

# Wolf Warrior Diplomacy : US – China Alaska Meet

March 30, 2021

The heated public encounter between Chinese and US diplomats at their first meeting since President Joe Biden came to office provides a measure of impending turbulence that will likely increase with time. It is seen as a manifestation of a newly combative and unapologetic Beijing, signalling a more confrontational and confident China.

**In news:** China's aggressive stance at Alaska meet suggests more confrontational posture in future

**Placing it in syllabus:** Foreign Affairs

## **Dimensions**

- Interests and Differences between the two countries
- Chinese Diplomat Response: wolf Warrior Diplomacy
- Wolf Warrior Diplomacy
- Impact of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy

## **Content:**

### **Interests and Differences between the two countries**

- The meeting in Anchorage, Alaska was the first high-level meeting between the two countries under the administration of President Joe Biden, and came after more than two years of rocky relations between the two countries.
- The US Side expressed deep concerns with actions by China, including in Xinjiang, Hong Kong, Taiwan, cyberattacks on the United States, economic coercion toward our allies. Each of these actions threaten the rules-based order that maintains global stability.

- Chinese diplomats accused the United States of exercising long jurisdiction and suppression and over stretching regional issues.
- They asserted that the United States itself does not represent international public opinion and neither does the Western world. The U.S. does not represent the world. It only represents the government of the United States.
- They said that the United States needs to change its own image and to stop advancing its own democracy in the rest of the world. Many people within the United States actually have little confidence in the democracy of the United States and they have various views regarding the government of the United States in China.

## **Chinese Diplomat Response: Wolf Warrior Diplomacy:**

- The theatrical exchange in Alaska was undiplomatic, unstructured and an obvious departure from convention.
- China urged the U.S. side to fully abandon the hegemony practice of willfully interfering in China's internal affairs. This has been a longstanding issue and it should be changed.
- Dubbed "wolf-warrior diplomacy," this new approach seems popular inside China and reinforces a presumed transition of Chinese diplomacy from conservative, passive, and low-key to assertive, proactive, and high-profile.

## **Wolf Warrior Diplomacy**

### **What is it?**

- Wolf warrior diplomacy describes an aggressive style of diplomacy adopted by Chinese diplomats in the 21st century, under Chinese leader Xi Jinping's administration.
- The term was coined from a Rambo-style Chinese action

film, Wolf Warrior 2.

- In contrast to prior Chinese diplomatic practice, which had emphasized the avoidance of controversy and the use of cooperative rhetoric, wolf warrior diplomacy is confrontational and combative, with its proponents loudly denouncing any criticism of China on social media and in interviews.

### **How is it different from China's earlier Peaceful Rise?**

- **"China's peaceful rise"**, sometimes referred to as "China's peaceful development", was an official policy in China under former paramount leader Hu Jintao.
- It sought to assure the international community that China's growing political, economic, and military power would not pose a threat to international peace and security.
- It characterized China as a responsible world leader that avoids unnecessary international confrontation, emphasizes soft power, and vows that China is committed to its own internal issues and improving the welfare of its own people before interfering in world affairs.
- Furthermore, it sought to rebut the "China threat theory" and reestablish the view of China as a nonthreatening world power, as historically Chinese empires were regarded as less aggressive.
- In Contrast, **Wolf warrior diplomacy** is characterized by Chinese diplomats' use of confrontational rhetoric, as well as diplomats' increased willingness to rebuff criticism of China and court controversy in interviews and on social media.
- It is a departure from former Chinese foreign policy, which focused on working behind the scenes, avoiding controversy and favoring a rhetoric of international cooperation, exemplified by the maxim that China "must hide its strength" in international diplomacy.
- This change reflects a larger change in how the Chinese

government and the CCP relate and interact with the larger world.

- Efforts aimed at incorporating the Chinese diaspora into China's foreign policy have also intensified with an emphasis placed on ethnic loyalty over national loyalty
- The emergence of wolf warrior diplomacy has been tied to Xi Jinping's political ambitions, as well as perceived anti-China hostility from the West amongst Chinese government officials.
- "Wolf warrior" began to see use as a buzzword during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In Europe, leaders have expressed surprise at the Chinese using a diplomatic tone with them that they previously would only have used with small or weak countries, with the messaging shifting from a tone of collaboration to one of opposition

## **Impact of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy**

### **On China:**

- This new approach seems popular inside China and reinforces a presumed transition of Chinese diplomacy
- Beijing has clearly concluded that the United States is a global power in decline, and that the time is ripe for China to press its perceived advantages.
- Wolf warrior diplomacy will continue to define China's public posture in the intensifying superpower competition and shape the international landscape for some time to come.
- Chinese believe that Americans no longer have an overwhelming reservoir of global influence, nor the power to wield it against China.
- This has made China more confident than once was in pursuing its aims openly and unabashedly – from human rights issues in Hong Kong and Xinjiang to territorial

disputes with neighbouring countries.

### **On India:**

- China becomes more powerful, India could increasingly view its development as a threat to its national interests.
- Chinese leaders view India as their rival, competitor and foe. Their inherent psychological fear that a strong and stable India will act as a deterrence in becoming a world power constantly reverberates.
- A similar stance could be seen in China's engagement with India on border issues and other areas of contention.

### **On Global Politics:**

- Relations between the reigning superpower and the aspiring one will be antagonistic and the rest of the world will have to navigate – sometimes delicately, sometimes openly.
- China's more aggressive diplomatic posture is likely to further intensify tensions with the US
- The international community is poised to face an increasingly aggressive Chinese nationalism.

**Mould your thought:** The heated exchange between US and Chinese diplomats at Alaska is a manifestation of a newly combative and unapologetic Beijing. Evaluate.

### ***Approach to the answer:***

- Introduction
- Discuss the Alaska meet and its outcomes
- Discuss the Wolf Warrior Diplomacy
- Discuss Its impact on the world politics
- Conclusion