China dismisses Abe’s Pearl Harbor visit, suggests Japan is unrepentant

BEIJING – China on Tuesday poured cold water on Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s visit to Pearl Harbor, saying Japan must reconcile with parts of Asia victimized by its wartime aggression if it wants to put that history behind it and move forward.

“I’m afraid that only Japan believes that it can settle accounts with the history of World War II by merely consoling the souls of victims in the Pearl Harbor,” Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said at a regular press conference.

“Without peace reconciliation with China and other victimized countries in Asia, Japan can never leave this part of history behind,” she said.

Her remarks came after Abe arrived in Hawaii on Monday and paid respects at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, setting the stage for his visit to Pearl Harbor with U.S. President Barack Obama on Tuesday.

Abe said he wants to demonstrate “the power of reconciliation to Japan, the United States and the world.”

Hua said China has “taken note” of reports that Abe’s visit does not include an apology and that it is, in her words, “highly likely to be a publicity stunt aimed at China.”

“Despite the ostentatious gestures, serious reflection holds the only key to reconciliation,” the spokeswoman said.

“Japanese leaders should hold a responsible attitude towards history and future, deeply reflect upon the past history of invasion and make a clean break with it,” she said.
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