

Liang-Gates Talks: Chinese, U.S. defense chiefs hold first phone conversation

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BEIJING, April 10 (Xinhua) — Chinese Defense Minister Liang Guanglie and U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates held their first phone conversation on Thursday, the Chinese Defense Ministry said in a news release.
The establishment of the direct phone link between the two sides marks an important step in the two countries' strategic and long-term interests, Liang told his U.S. counterpart.
☐Liang expressed confidence that the opening of the direct line will improve coordination, mutual trust and relations between the Chinese and U.S. militaries.
On the Taiwan issue, he hoped that the United States will abide by its repeated commitments to adhere to the one-China policy and the three Sino-U.S. joint communiques.
Liang urged the United States to cease arms sales and military links with Taiwan in a bid to maintain peace and stability across the Taiwan Straits and the overall interests of the Sino-U.S. relations.
Gates congratulated Liang on his appointment as Defense Minister of China last month. He hailed the opening of the direct line as a good beginning, seeing it as a new opportunity to enhance consultations and cooperation between the two sides.
☐He expressed satisfaction with the development of relations between the U.S. and Chinese militaries, hoping for further exchanges and cooperation.
☐Gates reassured Liang that the United States will adhere to the one-China policy.

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