



Time for U.S. to join China in safeguarding post-war order: expert

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It is high time for the United States to join China in safeguarding post-war order and close cooperation between the two countries can have a positive and stabilizing impact on a range of issues, an expert has said here.

"The post-World War II order is only partially applicable in the twenty-first century. The condemnation of aggressive war certainly applies, but the Cairo and Potsdam declarations also envisioned a world divided into the Allied victors and the defeated fascist powers, primarily Germany and Japan," said Ted Carpenter, a senior fellow for defense and foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute, a Washington-based think tank, during a recent interview with Xinhua.

"In our current era, those two countries need to be treated as responsible great powers with an obligation and right to contribute to global order," he said, adding that Japan must follow Germany's lead and accept full responsibility for the aggression that led to World War II.

"In a stable twenty-first century global order, there must be respect for the regional prerogatives of other great powers," he said, arguing that therefore, China and the United States need to regard each other as equal powers, which requires an adjustment in Washington's thinking.

That means that China must accept that the United States has especially important interests in the Western Hemisphere and expects to be treated as the leading power in that region. Conversely, the United States must accept that China has especially important interests in East and Central Asia and expects other major powers to respect that, he said.

The expert said the most controversial area is probably Northeast Asia, where both China and the United States have important interests at stake, and learning to navigate that situation will pose a challenge for both powers. Moreover, Carpenter said that close cooperation between the United States and China can have a "beneficial and stabilizing impact on a host of issues," including the DPRK's nuclear program and other possibilities of nuclear proliferation, fighting Islamic terrorism, and boosting global economic growth.

The scholar said that the United States has "overlearned the lessons of World War II" as Japan's acts of aggression, especially the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, has traumatized the American public.

Unfortunately, the Cold War mentality still persists as every disruptive development is regarded as a lethal threat to peace and global order and compels Washington to launch military interventions such as the Iraq invasion and the escalation of the war in Afghanistan, he said.

"In the end, those interventions caused far more problems than they solved. U.S. leaders must become more cautious and sober in assessing whether adverse developments in a particular country truly menace the security or other interests of the United States," he said.

On the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations, Carpenter said that neither declaration has had a decisive impact on the regional or global order. "Far more important has been the shifting U.S. perception of the threatening environment and the role that Washington believes allies should take," he said.

"At one time, U.S. leaders favored a constrained, if not outright pacifist, Japan," he said, adding that as concerns about burden sharing have grown, together with worries about the strategic intentions of China and the DPRK, the thinking of U.S. officials has changed.

"Now, Washington wants a militarily robust Japan that will help preserve the U.S.-led order in East Asia and beyond," he said.