

# US, Japan to Start Large-Scale War Games as Biden Meets with Xi

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*The US and Japan are set to kick off large-scale joint war games on Thursday. The military drills will involve [over 35,000](#) troops and take place just days after **President Joe Biden** met with Chinese **President Xi Jinping** aimed at lowering tensions.*

Dubbed 'Keen Sword 23,' the war games will run for three days and are being held amid increasing worries in Japan over China's growing presence in the region. The exercises simulate the defense of Tokunoshima Island, located in the East China Sea. Biden's administration has previously [pledged](#) to defend Japanese claims to the disputed Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea, which are also claimed by Beijing and Taipei.

Military activity in the region has spiked in recent months., with Chinese warplanes carrying out unprecedented drills in the airspace and waters surrounding Taiwan after **House Speaker Nancy Pelosi** visited the island in August.

'Keen Sword 23' will see 26,000 Japanese troops and 10,000 American soldiers join servicemen from Canadian, British and Australian forces for days of drills. Voice of America – Washington's primary state-funded media outlet – reported that 370 aircraft and 30 ships [will be mobilized](#) for the exercises.

The war games are taking place in the wake of Biden's meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping. At the sit-down, Biden declared that Washington would "continue to compete vigorously" with Beijing, though [said](#) relations should not "veer into conflict" and stressed that "the United States and China must manage the competition responsibly and maintain open lines of communication."

The Chinese Defense Ministry recently [said](#) that if the United States wanted to resume regular dialogue, especially on military matters, Washington must "respect China's interests and major concerns, and remove the negative factors that impede the development of ties."

Echoing the same sentiment, Xi told Biden “the Taiwan question” is at the “the very core of China’s core interests, the bedrock of the political foundation of China-US relations, and the first red line that must not be crossed.”

Since taking office, Biden has escalated tensions with China to unprecedented levels. Last year, Biden’s military flew [more than 2,000 sorties](#) with spy planes in the South China Sea, East China Sea and Yellow Sea, while the number of US aircraft carrier strike groups deployed to the South China Sea has [nearly doubled](#). Despite near-constant warnings by Beijing, US officials and lawmakers continue to make high-profile visits to Taiwan, and Biden has repeatedly said the US has a defense commitment to the island – [defying](#) the ‘One-China’ Policy under which the United States has agreed to treat Taiwan as part of China-proper. With Washington reportedly seeking to turn Taipei into a “[giant weapons depot](#),” US troops are [openly deployed](#) to the island [training](#) local forces, and American warships have transited the Taiwan strait on a [near-monthly basis](#) since Biden took power.

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