

France warns of 'cold war' between US and China

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Body

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian on Wednesday urged Europe not to be dragged into a new "cold war" between the United States and China.

"I don't think we should get caught up in a logic of global bipolar confrontation," Le Drian said to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and Defense.

"We must not return to a cold war," he emphasized, alluding to rising tensions between Washington and Beijing, reminiscent of the confrontation between Americans and Soviets during the second part of the 20th century.

Beijing and Washington have been engaged in a trade war launched by US President Donald Trump for two years, which penalizes international trade.

But the new coronavirus pandemic stoked tensions between the two powers, to the point that Donald Trump threatened to cut "any relationship" with China.

China, for its part, waved the ghost of a "new cold war" on Sunday after the United States criticized its management of the coronavirus.

"The best way not to get dragged into this confrontation, if we don't start a second cold war, is to make Europe assert itself autonomously," said the head of French diplomacy.

"Europe needs to say no to the radicalization of positions, to assert its own interests and to reject it being instrumentalized in a Chinese-American conflict on the one hand, and for the Chinese authorities to divide it, on the other," he added.

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