



By: TA | AP Brief

# US-China trade talks open in Paris on the eve of the Trump-Xi summit



Representatives from Beijing and Washington began their economic and **trade talks** in Paris, paving the way for U.S. President Donald Trump's **state visit** to Beijing to meet Chinese leader Xi Jinping in about two weeks.

The delegations, led by U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng, convened in the French capital in the morning, China's official news agency Xinhua reported.

The White House has said that Trump will travel to China from March 31 to April 2, though Beijing has not officially confirmed it.

Bessent said on Thursday that his team will continue to deliver results that put America's farmers, workers and businesses first. The U.S. Treasury Department said Bessent will meet He on Sunday and Monday.

China's commerce ministry said Friday the two sides are set to discuss "trade and economic issues of mutual concern."

Trump's visit to China will be the first for a U.S. president since he went in his **first term in 2017**.

It will come five months after the **two leaders met** in the South Korean city of Busan and agreed to a **one-year truce** in a trade war that temporarily saw tit-for-tat tariffs soar to triple digits before the two sides climbed down.

Still, trade remains a source of tensions. The commerce ministry hit back against the Trump administration's **new trade investigation** into 16 trading partners, which included China.

The investigation — which came after a **Supreme Court** ruling struck down Trump's sweeping global tariffs that were imposed last year — could pave the way for new tariffs.

The U.S. also launched a separate investigation into the import of goods made with forced labor from countries including China.

China said Monday that it had already made representations over concerns about the new

investigation to the U.S. "It's a mistake on top of a mistake, that severely harms the global supply chain's safety and stability," according to a statement from the Ministry of Commerce.

## Oil Prices

Another issue that could be discussed is the Iran war, especially when global anxiety is soaring over **oil prices and supplies**.

**Trump said** Saturday that he hopes China, France, Japan, South Korea, the United Kingdom and others will send warships to keep the Strait of Hormuz "open and safe."

**The Paris meeting is likely the most important bilateral one before the Xi-Trump summit**

Before Sunday's talks, Gary Ng, a senior economist at French bank Natixis and a research fellow at the Central European Institute of Asian Studies, said the Paris meeting is likely the most important bilateral one before the Xi-Trump summit.

The key issue is "whether China and the U.S. can agree on what is agreed and manage disagreement. Iran is a new factor, but Beijing is more concerned about the flip-flopping of U.S. policies," he said.

Last week, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said it would be a "big year" for China-U.S. relations. While he did not confirm the state visit, Wang said that "the agenda of high-level exchange is already on the table."

Bessent and He have led trade negotiations between the countries since last year, having met in Geneva, London, Stockholm, Madrid and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.