

US, China need to cooperate: American diplomat

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Washington: A top American diplomat has said that the current global challenges require the US and China to co-operate and the two countries can work together to reduce poverty and promote prosperity in the world.

"The US and China have a very complex, very consequential relationship. We don't always see eye to eye. But the fact is that global challenges require that we cooperate. They require collaborative solutions," said Assistant secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Daniel R Russel.

In an interaction with journalists here ahead of the next week's annual US-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue, Russel said cyber and South China Sea could be the two major topics of discussions along with other issues like climate change, Afghanistan and the traditional issues of human rights.

"The US works to find common ground with China. We work to expand areas of practical cooperation with China. We talk through, we work through our differences. We seek to solve problems and to manage the problems that we can't seem to solve," Russel said.Â

During the meetings, secretary of State John Kerry and Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew will chair a joint session with their Chinese counterparts focusing on how the two sides can work to reduce emissions and make energy cleaner.

There will also be another joint session on how they can work together to preserve and to protect the oceans and the marine environment more broadly.

Another joint session will focus on how they can collaborate to provide support for developing countries and for those countries that are emerging from crisis.

"China has a growing ability to make a positive impact beyond its own borders. For example, its work to combat Ebola in West Africa was important and was a milestone. China's assistance to Afghanistan has been essential to creating an environment that fosters the smooth transition of that country," he said.

"The point is there's a lot that the US and China can do together in other regions, as well as in the Asia Pacific, to reduce poverty and to promote prosperity," Russel said.

Russel acknowledged that the two countries have sharp differences over South China Sea issue. "We don't paper over these differences. We don't turn a blind eye to problems. We discuss them and we seek to tackle them directly," he said.

"There is an unwavering determination on the part of the US to avoid military confrontation, including with China. That serves no one's interest. And frankly, that is not the issue that faces us in the South China Sea," he said.

As important as the issue of the South China Sea is in the US-China discussions, it's not fundamentally an issue between the US and China, he said.

"The recent announcement out of Beijing that the Chinese Government intends to continue and expand the construction of facilities on the reclaimed outposts that it's been constructing in the South China Sea is troubling not just to us, but to the countries in the region. Frankly, we're concerned, and others are concerned," Russel said.

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