

*Sino-Thai Defence Cooperation  
under the New Situation*

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# I.Sino-Thai Defence Cooperation is of Vital Importance to Sino-Thai Relations

- *1.1* Defence cooperation between China and Thailand is an important part in Sino-Thai relations. Given the sensitivity of military and defence, military exchanges and defence cooperation always lags behind other fields of cooperation.
- Generally considering that military exchanges and defence cooperation is related to depth of state-to state relations. Military exchanges and defence cooperation can not be carried out without political mutual trust between the two sides.

- *1.2* Closer Sino-Thai relations promote development of military exchanges and defence cooperation.
- China attaches importance to developing friendly and cooperation relations with Thailand. China regards Thailand as one of priorities in China's neighboring diplomacy .
- Since establishment of diplomatical relations between China and Thailand ,Sino-Thai relations have continuously developed and grown closer. The two sides agreed to establish a comprehensive strategic partnership of cooperation in 2012.It demonstrates that Sino-Thai relations upgrade a new height.

- At present , not only Sino-Thai relations get ahead in China' s relations with other members of ASEAN, but also Sino-Thai military exchanges and defence cooperation as well.
- *1.3* Deepening and expansion of defence cooperation is of great significanc.
- It advances Sino-Thai military relations to new levels, consolidates two-sides' political mutual trust, and is an major part of pushing development of comprehensive strategic partnership of cooperation.

## II. New Progress in Defence Cooperation between China and Thailand

### 2.1 Frequent exchanges of two-sides' military personnels.

Two-sides' military personnels maintain high-level exchange visits. The exchange visits are helpful to strengthen mutual understand and ties ,to learn from each other, play an actively role in deepening comprehensive strategic partnership of cooperation.

### 2.2 Armies of two-sides carry out joint military training and exercises.

Thailand is the first country in China's joint military training with foreign forces. The joint military training of two militaries in 2007 opened up a new chapter in Chinese force's exchanges with foreign forces. After that ,Sino-Thai joint military training and exercises carry on.

## 2.3 Sino-Thai defence cooperation expands from land to Sea and the sky.

Following Royal Thai Navy vessels visited China in 2008, two-sides' navies began to exchange visits. Air forces of two-sides launched joint training in Nakhon Rachasima, Thailand in 2015. The cooperation between air forces of two-sides started after that.

Up to now ,military cooperation between two-sides have contained armies,navies and air forces of two-sides,which shows that military exchange between two-sides have reached a new high level and get ahead in military exchanges between China and ASEAN countries.

2.4 The mechanism of defence consultation established.

Two-sides' militaries began defence and security consultation in 2001. Based on the consultation, two-sides agreed to establish mechanism of defence consultation. By the mechanism, the both militaries discuss security issues in the area, construction of the army, and issues concerned. Exchanges and cooperation between two militaries constantly are consolidated and developed through the consultation,

2.5 Two-sides' cooperation in military equipments and technology become an important field.

Recent years Thailand bought some advanced military equipments from China ,including submarines, infantry fighting vehicles, armoured personnel carriers, and so on .

Two-sides ' cooperation in military equipments and technology were paid attention in Thailand and beyond. Why did Thai military buy so much weapons and equipments from China? Some Thai critics are confused about it.

The reasons provided by Thai military are :(1) It meet with difficulties when Thai military buy weapons and military equipments from the Western countries,(2) Thai weapons are aging and need to replace,(3)China's weapons and military equipments have good quality and cheap in price,(4) Thailand needs to take into account overall interest of country, (5) China and Thailand has closer ties.

# III. Characteristics of Sino-Thai Defence Cooperation

3.1 Sino-Thai defence cooperation are not targeting any specific country.

Aim is to enhance strategic mutual trust, improve defence cooperation level. There are clear consensus on this point in two-sides' defence cooperation

3.2 Sino-Thai defence cooperation has been growing in breadth and depth.

Two militaries keep multilevel and broad-field cooperation. Two-sides' defence cooperation is not only in military personnel exchanges, joint training, weapons and military equipments, but extending in other fields.

3.3 Top-level design from two-sides push forward development of defence cooperation.

Top-level design from two-sides give a direction for Sino-Thai defence cooperation , lead action plans to be implemented .

3.4 Sino-Thai defence cooperation and Sino-Thai relations complement each other.

Deepening of Sino-Thai relations promote Sino-Thai defence cooperation ,development of Sino-Thai defence cooperation consolidates and develops Sino-Thai relations.

## IV. Conclusion

Entering into new century, in the wake of development of Sino-Thai relations Sino-Thai defence cooperation is continuously upgraded .

Sino-Thai defence cooperation has become a new highlight in Sino-Thai relations.

Sino-Thai defence cooperation has gotten ahead in China' s cooperation with other members of ASEAN.

Sino-Thai defence cooperation plays positive role in maintaining security and stability in Southeast Asia

Sino-Thai defence cooperation with good foundation will welcome new developing opportunity.