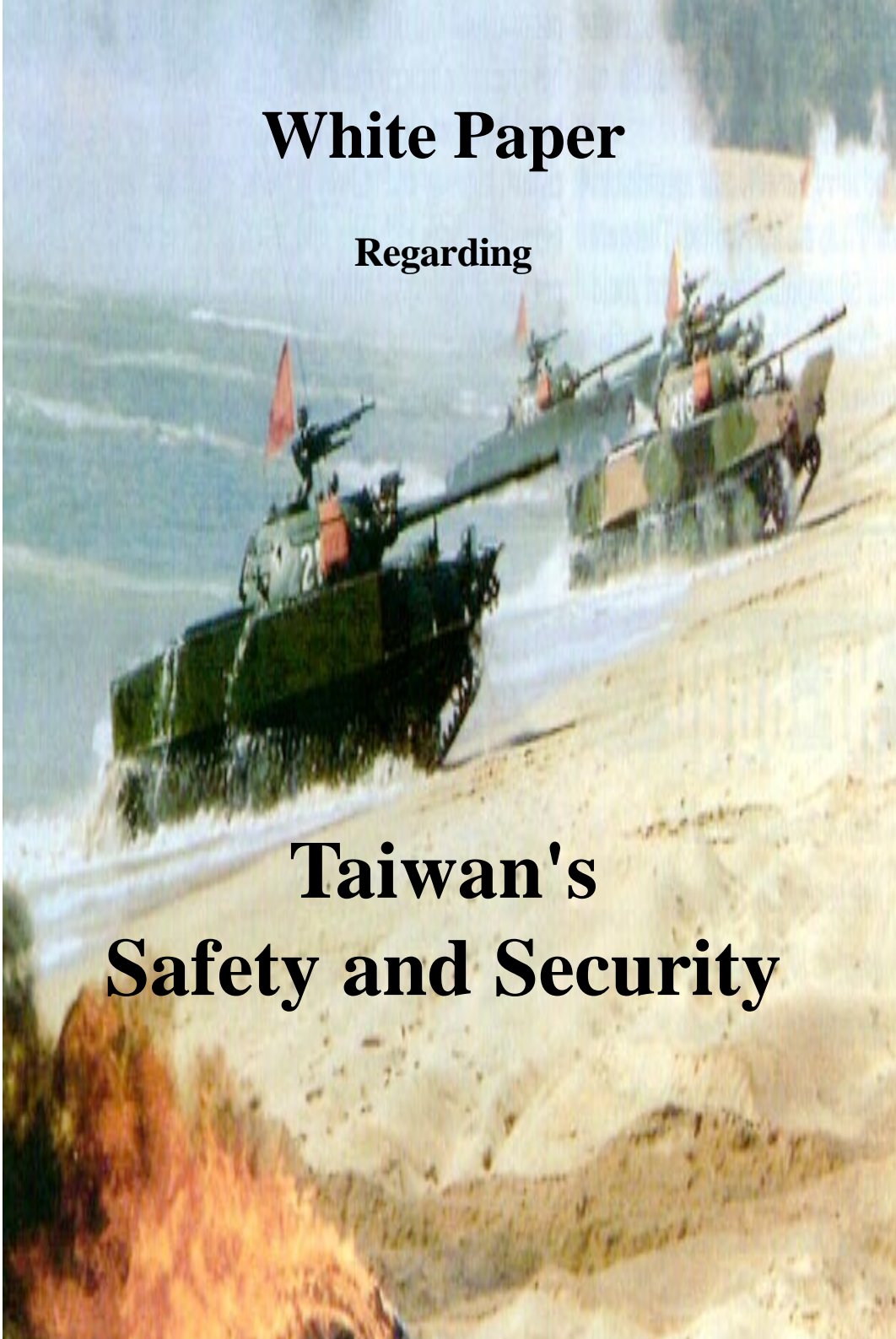


# **White Paper**

**Regarding**

# **Taiwan's Safety and Security**



# Taiwan's Safety and Security

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Washington D.C.  
May 1999

Cover photo: Chinese amphibious tanks during a major exercise in Fukien, coinciding with Taiwan's first direct presidential elections in March 1996 (Photo: EPA/AP)

## **Purpose and summary**

This is the second of a series of White Papers, issued by the overseas Taiwanese community in Canada, Europe and the United States — as represented by the organizations mentioned at the end of this Paper. Through these White Papers, we wish to promote a better understanding in North America and Europe of our homeland Taiwan, and to gain support for acceptance of Taiwan as a full and equal member in the international community.

In this paper, we deal with the important issue of safety and security of Taiwan, and discuss how it affects peace and stability in all of East Asia. On the following pages we first give a brief historical background. Then we present an overview of the Chinese military threat and Taiwan's defensive capabilities. We conclude with a number of policy recommendations, both for Taiwan itself, as well as for the United States and other democratic nations, which are concerned about peace and stability in East Asia.

## **Introduction**

In 1995-1996, in the run-up to the first direct presidential election in Taiwan, the People's Republic of China staged threatening military exercises opposite Taiwan and launched missiles at the island, which finally prompted the Clinton administration — after a considerable delay — to take action and send two aircraft carriers to the area.

Since then, there has been an increasing number of reports of a significant Chinese military buildup, both of conventional forces as well as missiles, which seem specifically designed to threaten and intimidate Taiwan. In the following sections, we present an overview of these developments, based on published records and on references listed at the end of this Paper.

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In spite of repeated urging by the United States and other Western nations, China has consistently refused to renounce the use of force against Taiwan. During his visit to Washington in April 1999, Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji even pointedly reiterated that China would never renounce the use of force, in spite of the fact that Taiwan does not constitute a threat to China's security in any way.

Before going into the military aspects, it is necessary to briefly summarize some historical issues and relevant aspects of Taiwan's international status. These are treated in more detail in the earlier paper, titled *White Paper regarding Taiwan and its Future*.

## Historical background

After World War II, the island of Taiwan – which had been under Japanese rule since 1895 — was occupied by the losing side of the Chinese Civil War “on behalf of the Allied Forces”. The Chinese mainlanders who came over with Chiang Kai-shek in 1949 constituted only 15 percent of the population of the island, but were able to maintain themselves in a position of power over the 85 percent native Taiwanese through tight control of the political system, police, military, educational system and media.

During the following four decades, the Kuomintang established a harsh regime, in which the native Taiwanese had little political representation. In the meantime, the Kuomintang authorities attempted to maintain the fiction that they ruled all of China, and would some day “recover” the mainland.

In the 1970s, the picture changed dramatically: in 1971, the UN accepted the Beijing regime as the representative of China. In 1972 President Nixon visited China, and on 1 January 1979, the United States switched recognition from the Kuomintang regime to the Beijing regime. These changes also gave impetus to the growth and evolution of Taiwan's democratic opposition movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

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Martial Law was finally lifted in 1987, and the democratic opposition movement evolved into a full-fledged opposition party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). However, it wasn't until 1991 that the KMT dropped the claim to rule all of China, and that aging Nationalist Chinese legislators — elected on the mainland in 1947 — were sent into retirement.

Since then, the island has undergone a major political transformation in the direction of a fully multi-party democratic political system. To this day, however, the KMT authorities continue to cling to their outdated claim that “Taiwan is part of China.” In doing so, they are perpetuating Taiwan's international isolation and its lack of diplomatic recognition.

## Taiwan's status

In international law, the 1933 **Montevideo Convention on Rights and Duties of States** defines the qualifications for recognition as a nation-state: a defined territory, a permanent population, and a government capable of entering into relations with other states. Taiwan fulfills all these requirements. Indeed, it has a population greater than that of 3/4 of the members of the UN. It is a *de facto* independent nation, and should be recognized as such.

The question, of course, is under what name it is to be recognized. The Kuomintang authorities at present still cling to the “Republic of China” designation, and maintain diplomatic ties with some 30 nations under this title, most of which are small nations in Central America, the Caribbean and Africa.

The democratic opposition movement in Taiwan and the overseas Taiwanese community as represented by the undersigned organizations insist on the principle that Taiwan has a right to international recognition as a full and equal member of the international community under the name “Taiwan.”

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China refuses to accept Taiwan as a friendly neighbor, it blocks its international recognition, and continues to lay claim to the island on the basis of the Chinese Civil War. This war ended five decades ago with the establishment of the People's Republic of China, and the expulsion of the Kuomintang authorities from Chinese soil to Taiwan.

China's position — that Taiwan is a “province” of China, and that the matter between Taiwan and China is an “internal” Chinese issue — has no historical or international legal basis. It runs counter to the basic principles of human rights, democracy, and self-determination, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. A further explanation can be found in the earlier *White Paper on Taiwan and its Future*.

## China's military threat

At the end of February 1999, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) issued a report to Congress, titled “*The Security Situation in the Taiwan Strait*.” One of the conclusions of the report is that China is changing its force planning, strategy and military doctrine. It is shifting away from the concept of fighting a large-scale “total war”, all-out invasion, or blockade, and is moving towards preparing to fight and win “local wars under high-technology conditions.”

In this context, Beijing is developing *asymmetric abilities* in certain niches, such as advanced cruise missiles and conventional short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs). According to the report, Beijing is attempting to develop these asymmetric engagement capabilities in an effort to outwit and defeat a stronger foe, using unexpected or innovative means, while avoiding the adversary's strengths.

Translated to the stand-off in the Taiwan Strait, this means that China intends to use weapon systems such as SRBMs and cruise missiles in large numbers, in an attempt to subject Taiwan to “credible intimidation” needed to accomplish political and military goals without having to rely on overwhelming force-on-force superiority.

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The U.S. Department of Defense Report states that “... *China views its growing conventionally armed ballistic missiles as a potent military **and political** weapon to influence Taiwan’s populace and their leaders*” (emphasis added).

At the same time, China is involved in the acquisition, primarily from Russia, of weapon systems it views as necessary to deter the United States from becoming involved militarily. These include Sukhoi Su-27 supersonic fighters and Sovremenny-class destroyers, outfitted with supersonic SS-N-22 Sunburn missiles.

A detailed analysis of China’s military buildup goes beyond the scope of this paper. For that, we refer to the DOD report mentioned above, and to the various references listed at the end of this paper. Below, we highlight some of the major areas of concern.

## **Ballistic missiles and cruise missiles**

China has built and deployed a limited number of intermediate-range and longer-range ballistic missiles: 12 single-nuclear-warhead CSS-N-3 submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM), approximately seven single-nuclear-warhead CSS-4 (DF-5) and 20 single-nuclear-warhead CSS-3 (DF-4) intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM). Reportedly, some of these have been MIRV-modified (**M**ultiple **I**ndependently-targetable **R**e-entry **V**ehicles) with technology obtained from the US through the launch of Iridium satellites on Chinese Long March launchers.

These intermediate and longer-range missiles do not constitute a direct threat to Taiwan: they are primarily designed as a deterrent to the U.S., Russia, or India. The primary threat to Taiwan comes from the next group of missiles, the short-range and medium-range ballistic missiles (SRBM and MRBM).

According to recent reports, China has presently deployed as many as 150-200 single-conventional-warhead CSS-6 (DF-15/M-9) SRBM’s

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along the southeast China coast facing Taiwan, and is intending to bring the total to some 650 missiles by the year 2005. Using a single-stage solid propellant rocket and road-mobile launcher, the CSS-6 can deliver a 500 kg warhead over a range of 600 km.

China is also developing a new conventional-warhead CSS-X-7 (DF-11/M-11) which will also use a single-stage solid propellant rocket and a road-mobile launcher, but with a range of 300 km – still more than enough to cross the Taiwan Strait.

The medium-range CSS-5, known previously only as a nuclear missile, is reportedly being equipped with conventional warheads and improved accuracy so that it might be used to threaten Taiwan from launching sites more distant from Taiwan.

China is also developing a land-attack cruise missile, which it presently doesn't have. It does have a number of subsonic anti-ship cruise missiles in its inventory, the C-802 and C-801, which have active radar guidance and a range of approximately 120 km and 40 km respectively.

## **Airforce**

The Chinese airforce presently has approximately 400,000 personnel and some 4,500 combat aircraft. According to the above-mentioned US DOD report, China is retiring old aircraft and is upgrading the quality of its airforce by purchasing Russian Sukhoi Su-27 fighters, and developing a fourth-generation fighter, the J-10, with Israeli assistance. It is also working out an agreement with Russia to produce Su-27's under license in China. This version will reportedly be called the J-11. It is also seeking to purchase Russian Sukhoi Su-30MK all-weather fighter aircraft, armed with advanced R-77 air-to-air missiles.

While at present, most of the air-to-air missiles in the inventory of China's airforce are roughly comparable to those of Taiwan, China is obtaining increasing numbers of Russian-built AA-11/Archer infrared missiles, which are superior to what Taiwan has at present. China is



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also developing beyond-visual-range air-to-air missiles for its fourth-generation aircraft.

While most of the 500 bombers in China's inventory (B-5/Beagles and B-6/Badgers) are relatively slow and old, China is outfitting the new Badger models with air-launched cruise missiles and anti-ship cruise missiles. They could thus constitute a considerable threat to Taiwan's ships and air defenses.

Finally, China is training and outfitting its 15<sup>th</sup> Airborne Army, which has three airborne divisions, as a strategic rapid reaction force, which could be used against Taiwan in a conflict.

## Navy

Traditionally, the Chinese navy has primarily been a coastal defense force. However, over the past decade, China has gradually expanded its capacity as a "blue water" navy. It presently has some 260,000 personnel and approximately 20 destroyers, 40 frigates, and some 50 landing ships. In addition, it has a formidable force of about 65 submarines. Most are not modern, capable submarines, but their sheer number is threatening.

Noteworthy in the submarine force is the quiet and capable indigenously-built Song-class (possibly two in the fleet) and four Russian Kilo-class, all diesel-powered, and five Han-class nuclear-powered attack submarines and one Xia-class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine, the operational status of which is in doubt.

All of the surface ships carry anti-ship cruise missiles, ranging from the relatively old CSS-N-1/Scrubbrush to the more advanced C-801 and C-802. A major future threat to Taiwan, as well as to forces that might support Taiwan, will come from the Sovremenny-class destroyers, which China is buying from Russia. These will be outfitted with the supersonic SS-N-22/Sunburn missile.

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The Chinese navy harbors the desire to purchase or build an aircraft carrier, but has been prevented from doing so because of the cost and because an aircraft carrier is not useful in the Taiwan scenario — the primary focus of the Chinese navy. According to recent reports, it is attempting to “leapfrog” to modern technology by studying the unfinished hulls of carriers purchased from the Ukraine and Russia.

## Ground forces

China’s ground forces include approximately 1.9 million army personnel, supported by approximately 1.5 million reserve-militia personnel and 1 million armed police personnel.

The most significant weakness of China’s ground forces is insufficient transport and logistic support, which means that their effectiveness for conducting assaults against Taiwan would be very limited. However, since the 1991 Gulf War, China’s People’s Liberation Army (PLA) has devoted considerable resources to the development of special operations forces, which could be used against targets in Taiwan, such as C<sup>3</sup>I centers, communication grids, transportation nodes, logistic depots, airfields, etc.

## Advanced technologies

According to the above-mentioned US Department of Defense report, China is investing considerable resources in various advanced warfare technologies, including information warfare in general, and two of its components: computer warfare and electronic warfare.

In addition, recent press reports (**Aviation Week & Space Technology**, 9 November 1998, and **Los Angeles Times**, 28 November 1998) mention the development by China of directed-energy lasers and high-power microwave weapons, which could be used to destroy US satellites, aircraft or missiles.

China has traditionally also made extensive use of psychological warfare during previous situations of conflict, and – according to the US DOD — is believed to have “a robust capability to conduct PSYOP

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(Psychological Operations Warfare) against Taiwan.” In this context it must be mentioned that China has openly stated that it intends to conduct “Fifth Column” and “United Front” activities against Taiwan.

Finally, China has nuclear weapons and the associated delivery systems, which it could use against Taiwan – primarily as a means of intimidation.

## **Taiwan’s defense capabilities**

Taiwan has traditionally had a strong defense force, primarily designed to deter Chinese aggression. It has a total military force of around 400,000, with half in the army, and with the navy and airforce each at around 60,000-70,000. Over the past decade, it has gone through an extensive modernization, beefing up the defenses against China by strengthening all three military services.

The army is being restructured to upgrade its combat effectiveness, emphasizing rapid reaction capabilities, airborne invasion interdiction, and special forces operations. It has a significant battle tank force, and is acquiring helicopters and short-range air defense missiles to improve mobility and fire power.

The airforce consists of some 400 aircraft, out of which 150 are US-built F-16 A/B MLU-models, 60 French-built Mirage 2000-5s, over 100 Taiwan-built Indigenous Defense Fighters (IDF) and the remainder older Northrop F-5E/F fighters and miscellaneous support aircraft. In combination with ground-based air defense systems, the airforce constitutes a credible deterrent against air attack from China.

Taiwan’s navy is also going through an extensive modernization program, which includes the purchase of Lafayette-class frigates from France, the lease and purchase of Knox-class frigates from the United States, and the licensed production of Perry-class frigates in Taiwan.

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In addition to numerous small surface missile ships, Taiwan has more than a dozen older, World War II-era Gearing-class destroyers.

One of Taiwan's weaknesses is in the area of submarine capabilities, where China has a large numerical superiority: Taiwan has only four submarines, two old World War II Guppy-class and two diesel-powered Dutch-built Zwaardvis-class submarines. It would thus be difficult for Taiwan to counter a blockade of the island by Chinese submarines.

The other major weakness is in the area of defense against ballistic missiles. Taiwan has purchased a number of advanced Patriot II surface-to-air missiles as part of its Modified Air Defense System (MADS), which are primarily deployed around the heavily populated area of Taipei. However, even if expanded to protect other parts of the country, it would be totally insufficient against the overwhelming numbers of missiles Beijing is expected to have in place by 2005.

### **Strategic considerations**

Taiwan is an essential link in the chain of democratic nations along the Pacific Rim, stretching from Japan and South Korea in the north, via the Philippines to Australia and New Zealand in the South.

The people of Taiwan have achieved a remarkable transition from a repressive regime under the Kuomintang from the 1940s through the 1980s, to a free and vibrant democracy at present. Taiwan is a shining example that Asian people do want freedom and full democracy. It would be a blatant violation of basic democratic principles if they were forced to "unify" with an undemocratic and repressive Chinese regime. This would set the cause of democracy and human rights in Asia backward for decades to come.

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Taiwan also straddles the major sea-lanes from Japan and South Korea in Northeast Asia to the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia in Southeast Asia, through which 40 percent of the world's trade flows. It is therefore of great strategic importance for free trade in the region.

Over the past decade, the island has evolved as an important player within the region, with a shared interest in political and economic stability. It is increasing its role in regional organizations and strengthening its bilateral ties with Japan and Korea and with the nations in Southeast Asia.

Taiwan and the U.S. share a vibrant, mutually beneficial trade relationship. Taiwan is the 14th largest trading economy and the seventh largest foreign investor in the world. It is also the seventh largest market for U.S. exports. The U.S. absorbs 25% of all Taiwan exports and the annual bilateral trade exceeds \$50 billion. This economic partnership continues to grow.

Per capita GNP in Taiwan is U.S. \$13,500 per year (1997) or about 20 times that of China, making "unification" a very unattractive proposition for the Taiwanese, just on those grounds alone. The Taiwanese are proud of their political and economic achievements and there is growing resolve to maintain and defend Taiwan's hard-won freedom and *de facto* independence.

An additional strategic factor is China's "creeping expansion" in the South China Sea: in the 1990's, the PLA built a 7,000-foot airstrip — long enough to accommodate jet fighters and bombers — on Woody Island in the Paracel Group. In 1995, it built large concrete structures on Mischief Reef in the Spratly Island chain, about 150 miles from Philippine territory but over 1000 miles away from the Chinese mainland. The structures allow the placement of naval- and possibly airforces within reach of the sea-borne commerce through the Palawan Strait, through which 75% of Japan's and South Korea's oil supply flow.

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China's buildup in the South China Sea, in combination with its threats against Taiwan, constitutes a major threat to the freedom of the seas in East Asia. If Taiwan would be absorbed by China, the major waterways in East Asia would be under Chinese control - an unattractive prospect for the United States, Japan and nations such as South Korea.

The lifelines of both Japan and South Korea would be in jeopardy, with major implications for the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty and American security arrangements with South Korea.

China needs to realize that by aggressively laying territorial claims outside its borders, it itself becomes a major source of instability in the region. The apprehension about China's intentions in nations such as Japan, Taiwan, The Philippines and Vietnam creates an environment of suspicion and distrust, which encourages arms buildup and clearly is not in China's own interest.

## **Policy Recommendations**

Peaceful coexistence between Taiwan and China as two friendly neighboring nation-states is the only way in which peace and stability in East Asia can be guaranteed.

Based on this premise, it is essential that the United States and other nations prevail upon China to come to an accommodation with Taiwan and help bring about a peaceful resolution of the decades-old conflict.

This can only be done if the safety and security of the island is guaranteed, and the Taiwanese people can freely determine their own future as a full and equal member of the international community.

As Taiwanese citizens of the world, we reiterate our appeal to the international community – and in particular the United States, Canada and other nations that profess to adhere to democratic principles – to:

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- a. Endorse that the people of Taiwan have the **right to determine their own future** under the principle of self-determination as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
- b. Urge China to renounce the use of force, and **accept Taiwan as a friendly neighboring state** instead of perpetuating the hostility and rivalry dating from the Civil War, which China fought against the Kuomintang five decades ago; and
- c. Accept Taiwan as a **full and equal member of the international family of nations**, including the United Nations.

While striving for these general objectives, it is essential to safeguard Taiwan's safety and security, and peace and stability in the region. To this end, a **number of specific measures** need to be taken:

1. The United States needs to maintain its forward military presence in East Asia, and — in accordance with the Taiwan Relations Act — needs to maintain sufficient military capabilities in the area to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people on Taiwan.
2. The United States needs to expand and upgrade its military dialogue with Taiwan so that each side will become familiar with the other's military doctrine, operational methods, and readiness. This is critical in the event of a crisis in the Taiwan Strait. Such an even-handed policy toward Taiwan itself may discourage any miscalculation and adventure on China's part.
3. Nations which provide advanced military equipment to China should be strongly advised that these deliveries contribute to instability in the region. In particular Russia, France, Britain and Israel do presently provide technology and weapon systems which endanger Taiwan's safety and security. Britain is providing China

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with the Searchwater naval radar system, while Israel is assisting China with the development of its J-10 fighter and is reportedly providing it with advanced Phalcon radar technology.

4. The United States and Japan must make it crystal clear that Taiwan will be included in the proposed East Asia Theater Missile Defense System. While this system is under development, Taiwan should receive advanced PAC-3 type Patriot missile defenses with active-seeker technology as soon as possible. China needs to be convinced to dismantle the large numbers of short- and medium-range ballistic missiles it has deployed against Taiwan. This can only be done if the US provides Taiwan with adequate defenses against the missile threat. Without such a defensive system, any conflict has a much greater likelihood of escalating into full-scale war.
5. Taiwan at present does not have advanced destroyers. It should be assisted in obtaining Aegis-class destroyers, equipped with TMD-defenses (Navy Theater Wide), advanced surface-to-air missiles, ship-to-ship missiles and anti-ship missile interceptors.
6. Taiwan should be enabled to obtain a sufficient number of additional diesel-powered submarines as well as further helicopter- or aircraft-based **Anti Submarine Warfare (ASW)** capabilities, in order to constitute a credible deterrent against China's massive submarine force.
7. In order to counter the threat from Chinese advanced fighter aircraft, such as the Sukhoi Su-27/30 and the J-10, Taiwan should upgrade the air-to-air armaments and avionics of its F-16 fighter aircraft, and obtain additional Airborne Early Warning (AEW) aircraft or Airborne Warning and Control aircraft (AWACS).
8. Taiwan should upgrade the inter-service joint operational and communication capabilities of its military, as well as improve the recruitment and retention of technically-qualified junior officers. It



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should also enhance the promotion of native Taiwanese officers to senior military positions, so as to ensure the loyalty of the armed forces to Taiwan and its defense.

These recommendations are supported overwhelmingly by the people of Taiwan and by the overseas Taiwanese community. The specific measures are of a defensive nature. They are intended to signal that Taiwan wants peace and stability, but is determined to defend itself when threatened.

Many of these recommendations are also incorporated in the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act, introduced in the U.S. Senate in March 1999, and in the House of Representatives in May 1999.

The Act fills many of the voids that the U.S. Congress left when it passed the Taiwan Relations Act in 1979. It provides for a cohesive set of defensive measures, and it specifically states that "Any determination of the ultimate status of Taiwan must have the express consent of the people on Taiwan." The Taiwanese-American community strongly endorses this Act.

Adoption of the recommendations of the present White Paper as well as the measures of the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act are crucial building blocks for the enhancement of safety and security in the Taiwan Strait and in East Asia and the Pacific as a whole.

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## **Organizations endorsing this White Paper:**

World Federation of Taiwanese Associations  
Taiwanese Canadian Association  
Taiwanese Association of America  
Federation of Taiwanese Associations in Europe  
World United Formosans for Independence

North American Taiwanese Women's Association  
North America Taiwanese Professors' Association  
North American Taiwanese Medical Association  
Taiwanese American Citizens League  
Society of Taiwanese Americans  
Taiwanese Americans United

Formosan Association for Human Rights  
Formosan Association for Public Affairs  
Center for Taiwan International Relations  
Taiwan Communiqué  
Taiwanese Collegian  
Intercollegiate Taiwanese American Student Association  
Professor Chen Wen-chen Memorial Foundation  
Dr. Wang Kang-lu Memorial Foundation

**For further information, contact one of the following organizations:**



***Formosan Association for Public Affairs (FAPA)***

552 -- 7th St., S.E.  
Washington, DC 20003  
Tel. (202) 547-3686  
Fax (202) 543-7891



***Taiwan Communiqué***

P.O. Box 15182  
Chevy Chase, MD 20825  
e-mail: taiwandc@globescope.com  
homepage: <http://www.taiwandc.org>



***Taiwan Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)  
Mission in the United States***

529 14th Street N.W., Suite 600  
Washington, DC 20045  
Tel. (202) 737-4443  
Fax (202) 737-4411



***World United Formosans for Independence (WUFI)***

P.O. Box 360315  
Strongsville, OH 44136  
homepage: <http://www.wufi.org>



***Center for Taiwan International Relations (CTIR)***

110 Maryland Ave, N.E. Suite 206  
Washington, DC 20002  
Tel. (202) 543-6287  
Fax (202) 543-2364