

Xu Qiliang 许其亮

Born 1950

Current Positions

- Vice-Chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) (2012–present)
- Member of the Politburo (2012–present)
- Full member of the Central Committee of the CCP (2002–present)



Personal and Professional Background

Xu Qiliang was born in March 1950 in Linqu County, Shandong Province. He joined the PLA in 1966 and the CCP in 1967. He studied at the PLA Air Force No. 1 Preparatory School in Shenyang City, Liaoning Province (1966). He received a military education in aviation from the PLA Air Force's No. 8 Aviation School in Shenyang, Liaoning (1967–68), and the PLA Air Force's No. 5 Aviation School in Wuwei City, Gansu Province (1968–69). He also attended the senior officer class at the PLA Air Force Academy in Xinyang City, Henan Province (1982). At the National Defense University in Beijing, he studied in the Basic Operations Department (1986–88), attended the Battle Operations Seminar (1994), participated in a program in defense research (1998), and participated in a class for military leaders at the full army commander level (2001).

He advanced his early military career first as a pilot, then as deputy head and head of an aviation brigade, and finally as deputy commander of a division (1969–83). He served as commander of the PLA Air Force Division (1983–84), deputy commander of the PLA Air Force (1984–85), and chief of staff of the Air Force Command in Shanghai (1985–86). He served as acting deputy commander of the PLA Air Force (1988–89), chief of staff and commander of the PLA Air Force (1989–93), deputy chief of staff of the PLA Air Force (1993–94), and chief of staff of the PLA Air Force (1994–99). He then served concurrently as deputy commander of the Shenyang Military Region and commander of the PLA Air Force in the Shenyang Military Region (1999–2004). After that, he was promoted to deputy chief of the PLA General Staff Headquarters (2004–07), during which time he also served as commander in chief of the Peace Mission of Joint Anti-Terrorism Operation Exercises (2007). He also served as commander of the PLA Air Force and as a member of the CMC (2007–12). He was first elected to the Central Committee as an alternate member at the 14th Party Congress in 1992.

Xu attained the rank of major general in 1991 and the rank of lieutenant general in 1996. He has held the rank of general in the PLA Air Force since 2007.

Compiled by Cheng Li and the staff of the John L. Thornton China Center at Brookings