US is to blame for deterioration of Sino-US military relations: Ministry

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The Ministry of National Defense said the United States is solely to blame for the recent deterioration in Sino-American military relations, and demands "rational" and "sincere" actions from the US and to correct its mistakes, a ministry spokesman said on Thursday.   
On Sept 20, the US State Department imposed sanctions on China's Equipment Development Department, the branch of the military responsible for weapons procurement, for purchasing Russian Su-35 combat aircraft and the S-400 missile system.   
The Chinese military is resolutely opposed the sanctions, the ministry said in a statement on Sept 22. In response, China immediately recalled Chinese navy commander Vice-Admiral Shen Jinlong, who was in the US attending a symposium and planned to have exchanges with high-ranking US Navy officials, it said.   
In addition, China has postponed the second meeting of a communication mechanism for the joint staff departments of China and the US, scheduled for Sept 25-27 in Beijing, the ministry added.   
"China highly values Sino-US military exchanges across various levels," Senior Colonel Ren Guoqiang, a spokesman for the ministry, said in a regular press meeting on Thursday.   
"However, the US side is solely to blame for the recent damage to Sino-US military relations," he said. "We urge the US side to show sincere efforts to improve Sino-US military relations, and allow it to become a stabilizing factor for bilateral ties."  
When asked whether the recent heightened tension could affect State Councilor and Minister of National Defense Wei Fenghe's planned visit to the US later this year, Ren said the US should take "rational and mature attitudes in generating positive conditions for exchanges and cooperation."

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