

Henry Kissinger meets China's defence minister in surprise visit to Beijing

Ex-US secretary of state's meeting with Li Shangfu comes amid hopes of improved ties between two countries

The veteran US diplomat Henry Kissinger has met China's defence minister in Beijing.

According to a readout on Tuesday from the Chinese defence ministry, Li Shangfu said "friendly communication" between China and the US had been "destroyed" because "some people in the United States did not meet China halfway". Kissinger said he was a "friend of China", according to the readout.

"Neither the United States nor China can afford to treat the other as an adversary. If the two countries go to war, it will not lead to any meaningful results for the two peoples," the Chinese statement reported Kissinger as saying.

The surprise visit of the 100-year-old former US secretary of state comes as John Kerry, the US climate envoy, is in Beijing to meet Chinese officials to discuss how the two countries can cooperate on confronting the climate crisis. Kerry is the latest in a string of senior US officials who have travelled to China this summer, after the US secretary of state, Antony Blinken, completed a long-awaited trip in June.

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