

# CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS AFGHANISTAN TO DISCUSS ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Posted on April 1, 2022



In a first visit to Afghanistan after the Taliban takeover last August, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi spoke about economic cooperation between the two countries, and renewed his call to the U.S. to end

sanctions.

**Category:** [NEWS](#)

**Tags:** [Afghanistan](#), [China](#), [diplomacy](#)

The Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi visited Afghanistan's capital Kabul on Thursday, March 24th. It marked the first visit of a high-ranking Chinese official since the Taliban returned to power last summer. During a meeting with Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi, the two ministers discussed future economic cooperation, as well as assistance in resolving the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan following the withdrawal of U.S. troops in August 2021.

According to [Chinese reports](#), China is the only major country that has not harmed Afghanistan, a point Yi emphasised when he spoke about China's Afghanistan policy—characterised by "three respects" and "three nevers:"

*China respects Afghanistan's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, respects the independent choice made by the Afghan people, and respects Afghanistan's religious beliefs and customs. China never interferes in Afghanistan's internal affairs, never seeks any self-interest in Afghanistan, and never seeks the so-called sphere of influence.*

Abdul Qahar Balhki, spokesman of the Afghan Foreign Ministry, [reported on Twitter](#) that the two foreign ministers discussed among other things a broader cooperation in the mining sector, as well as Afghanistan's role in China's Belt & Road Initiative (BRI). There is likely to be great economic potential in the mining sector in particular; the Mes Aynak copper mine is projected to be the [second largest copper mine in the world](#). A lack of security had [deterred Chinese investors](#) in the past. Now these worries should be resolved, as the Chinese foreign minister praised the new Afghan government for its "changes & security," as Balkhi reported.

Wang Yi used the meeting to reiterate his opposition to the political and economic sanctions against Afghanistan, which the Chinese diplomat said were partly responsible for the current humanitarian crisis. According to UN reports, half of all Afghans are currently [on the verge of starvation](#). After the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan, the United States [froze \\$9 billion in Afghan foreign assets](#), held mostly in the U.S. Federal Reserve.

Already on March 7th, the Chinese foreign minister had said at a [press conference in Beijing](#) that he calls "on the immediate lifting of the freeze on Afghanistan's assets in the U.S. and various unilateral sanctions to unconditionally return assets that belong to the Afghan people." According to Yi, Afghanistan is facing a "critical transition from chaos to order" and criticised the U.S. for walking away "irresponsibly from Afghanistan, leaving the Afghan people in a serious humanitarian crisis and creating enormous security challenges to regional stability."