

Xi-Biden call establishes foundation for future engagement: Kuhn

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Chinese President Xi Jinping (R) meets with U.S. Vice President Joe Biden in Davos, Switzerland, Jan. 17, 2017. (Xinhua/Lan Hongguang)

"The U.S. primary concern is to uphold the international system. China's primary concern is to continue the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. These objectives are not incompatible," says Robert Lawrence Kuhn.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 11 (Xinhua) -- The phone conversation between Chinese President Xi Jinping and U.S. President Joe Biden "established a foundation for future engagement" between the world's two largest economies, said Robert Lawrence Kuhn, Chairman of the Kuhn Foundation, on Wednesday.

"It is always good when the leaders of the U.S. and China speak, and at this time, in light of deteriorated U.S.-China relations, it is especially good that President Biden and President Xi spoke," Kuhn told Xinhua via email.



Chinese President Xi Jinping and his wife Peng Liyuan welcomed by U.S. Vice President Joe Biden and his wife at Andrews Air Force Base, Washington, D.C., Sept. 24, 2015.

"It was their first talk since Biden was inaugurated and, even though significant differences were surfaced, it established a foundation for future engagement," he said.

"When the two national leaders exchange candid views, seeking areas of cooperation as well as addressing mutual concerns, they are putting their personal credibility behind their commitment to stabilize bilateral relations," he said.

"Thus, the Biden-Xi call serves to prevent further deterioration by setting a standard that their respective senior official -- diplomatic, economic, military -- must maintain," he said.



Chinese President Xi Jinping (R) shakes hands with U.S. Vice President Joe Biden during their meeting at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, Dec. 4, 2013.

"While some commentators may see different readouts of the call from (the) U.S. and China sides as indicating that the leaders were 'talking past each other,' I can see it as holding hope that (the) U.S. and China's core interests are not a zero-sum game," said Kuhn.

"The U.S. primary concern is to uphold the international system. China's primary concern is to continue the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. These objectives are not incompatible," he said.

"Given leadership vision, diplomatic skill, good will, and perhaps a bit of luck, U.S.-China relations can shift slowly from increasing confrontation to growing cooperation. Let's all give Presidents Biden and Xi some time," he said. ■

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