

Australian prime minister says U.S.-China war no longer inconceivable



Canberra, August 6 (RHC)-- Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison says a war between the United States and China is "no longer inconceivable." He made the comments in an online address from the Australian capital, Canberra, on Wednesday amid rising tensions between Washington and Beijing.

"We've acknowledged that what was previously inconceivable and not considered even possible or likely in terms of those types of outcomes is not considered in those contexts anymore," Morrison said at the Aspen Security Forum.

The Australian premier further asserted that finding allies in the region is a "critical priority" for Canberra. "Today, the Indo-Pacific is the epicenter of strategic competition. Tensions over territorial claims are growing," he said. "We have to take an optimistic attitude but not an unrealistic or naive attitude. We've got to set out and wed ourselves to the objectives here and that is not the suppression or containment of any one state, it's about the productive and strategic balance that can be achieved," he added.

Morrison voiced hope that, despite tensions between the U.S. and China, the Canberra-Beijing economic relationship could be pursued.

China's embassy in Myanmar says the U.S. is showing an "ugly face" in a campaign to drive a wedge between China and its neighbors over Hong Kong and the South China Sea. "What matters is that the trading relationship, the economic relationship is able to be pursued. That is occurring. It has its frustrations from time to time."

The U.S. and China have been at odds over a range of issues; but recently, Washington has taken a markedly more aggressive posture against Beijing. Washington's aggressive posturing against Beijing comes as the U.S. presidential elections are approaching in November.

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