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# China warns conflict is inevitable unless U.S. changes course

*By Eric Baculinao and Jennifer Jett*

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BEIJING — The U.S. and [China](#) are hurtling toward inevitable “confrontation and conflict” unless Washington changes course, [Beijing’s](#) new foreign minister warned Tuesday.

Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang’s fiery comments underlined the [deepening tensions between the world’s two largest economies](#) in the wake of the [surveillance balloon saga](#) and [Russia’s war in Ukraine](#).

They echoed similarly sharp remarks Monday by China’s leader, [Xi Jinping](#), blaming U.S. efforts to contain China for deteriorating relations and suggesting Beijing would increasingly seek to push back.

Qin spoke at a news conference in Beijing, his first since he took office in December, on the sidelines of the annual meeting of China’s rubber-stamp legislature, where Xi is expected to complete the biggest government reshuffle in a decade.

In a wide-ranging rebuke of U.S. policies, Qin — who until recently was the Chinese ambassador to the U.S. — questioned [President Joe Biden](#)’s assertion that the U.S. seeks competition with China

but not conflict.

“In fact, the U.S. side’s so-called competition is all-round containment and suppression, a zero-sum game,” he said, suggesting conflict may be unavoidable unless Washington stops trying to suppress Beijing.

“The U.S. side supposedly wants to put ‘guardrails’ on Sino-U.S. relations and not to clash,” Qin continued. “In fact, it wants China not to respond in words or action when slandered or attacked. That is just impossible.

“If the U.S. side does not put on the brakes and continues down the wrong path, no amount of guardrails can stop the derailment and rollover into confrontation and conflict,” he said.



In a speech to political delegates Monday, Xi also accused the U.S. of trying to fence China in.

“Western countries led by the United States have implemented all-round containment, encirclement and suppression of China, which has brought unprecedented severe challenges to our country’s

development,” he said, according to Xinhua, China’s state-run news agency.

Qin also criticized Washington’s decision early last month to [shoot down a suspected Chinese spy balloon](#) off South Carolina, repeating Beijing’s insistence that it appeared over U.S. territory by accident.

“The U.S. side violated the spirit of international law and international practice by making presumptions of guilt, overreacting, abusing force and making use of the issue to create a diplomatic crisis that could have been avoided,” he said.

Of [Taiwan](#), the self-ruling island that Beijing claims as its territory, Qin said it was the first red line in China’s relations with the U.S., which is Taiwan’s most important international backer.

“The U.S. bears unshirkable responsibility for the creation of the Taiwan issue,” he said.