

Beijing issues new warnings on Tibet and Taiwan

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China yesterday launched a new warning to other countries not to interfere in its affairs in Tibet and Taiwan.

Washington irked Beijing in January when it approved the sale of a US\$6.4 billion package of arms to Taiwan, and then again a month later when US President Barack Obama met the Dalai Lama at the White House.

Without referring specifically to the US leader, Li Zhaoxing (李肇星), former foreign minister and spokesman for the National People's Congress (NPC), said Western leaders should have better things to do than meet the Dalai Lama.

"Although Western leaders are very busy with their work ... they still take the time to see the Dalai Lama," Li told a press conference.

"We can't understand this, and when Chinese people hear about this they are very angry," Li said. "Some people believe the sweet words of the Dalai, he says that he doesn't support Tibet independence, but more importantly we watch his actions."

He said it was "totally unacceptable" for foreign governments to interfere in China's affairs by selling arms to Taiwan, adding: "At a time when the Chinese people across the Taiwan Strait are carrying out friendly exchanges as brothers, the advanced arms sales to Taiwan by a certain country is like handing a dagger to one person when he is hugging his brother."

Meanwhile, Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang (秦刚) said yesterday the US has pledged to work to improve relations with Beijing.

US Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg held an "in-depth and candid exchange of views" with Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi (杨洁希) and other officials during a three-day visit this week, Qin said.

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