

## **ANNEX III**

### **MILITARY CRISIS NOTIFICATION MECHANISM FOR USE OF THE DEFENSE TELEPHONE LINK**

#### **SECTION I. PURPOSE**

The military crisis notification mechanism for use of the Defense Telephone Link (hereinafter referred to as the military crisis notification mechanism) is intended to improve and normalize mutual notification of military crisis information via the Defense Telephone Link (DTL) including audio and video modes, in order to reduce risk, foster mutual trust, and increase openness.

Both sides recognize the importance of sustained channels of communication and share a commitment to avoid misunderstanding and miscalculation, and to prevent unintended incidents or crisis from harming the overall relationship.

#### **SECTION II. SCOPE**

The military crisis notification mechanism should encompass communications and notifications of a crisis consistent with the scope established in the 2008 Defense Telephone Link Agreement. Since the timing of a military crisis by its nature is unpredictable, this mechanism establishes norms, encourages effective use of risk-reduction measures, and supports the effective use of the DTL in times of actual crisis.

The military crisis notification mechanism should be on voluntary basis and occur within the existing framework of the 2014 Notification of Major Military Activities Confidence-Building Measures Mechanism (hereinafter referred to as the Notification CBM Mechanism) and the 2008 Defense Telephone Link Agreement (hereinafter referred to as the 2008 DTL Agreement).

The military crisis notification mechanism is not intended to alter or supersede any other bilateral or multilateral agreements or obligations.

#### **SECTION III. GOALS**

Ensure that secure calls between the U.S. and Chinese militaries are accomplished at the appropriate level within the mutually determined time frame, particularly at a time of crisis.

The specific goals of the military crisis notification mechanism are to:

- i. Improve the ability to communicate clearly the nature of the military crisis in a smooth and timely fashion;
- ii. Ensure communications at the appropriate leadership level are sufficient and effective;
- iii. Deepen mutual understanding and increase comprehension of each side's intent;
- iv. Prevent destabilizing escalation in times of crisis or tension; and
- v. Demonstrate, in a concrete and measurable manner, steadily increasing openness and mutual trust.

#### SECTION IV. PROCEDURES

Consistent with the consensus reached in the 2008 Agreement, the side proposing the call should provide 48-hours advance notice, and both sides should identify the callers and a mutually acceptable time to place the call. During a crisis, a call may be requested without advance notice.

The side receiving a request to hold a call should respond to the request within 24 hours of receipt, replying positively or negatively in writing. During a crisis, if the official or officer requested is unavailable, another official or officer may be proposed, particularly to ensure a timely response.

When consensus for a time of the call between the two proposed officials or officers cannot be reached, either side may delegate authority. Either side may propose a lower-level or alternate official or officer to communicate with an appropriate counterpart.

Both sides should place importance on the value of completing a mutually determined call, preferably within 48 hours after the initial proposal.

The authorized agencies as established by the notification CBM mechanism should propose a DTL call in writing.

A proposal should include the following information:

- Date of the proposal;
- Specify voice, video, or non-secure phone line;
- Official or officer initiating the call, including name and title;
- Official or officer requested to receive the call, including name and title;

- Reason for the call;
- Requested date and time of the call, including day/month/year, time, and time zone referenced; and
- Requested alternate date and time, if the primary date and time are not available, including day/month/year, time, and time zone referenced.

If the DTL is not available or circumstances warrant, non-secure communications means should be considered.

The number of notifications made in the previous year, including DTL calls, should be reviewed on annual basis at the annual assessment meeting between the two authorized agencies under the Defense Policy Coordination Talks. Both sides should discuss the circumstances of all proposed calls in order to increase mutual understanding and improve the regular use of the DTL.

Based on the consensus reached at the annual assessment meeting, both sides should develop a joint public statement on outcomes and accomplishments, to be released if appropriate.

#### SECTION V. ORGANIZATION

The military crisis notification mechanism annex is an integral part of the overall Memorandum of Understanding Between the United States of America Department of Defense and the People's Republic of China Ministry of National Defense on Notification of Major Military Activities Confidence-Building Measures Mechanism, managed by the authorized agencies of both sides.

The Department of Defense of  
the United States of America

The Ministry of National Defense of  
the People's Republic of China


