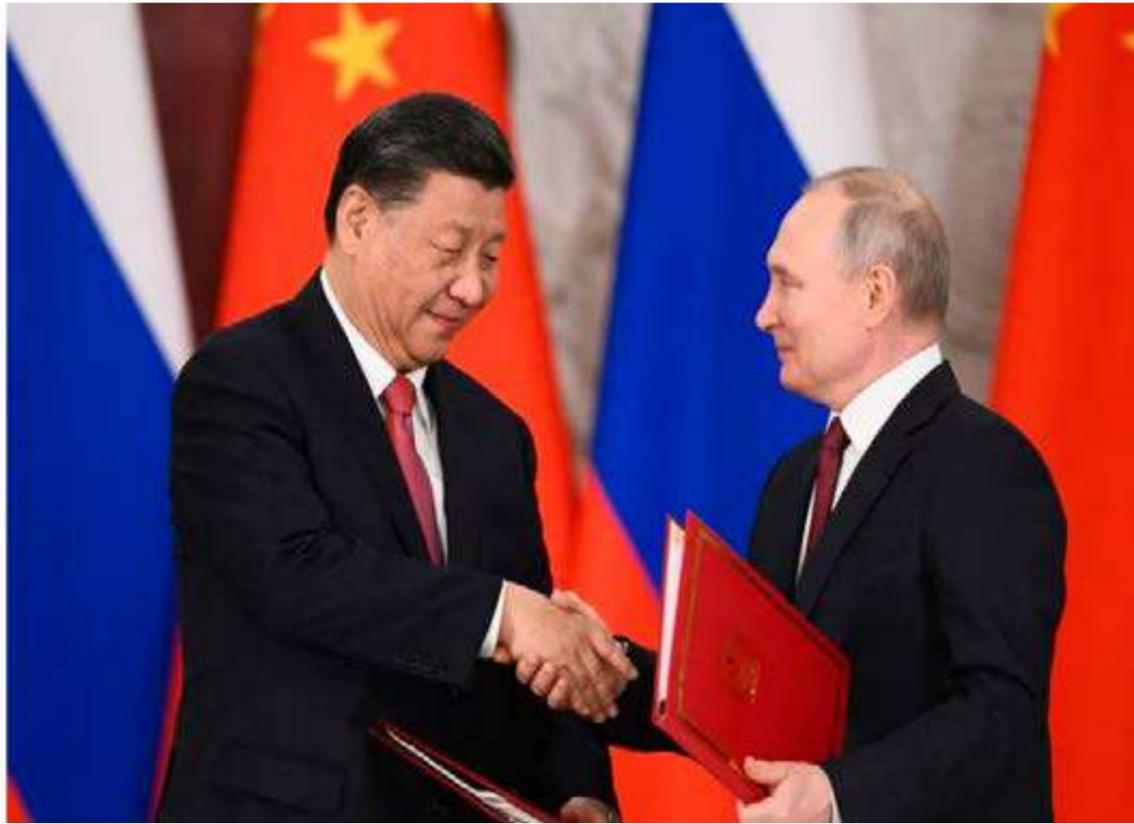
QUEUING FOR FOOD, WATER On the ground, bursts of incoming and outgoing artillery fire could be heard in the town of Chasiv Yar just west of Bakhmut, a small eastern city that has been the focus of intense fighting for months.

Between apartment blocks in Chasiv Yar, mainly elderly residents queued for water and food delivered by a team from the State Emergency Service.

Oleksii Stepanov said he had been in Bakhmut until five days ago but was evacuated when his house was destroyed by a missile.

"We were in the kitchen and the missile came through the roof.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping attend a signing ceremony at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia March 21, 2023. Sputnik/Vladimir Astapovich/Kremlin via REUTERS



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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

03/20/2023

Trump Says He Expects To Be Arrested

Former President Trump said he expects to be arrested in connection with the investigation into a hush money scheme involving adult actress Stormy Daniels and he called on his supporters to protest.

Any indictment of the former president who is running for re-election in 2024 would represent legal woes as he works to recapture the White House.

We would like to point out, with great regret, that the domestic political fight has already begun. The Republicans' and Democrats' fight and race for the 2024 office of the presidency of the United States has started ahead of schedule.

Early in the 2020 election, President Trump refused to recognize the voting results. More than two years later, he has announced that he would run for the White House again. For the time being, he is the leading Republican presidential candidate in the polls.

We have to admit that our political system is in chaos. How can we persuade the rest of the world to follow us into a true democracy?

We really don't know what the followers of Trump will do on Tuesday. If Trump will actually be arrested, this will be very unfortunate for the country, if not for the whole world. We also are now very worried about who will be the next leader to lead our nation.



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Republic of Guiana Honorary consul at Houston Texas



Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



People walk near a damaged building in the aftermath of a deadly earthquake, in Kahramanmaras, Turkey. REUTERS/Suhaib Salem



Women take a picture atop a destroyed Russian tank during an exhibition displaying destroyed Russian military vehicles in central Kyiv, Ukraine. REUTERS/Gleb Garanich



Girls feed sparrows and take photos in front of cherry blossom trees at Ueno park, in Tokyo, Japan. REUTERS/Androniki Christodoulou



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping arrive for a signing ceremony at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia. Sputnik/Grigory Sysoyev



Riot police use water cannons as they clash with supporters of Kenya's opposition leader Raila Odinga of the Azimio La Umoja (Declaration of Unity) One Kenya Alliance, as they participate in a nationwide protest over cost of living and President William Ruto's government in Eastleigh neighborhood of Nairobi, Kenya. REUTERS/Thomas Mukoya



Hannah Waddingham reacts as Jason Sudeikis takes questions while the cast of Ted Lasso joined Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre at the daily press briefing to discuss the importance of addressing mental health to promote overall well-being, in the Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House in Washington. REUTERS/ Kevin Lamarque

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

BUSINESS

Opinion

Can China End The Ukraine War?

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



power dynamics in the region and the evolving China-Russia relationship. These changes were also seen in the meeting between the leaders of the two countries.

On the one hand, China and Russia underscored the strength of the bilateral relationship and pledged to support each other on issues concerning their respective core interests. Russian President Vladimir Putin described the strategic partnership between China and Russia as "solid as a mountain."

In the last few months, a series of events have drawn China and Russia closer together. China was already Russia's biggest trading partner and has become even more economically important for Moscow amid Western sanctions. In the first eight months of this year, total goods trade between China and Russia jumped 31.4 per cent year on year to US\$117.2 billion.



Chinese Troops In Training

In Samarkand, Putin expressed strong support for China, going so far as to condemn the "provocative moves by individual countries on issues concerning China's core interests." Ongoing developments, such as the progression of the Taiwan Policy Act through the US Congress, are likely to further cement China-Russia alignment on this issue.

Last week, many eyes were trained on the ancient city of Samarkand for the annual meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). Coming at a time of mounting global challenges and geopolitical tensions, the summit showed the importance of the SCO and China's role in promoting multilateralism, connectivity and development in Central Asia and beyond.

In Samarkand, SCO members adopted more than 40 outcome documents covering a range of fields and issued statements on pressing issues such as food security, energy security, climate change and supply chain security. New infrastructure projects were also announced, including the Mongolian section of a new Russia-China gas pipeline and a joint agreement between China, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan to build a transnational railroad.

Once complete, it will shorten the rail freight journey from China to Europe, which currently goes through Russia, by 900km. This new route through Central Asia had long been considered but previously did not proceed, partly because it went against Russia's strategic and economic interests.



A Soldier Walks Past A Destroyed Russian Tank

The fact that it is now going ahead reflects shifting

ing power dynamics in the region and the evolving China-Russia relationship. These changes were also seen in the meeting between the leaders of the two countries.

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Victims Of War-Torn Ukraine

On the other hand, in contrast to their unified stance on Taiwan, perhaps the most notable outcome of the meeting was to put clear water between Beijing and Moscow regarding the war in Ukraine. Putin acknowledged the "balanced position" and "questions and concerns" of China on the Ukraine crisis and said he would "explain our position".

Coming from a leader not known for feeling a need to explain anything to anyone, Putin's admission of Beijing's reservations signals that, contrary to the views of some people, China is not fully aligned with Putin on Ukraine and did not conspire to support the invasion. Putting these statements together, we see that while the bilateral relationship remains strong, China has put some distance between itself and Russia on the Ukraine issue.

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Ukraine Soldiers Fire Long-Range Artillery At Enemy Troops

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Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin speak in person for first time since Russia invaded Ukraine



XI AND PUTIN TALK IN UZBEKISTAN

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President Xi And Putin Review The Troops



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Putin Grants Russian Citizenship To Edward Snowden

Russian President Vladimir Putin has granted Russian citizenship to former American security contractor Edward Snowden Monday, the Associated Press first reported.

Putin signed a decree Monday granting Snowden citizenship nearly two years after the National Security Administration (NSA) whistleblower petitioned for it along with his wife, citing a fear of being separated from their son in "this era of pandemics and closed borders." Snowden has not renounced his U.S. citizenship, but remains wanted by American authorities on charges of theft of government property and violation of the Espionage Act.



Edward Snowden. 11:05 AM · Sep 26, 2022

Snowden, who was granted permanent residency in Russia in 2020, was one of 75 foreign nationals granted citizenship Monday. He has lived in Russia since 2013 while evading capture by U.S. law enforcement. Snowden is wanted for allegedly leaking highly classified documents exposing several global surveillance operations involving the NSA and other government agencies in 2013. He initially fled to Hong Kong in May of 2013 before reportedly passing the documents to journalists, including Glenn Greenwald in June, before making his way to Russia later that month after the Department of State revoked his passport.



Putin initially described Snowden's fleeing to Russia as an "unwanted Christmas present" in 2013 and said he should leave the country, but Russia has repeatedly refused to extradite him to the U.S. in the years since. Numerous American politicians and activists have petitioned for Snowden to be pardoned, characterizing him as a freedom fighter who exposed government corruption and spying against its own citizens. Critics label him a traitor for leaking government secrets, including revealing sensitive information to China on American efforts to infiltrate CCP institutions. (Courtesy https://dailycaller.com/)

About The Author*



Wang Huiyao is the founder of the Centre for China and Globalisation, a Beijing-based non-governmental think tank.

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

COMMUNITY

~Photo Essay Of A Human Tragedy~

Refugees Of War Are Now Our Neighbors Ukraine Refugees Wait In Tijuana For Permission To Enter The U.S.

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



The Ukrainian Flag hung on the side of a building offers solace to some.



Volunteers with signs welcome Ukrainian refugees as they arrive at the Tijuana airport to help them on their journey to the United States after fleeing the war in Ukraine, in Tijuana, Baja California state, Mexico on April 8, 2022. (PHOTO/PATRICK T. FALLON, AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES)



Ukrainians who are seeking asylum in the United States gather in a city government shelter for Ukrainians, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine, on April 6, 2022 in Tijuana, Mexico. Authorities opened the nearby El Chaparral port of entry today solely for the processing of Ukrainian asylum-seekers. U.S. authorities are allowing Ukrainian refugees to enter the U.S. at the Southern border in Tijuana with permission to remain in the country on humanitarian parole for one year. (MARIO TAMA, GETTY IMAGES)



Two Ukrainian women sit and wait for U.S. Customs

and Border Protection to allow them to enter the U.S. at the San Ysidro Port of Entry in Tijuana, Baja California on April 5, 2022. (OMAR ORNELAS, EL PASO TIMES/USA TODAY NETWORK)



Ukrainian refugees wait to be allowed to enter the U.S. by Customs and Border Protection at the San Ysidro Port of Entry in Tijuana, Baja California on April 5, 2022. (OMAR ORNELAS, EL PASO TIMES/USA TODAY NETWORK)



U.S. Customs and Border Protection allow Ukrainian refugees to enter the U.S. at the San Ysidro Port of Entry in Tijuana, Baja California on April 5, 2022. (OMAR ORNELAS, EL PASO TIMES/USA TODAY NETWORK)



U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers take photos of Ukrainian refugees as they await to be allowed to enter the U.S. by Customs and Border Protection at the San Ysidro Port of Entry in Tijuana, Baja California on April 5, 2022. (OMAR ORNELAS, EL PASO TIMES/USA TODAY NETWORK)



U.S. Customs and Border Protection stop a Russian citizen from entering the U.S. at the San Ysidro Port of Entry in Tijuana, Baja California on April 5, 2022. (OMAR ORNELAS, EL PASO TIMES/USA TODAY NETWORK)



A volunteer (L) bids farewell to Ukrainians who are seeking asylum as they gather on a bus on their way to the El Chaparral port of entry, before entering the United States amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine, on April 6, 2022 in Tijuana, Mexico. (MARIO TAMA, GETTY IMAGES)



Ukrainians who are seeking asylum walk at the El Chaparral port of entry on their way to enter the United States, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine, on April 6, 2022 in Tijuana, Mexico. (MARIO TAMA, GETTY IMAGES)



Ukrainians who are seeking asylum in the United States gather in a city government shelter for Ukrainians, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine, on April 6, 2022 in Tijuana, Mexico. (MARIO TAMA, GETTY IMAGES)



Ukrainian refugees wait for Customs and Border Protection authorities to allow them to enter the USA at the San Ysidro Port of Entry in Tijuana, Baja California, on April 5, 2022. (OMAR ORNELAS/USA TODAY NETWORK)



Family members offer each other comfort in the uncertain time.



A Ukrainian family contemplates the future in a new country.



Elderly woman being transported by a relative.

Ukrainians families gather their belongings hoping to cross the border into the U.S.



Ukrainians wait for processing by US authorities at the Texas-Mexico border.



Family members offer each other comfort in the uncertain time.



A Ukrainian family contemplates the future in a new country.



A father holds his son up to see the massive group of his fellow countrymen scattered together in a foreign land.