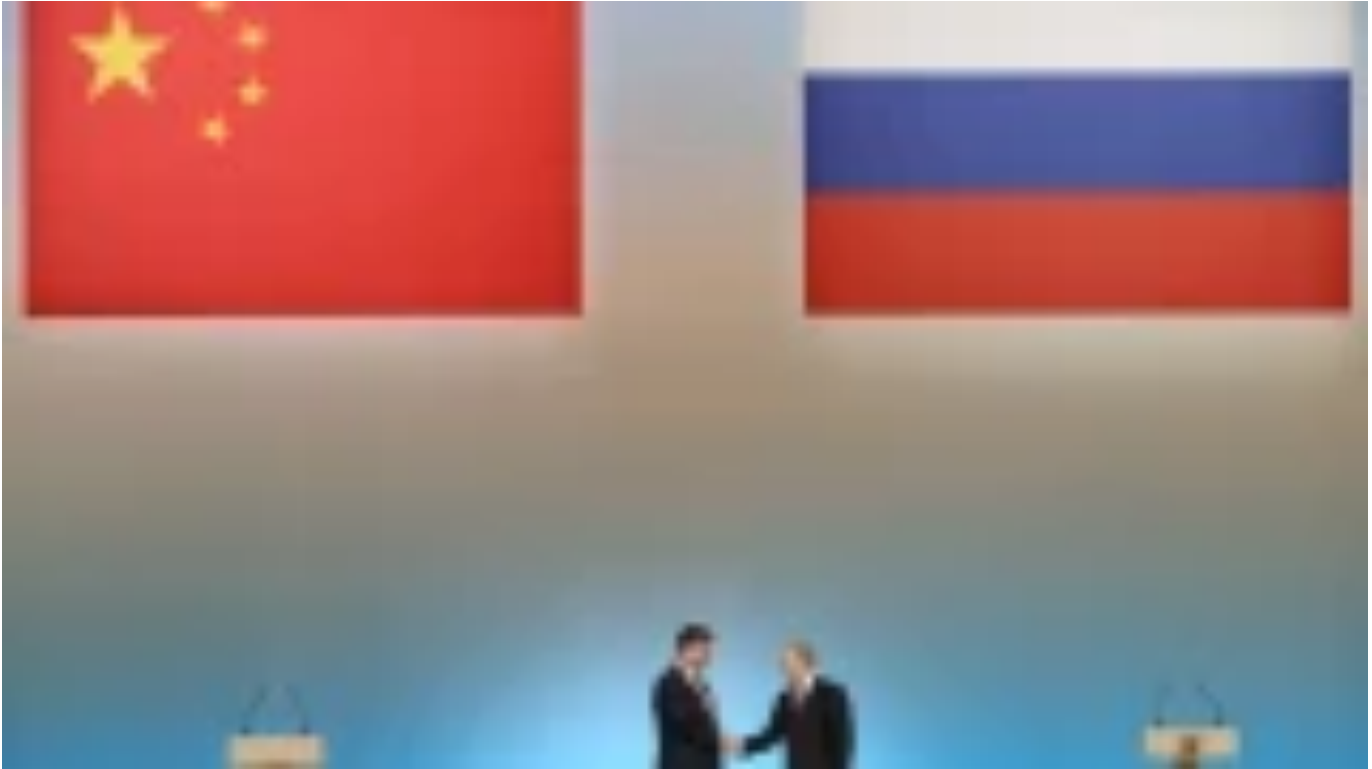


# China, Russia fly warplanes in military drill during Biden trip to Japan



AP Photo/Sergei Ilnitsky, Pool

China and Russia flew nuclear-capable bombers Tuesday in a joint military drill that came as President [Biden](#) is in Japan, a senior administration official confirmed.

The exercise demonstrates that Beijing is continuing its military cooperation with Moscow in the Indo-Pacific “even as Russia continues to conduct a brutal war against Ukraine,” the official told The Hill in a statement.

The bombers “traversed the Sea of Japan and continued through the East China Sea and the Philippine Sea,” the official said, adding that the exercise was likely planned well in advance by both countries and included Chinese navy ships.

China's Ministry of National Defense also confirmed the drill, what it called a "joint aerial strategic patrol," which took place over the Sea of Japan, known in South Korea as the East Sea, the East China Sea and the western Pacific Ocean, according to a statement posted to its official website.

China added that the flights were part of the two countries' "annual military cooperation plan."

Russia's Defense Ministry, meanwhile, said the exercise lasted 13 hours and involved Russian Tu-95 and Chinese Xian H-6 strategic bombers.

The two countries have conducted several joint military exercises over the past few years, the most recent being in August 2021. But Tuesday's joint drill is the first such exercise between China and Russia since the Kremlin invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24.

The senior administration official said the drill "shows that Russia is prioritizing ties with China in the East and South China Seas, not with other Indo-Pacific states."

Though Beijing and Moscow pledged a "no-limits" partnership weeks ahead of the Kremlin's attack on Ukraine — an invasion China has not condemned — there are no indications that China has given military assistance to Russia, according to U.S. officials.

The military exercise also comes as Biden is wrapping up his trip to Asia. The commander in chief is currently in Tokyo for the Quad leaders' second in-person summit with the heads of Japan, India and Australia.

Biden, whose trip has included stops in South Korea and Japan, has sought to strengthen ties with allies and partners in the region.