

Headline: US envoy Kerry says China climate talks constructive but complicated

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U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry and Chinese Premier Li Qiang attend a meeting at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China July 18, 2023. REUTERS FILE PHOTO

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BEIJING — U.S. climate change envoy John Kerry said on Wednesday his talks with Chinese officials this week have been constructive but complicated, with the two sides still dealing with political “externalities”, including Taiwan.

“We’re just reconnecting,” Kerry told reporters. “We’re trying to re-establish the process we have worked on for years.”

Kerry arrived in Beijing on Sunday and has held meetings with China’s top diplomat Wang Yi and Premier Li Qiang as well as veteran climate envoy Xie Zhenhua in a bid to rebuild trust between the two sides ahead of COP28 climate talks in Dubai at the end of this year.

“We’re trying to carve out a very clear path to the COP to be able to cooperate and work as we have wanted to with all the externalities,” Kerry said.

Climate diplomacy between the world’s top two emitters was suspended in August last year following the visit of U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan, a democratically governed island that China claims.

“The mood is very, very positive,” Kerry said ahead of meetings on Wednesday. “We had a terrific dinner last night. We had a lot of back and forth. It’s really constructive.”

“We’re focused on the substance of what we can really work on and what we can make happen.”

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