

# *China Accuses U.S. of Serious Provocation by B-52 Bombers*

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Beijing, December 19 (RHC)-- China's Defense Ministry said Saturday that the U.S. committed "a serious military provocation" by recently flying two Air Force B-52 bombers over a Chinese-controlled man-made island in the South China Sea, a mission that the U.S. appeared to indicate had strayed off course.

In Beijing, the defense ministry accused the U.S. of deliberately raising tensions in the disputed region of the South China Sea. It also reiterated that it would do whatever is necessary to protect China's sovereignty.

China's Defense Ministry demanded that Washington immediately take measures to prevent such incidents and damage to relations between the two nations' militaries.

The statement said that Chinese military personnel on the island went on high alert during the overflights by the B-52 strategic bombers and that they issued warnings demanding the aircraft leave the area.

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