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Taiwan's Turn - Deterring and Derailing an Existential Threat

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Potential conflict in the Taiwan Strait has become an almost daily topic in mainstream reporting attracting global attention. Chinese diplomatic arrogance, military aggression, and economic coercion have demonstrated that Beijing's leadership has jettisoned Deng Xiaoping's historic 24-character maxim that exulted "hide our capacities and bide our time."¹ The Department of Defense's (DOD) just released *China Military Power Report* highlights that "The PLA also is likely preparing for a contingency to unify Taiwan with the PRC by force, while simultaneously deterring, delaying, or denying any third-party intervention, such as the United States and/or other like-minded partners, on Taiwan's behalf... As part of a comprehensive campaign to pressure Taiwan and the Tsai administration, and signal its displeasure at warming Washington-Taipei ties, China has persistently conducted military operations near Taiwan and military training for a Taiwan contingency."²

Arguably, Beijing's bellicose rhetoric and actions have caused regional actors to discuss and take significant countermeasures in response. Within the United States, there is now an on-going debate about abandoning the decades old policy of strategic ambiguity for strategic clarity so that it would be assured that the proverbial U.S. cavalry will ride to Taiwan's rescue



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in case of a People's Liberation Army (PLA) attack. In Japan, the ruling party has signaled a rise in the defense budget to break through the historic policy limit of 1 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).³ Australia's future nuclear-powered submarine capability will increase range and endurance that will account for potential Taiwan contingencies.⁴ Even the Moon Administration in South Korea has signaled increased concern about destabilization in the Taiwan Strait.⁵ Furthermore, European and Canadian warships have transited the Taiwan Strait to underscore their commitment to international norms.⁶ Yet, it remains highly debatable, even unlikely, whether these countries would be "all in" if China launches offensive action against Taiwan. Moreover, additional actions that the international community can take to deter Chinese military aggression remains a hotly debated topic. Unfortunately, not enough attention is being paid to what else Taiwan can and must do to deter China. It's now Taiwan's turn to take the necessary action to complicate Chinese calculus.

President Tsai's government has made some progress towards enhancing Taiwan's defense particularly by increasing the defense budget. In a recent Op-Ed, Taiwan's Defense Minister, Chiu Kuo-Cheng, makes a case for what "Taiwan is doing to turn the tide in a battle against an enemy that is many times larger."⁷ Unfortunately, his Op-Ed lacked specificity and appears to preemptively address serious concerns about Taiwan's apparent inability, or unwillingness, to take the necessary steps to build a resilient military able to deter a Chinese invasion despite public pronouncements.

Taiwan's previous Overall Defense Concept (ODC), widely supported by U.S. defense officials, appears to be abandoned by Taiwan's military leadership in the face of overwhelming evidence that such an asymmetric approach is exactly what is needed to deter, and if necessary, derail Chinese aggression.⁸ In fact, there is not a single reference to ODC in Taiwan's *Quadrennial Defense Review* (QDR) published in early 2021.⁹ This perpetuates the growing view that Taipei is not being truly serious about its own defense despite the almost universal assessment that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and its PLA pose an existential threat to democratic Taiwan.

A spate of U.S. legislation has passed with overwhelming bipartisan support in recent years to strengthen the seminal provisions of the Taiwan Relations Act based on a growing concern over precipitous offensive action by a revisionist China.¹⁰ To underscore that concern and to encourage real action to address it, Senator Josh Hawley just introduced the *Arm Taiwan Act of 2021*. This act incentivizes Taiwan to field a credible asymmetric defense by providing U.S. funding conditional on Taiwan matching "U.S. investments in its asymmetric defenses, increasing its defense spending, acquiring asymmetric defense capabilities as quickly as possible regardless of source, and implementing defense reforms, especially with regard to Taiwan's reserve forces."¹¹



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Hopefully, this act will induce our partner to take the required steps for a credible deterrent and defense. The act underscores that the United States will help those that help themselves. Yet, this blueprint also signals that U.S. support is not unconditional. No partner or ally should expect Americans to expend blood or treasure to make up for negligence in providing for their own defense. As Senator Hawley's legislation and other experts have pointed out repeatedly, there are concrete actions that Taiwan must take in order to thwart Chinese plans. These actions include increasing the defense budget, prioritizing acquisitions that favor an asymmetric defense, and reforming the reserves into a territorial defense force with accompanying changes to doctrinal and operational concepts.

Defense Budget

President Tsai's government increased the Taiwan defense budget to approximately 2.4 percent of GDP in 2020 and there is an additional, relatively modest increase for 2021.¹² While going in the right direction, it still falls short for a nation that is facing an existential threat and has almost daily incursions into its air, sea, and cyber space by an openly hostile foreign power. General-Secretary Xi has repeatedly stated that it's not a question of if, but when Taiwan is absorbed into mainland China. In his October 9th speech in the Great Hall of the People, he said "The historical task of the complete reunification of the motherland must be fulfilled, and will definitely be fulfilled."¹³ These pronouncements coupled with a triple digit percentage increase in the PLA's budget over the past two decades should trigger Taiwan to increase its defense budget even further despite a resource-constrained environment in which we all find ourselves.

Taiwan must significantly increase its defense budget to ensure that the resources for building resilience are made available not only to the armed forces, but across the Taiwan Government and to the people on Taiwan. Taiwan can look to a number of foreign countries that have made the requisite investments in defense commensurate with the respective threats that they face¹⁴:

- Israel has sustained a level of defense spending of over 5.3 percent of GDP since at least 2015. This level of investment has resulted in both a modern, combat-credible defense force as well as a robust capacity for homeland resilience.
- Singapore allocates over 3 percent of its GDP to military expenditures. This investment has been critical to sustaining Singapore's highly professional and highly respected armed forces.
- The Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia all invest more than the NATO stated minimum of 2 percent on defense. This allocation is an important foundation for supporting territorial defense.

Countries that arguably face less challenges to their political and social autonomy invest more in their own defense than Taiwan does. Given the daily cadence of threats emanating from



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China against Taiwan, it is perplexing that a greater share of GDP is not spent on defense, which raises undue concerns within Taiwan's circle of international partners, many of whom are increasing defense spending to address the China challenge. Furthermore, what Taiwan spends its limited defense resources on is an additional concern. It's not just a question of how much Taiwan spends on its defense, but also what Taiwan prioritizes in its acquisitions and the opportunity cost of those expenditures.

Acquisition Priorities to Favor Asymmetric Defense

Taiwan has legitimate defense requirements that span the spectrum from steady-state operations to contingency or combat operations. Historically, Taiwan's preference for conventional systems made sense in an era in which the Taiwan Armed Forces had a technological advantage over the PLA and there was relative parity in overall capabilities relative to a Taiwan contingency. While that era is long gone, Taiwan still needs conventional systems such as a modern fighter fleet with airborne early warning assets in order to maintain its air and maritime sovereignty against daily PLA incursions and other forms of gray zone aggression. In fact, the historic Foreign Military Sales package of 2019 provided Taiwan with requested F-16s and M1A2 tanks to recapitalize select elements of its legacy force structure to effectively address steady-state needs and the predilection of Taiwan's Flag Officers for major systems.¹⁵ Most of Taiwan's requests for military sales have continued to focus on conventional systems such as self-propelled artillery, anti-submarine warfare helicopters, and more fighter aircraft. Indigenously, Taiwan is producing submarines and surface combatants at great expense and for dubious domestic motives.¹⁶ In the face of an adversary that spends more, fields capabilities faster, and expresses a willingness to use force, Taiwan can no longer afford, literally and figuratively, to invest a preponderance of its small defense budget on large, advanced, and shiny platforms that will arguably not survive much past D+1.

In order to enhance deterrence and increase combat effectiveness in a potential conflict with China, Taiwan must now turn to field credible, resilient, and cost-effective capabilities. This asymmetric approach means a distributed, maneuverable, and decentralized force—large numbers of small things—that can operate in a degraded electromagnetic environment and under a barrage of missile and air attacks, an operational environment that is all too probable given PLA capabilities and force disposition in the Eastern Theater Command.

Taiwan's leadership must prioritize the acquisition or production of asymmetric capabilities. Such systems are far less expensive to operate and maintain, and are more survivable, compared to more conventional platforms such as fighter aircraft or large naval vessels. A recent success in this approach is the Tsai Administration's commitment to acquire U.S. coastal defense cruise missiles (CDCMs).¹⁷ This was a step in the right direction, but is still not enough. The list of prioritized acquisitions and indigenous production must shift to focus on:



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- Additional CDCMs to dramatically alter the correlation of forces against PLA amphibious ships and escort vessels.
- Sea mines and associated fast minelayers that attrit, impede, and channel PLA invasion forces into kill zones in the littoral and potential disembarkation areas.
- Unmanned aerial, surface, and underwater systems for attack, targeting, and surveillance missions and in adequate numbers to allow for tactical employment of swarms.
- Mobile, resilient, secure, and persistent ground-based and aerial C4ISR systems to ensure the expanded ability to complete kill chains given the PLA's ability to attack Taiwan not only across the Taiwan Strait, but from all cardinal directions and across all domains.
- Small, fast attack craft for the Taiwan Navy armed with missiles that can easily deploy and operate in the littoral and disembarkation zones while complicating and evading PLA targeting through stealth, size, and speed.
- Integrated joint fires systems that leverage mobility and precision guided munitions offensively such as mobile missile systems against PLA embarked invasion forces and defensively against air and missile threats such as short-range air defense systems.
- Scores of additional MANPAD anti-armor and air defense systems securely dispersed throughout Taiwan.
- Enhanced and expanded electronic warfare (EW) capabilities focusing on electronic protection (EP) and electronic support (ES) missions.

Targeted investments in the aforementioned capabilities have had almost universal support amongst Taiwan's most stalwart allies in the United States and in other like-minded countries. Even Taiwan's own *Quadrennial Defense Review* (QDR) ostensibly advocates for an asymmetric approach despite what the cover of the QDR possibly belies.¹⁸ Regardless, Taiwan acquiring sufficient quantities of credible warfighting systems is only one necessary step in ensuring that it can deter, delay, degrade, and deny the PLA. Weapons alone do not build a capability. Defense systems must be employed effectively to deter an adversary, or if need be, to deny the adversary's military objectives. That can only be accomplished in concert with trained personnel organized appropriately and maintained at a high level of operational readiness.

Reserve Reform, Modernizing Operational Concepts, and Building Resilience

The cross-Strait security situation has radically changed over time. Just as U.S. forces have reorganized and recalibrated to counter evolving threats, so too must Taiwan. The Tsai Administration must take a hard look at force structure to consider which elements are likely to deter an adversary that can outmatch and outspend Taiwan's forces in practically every domain.



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Despite that fact, the Taiwan Navy maintains a robust amphibious lift capability ostensibly to reinforce and resupply Taiwan's possessions in the South China Sea and the offshore islands which hug the Chinese coast. While laudable objectives, it's improbable that these efforts would be successful in the face of concerted PLA opposition. In terms of sheer numbers and geography, these missions during wartime would be quixotic. Yet, Taiwan maintains approximately 10 amphibious ships and landing craft, and it's building more with an associated high opportunity cost for more pressing defense investments.

Relatedly, Taiwan's Marine Corps retains its mission of amphibious assault particularly to reinforce and potentially retake Taiwan's smaller islands. With an approximate size of 10,000 Marines, this is not an inconsequential force for Taiwan's myriad of higher priority defense requirements. Rhetorically, one must ask if planning to retake islands already occupied by the PLA by force is realistic. Arguably, the answer should be no despite the unpalatable political implications. Instead, the Taiwan Marine Corps should be reorganized and retooled to address other defense requirements particularly as they relate to the defense of the main island. A relevant example is the United States Marine Corps which, under its Force Design 2030, has made significant changes to adapt to the challenges of the new operational environment presented by China. The U.S. Marine Corps no longer employs main battle tanks and has started to establish Marine Littoral Regiments (MLR) outfitted with anti-ship missiles mounted on light vehicles. The U.S. Army is deploying Multi-Domain Task Forces (MDTF) in order to "neutralize adversary A2/AD networks to enable joint freedom of action."¹⁹ Both the MLR and MDTF represent an entirely new type of formation requiring new operational concepts, technologies, and weapons. The Taiwan Marine Corps should seek applicable lessons from the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps to reorient itself based on the operational threats posed by the PLA. This would be a turn in the right direction for a force with a storied history.

Taiwan's Special Operations Forces (SOF) also have a long proud legacy of fighting Chinese Communist forces in the mainland. For decades, Taiwanese SOF operators, often from very specific ethnic groups, were inserted clandestinely into China for direct action and special reconnaissance missions. Those days have passed and will probably never return. Taiwan's SOF should now focus their training and organization to focus on unconventional warfare (UW), such as enabling a resistance movement or insurgency to "coerce, disrupt, or overthrow an occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary or guerrilla force."²⁰ During the Cold War, American SOF trained and organized NATO allies in guerrilla tactics. In case of a Warsaw Pact attack and subsequent Soviet occupation, the intent was for them to conduct an unconventional campaign to facilitate a NATO counteroffensive. The parallels to a PLA invasion of Taiwan are obvious. This type of mission was part of the genesis of SOF and is ideal for a Taiwan contingency. Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense (MND) should embrace this concept and establish a Joint SOF Command to train, equip, and organize its SOF units to concentrate on unconventional warfare. If PLA planners had to contend with the prospect of a Taiwanese insurgency, this alone would enhance deterrence not to mention



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the potential operational impact of guerrilla light infantry operating in Taiwan's mountainous interior thwarting PLA advances.

Most consequentially, perhaps, is reforming Taiwan's reserve forces. While the announced establishment of Taiwan's All-Out Defense Mobilization Agency (ADMA), increases in annual training time for reservists, and proposals to reform the reserve system appear to be positive developments, they fall far short of real, systemic reforms required to provide a layered defense of Taiwan. Taiwan must do more to strengthen its reserve forces. The reserves can be a major potential asset for Taiwan and must be cultivated as part of a modern, credible, and effective deterrent force.

Generally speaking, the current system in Taiwan organizes and equips the reserve forces similarly to the way it does the active army. In fact, the Taiwan Army is the main player in the reserve system whose forces' primary mission is to reinforce active components particularly to plug gaps and prevent the PLA from breaking out of a potential beachhead. Utilizing the reserves as a backstop is misguided particularly since the reserves notoriously lacked resources for training, equipment, maintenance, facilities, and other logistical requirements. Simply subsuming the reserve forces under the Army misses the critical challenge that a "whole-of-island" defense structure would present to the PLA. A reformed reserve force can fill an important role in organizing people, logistics, and resources to equip the population to defend Taiwan in a crisis. This includes establishing a deep, layered, continuous national resistance if the PLA is not defeated at the littorals or on the beaches.

Taiwan's reserve system should be transformed into a homeland or "whole-of-island" defense force.²¹ There is not a one-size-fits-all approach to such a force. Aspects of the U.S. model of the reserve component and the National Guard may or may not be applicable. However, there are many other models from which Taiwan's leadership could take applicable lessons beyond the U.S.²²:

- Israel maintains a robust corps of reservists that have completed their regular mandatory service in the Israeli Defense Force (IDF). Some reservists are drafted into the units in which they served during their regular service and others are recruited into reserve-specific units. All reservists are trained to be able to provide support to the active-duty forces in an emergency.
- The Finnish Defense Forces, who have faced historic threats from the Soviet Union and now the Russian Federation, include approximately 900,000 reservists. Finnish reservists can apply to support local forces, who in a crisis will protect strategic targets, conduct surveillance, and conduct counter-operations against invading troops.

A reformed reserve force can also provide an important link between Taiwan's people and its armed forces. It's encouraging to note that polling data reveals that most residents now identify



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as Taiwanese rather than Chinese and the youth appears willing to defend their homeland. However, polls also convey an unwillingness to return to universal conscription, doubts about increased defense spending, and even that a plurality of the population plans to “leave the country,” “unhappily accept the situation,” “hide” or “choose to surrender” if there is war. Despite these troubling sentiments, some argue that turning the current reserve system, which is not highly regarded by many of Taiwan’s citizens nor outside experts, into a territorial defense force with more meaningful and effective training, equipment, organizational structure, and missions should be a top priority of the Tsai Administration.²³

Such a territorial or homeland defense force could be community based and serve in a humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) role in peacetime supporting civil defense institutions, local first responders, and Taiwan’s society and economy as a whole. In case of a Chinese invasion, these forces are a ready-made guerrilla or insurgent force comprising a layered defense with which the PLA would have to contend past the beaches and into the Taiwan hinterland. Taiwan SOF should be given the mission to organize and train these forces for urban and rural operations as well as unconventional warfare; this is the ideal mission for SOF. From an equipping perspective, the homeland defense force should have basic small arms, along with anti-armor and anti-air man-portable systems. Tactical communications and some wheeled vehicles should also be standard issue. All of which are relatively easy to maintain proficiency on and cost relatively little.

It is well known that the Chinese leadership is counting on a quick victory or a *fait accompli* to preclude third party intervention in a Taiwan scenario. Taiwan must thus demonstrate a resilient system of civilian and military capabilities to preclude early or quick capitulation. The establishment of a homeland defense force to integrate more of Taiwan’s society into a national defense strategy can shape an adversary’s perception and provide a strong deterrent effect by demonstrating that the costs of war are too high to pursue. Again, there are many international models of territorial defense that could offer relevant examples for Taiwan:

- In Singapore, the civil-military integration of the National Service System and Volunteer Corps are viewed as impactful and well respected across society furthering links between the people and the military.
- Throughout history, a neutral Switzerland stressed societal resilience and comprehensive defense thereby deterring medieval invaders, Napoleon, and the Third Reich. Under the Swiss militia system, most of the military are conscripts and volunteers who serve for decades after their basic training and maintain their own personal equipment, including all personally assigned weapons, at home.
- Sweden not only resumed compulsory military service, but also conducted a total defense exercise involving all elements of society, from parliament down to regional



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and local municipalities and across the government and private sector to simulate and test how the entire nation could be mobilized to respond to a crisis.²⁴

- Every citizen in Lithuania is expected to support an active resistance to an invader. The Lithuanian MoD published information on how the average citizen should prepare for and act in emergencies or conflict.

The aforementioned examples are not meant to provide a defining blueprint for Taiwan, but do clearly demonstrate what can be done when there is sufficient political and national will. Elements from these diverse countries can help inform what needs to be a fundamental review of Taiwan's current reserve and mobilization system. Given the threat the CCP and PLA pose to Taiwan's way of life, it stands to reason that the Taiwanese people will support a consequential reorganization even if it entails some sacrifices as long as reforms address the common and well-known shortcomings of the current system. An effective homeland defense force will function as a connection between the active force and broader society, and can reinforce the stakes the people of Taiwan have in their own defense.

Now what?

The threat that Taiwan faces is of historic proportions given China's demonstrated intent and capabilities. Taiwan Defense Minister, and former General, Chiu Kuo-cheng recently said that the cross-strait situation was "the most serious" in more than 40 years.²⁵ This should dictate that the time is now for serious investments and reform in Taiwan's self-defense.

On November 9, 2021, Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense published its annual *National Defense Report*.²⁶ It's a comprehensive volume and was published in Chinese and English at the same time undoubtedly to inform and shape opinions not just domestically, but among Taiwan's international friends and partners as well. The report includes some encouraging information particularly regarding reserve reform and mobilization. While still too early to tell definitively, it hopefully reflects an acknowledgement that much work still remains in order for Taiwan to have a combat credible reserve force. Actual budgets, authorities, and organizational lines of command will be the indicators of commitment to pragmatic reform. Asymmetric strategies and capabilities are not covered as extensively as should be warranted given the looming threat. Moreover, the acquisition priorities in the *National Defense Report* appear to focus on the large, expensive, and vulnerable platforms that have only limited utility in a conflict with the PLA. This does not augur well for turning the tide from the historic conventional approach to the defense of Taiwan to a more realistic and effective asymmetric approach.

Taiwan has no better friend and partner than the United States. The Biden Administration has largely kept intact the policies and principles focused on great power competition with China embodied in the previous administration's *National Security Strategy* of 2017 and



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National Defense Strategy of 2018. While they would never admit it publicly, President Biden's China hands in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, the Pentagon, and at Foggy Bottom will continue the prudent actions started in the Trump years to strengthen deterrence in the Taiwan Strait.

The United States must remain strident in helping Taiwan as our values and interests intersect in every way. However, there comes a time when tough love is warranted. As the only real guarantor of Taiwan autonomy, U.S. recommendations for arms acquisitions, doctrinal changes, and defense reforms should be heeded. Tacitly supporting Taiwan's continued expenditures of limited resources on systems of negligible deterrent and combat value while not making necessary structural and organizational changes actually calls into question America's commitment to real deterrence and perpetuates bad policy. Unconditional support is no longer acceptable given the geo-political stakes.

Much of the world has started to turn, albeit reluctantly sometimes, to the realization that the rise of China is anything but peaceful. Difficult decisions balancing economic, political, social, and bureaucratic interests are being made in capitals globally to contend effectively with the China challenge. Tough calls need to be made in Taipei as well. The choices to end misplaced priorities are clear. It's Taiwan's turn to make those choices. 該你了.

1. In the early 1990s, Deng Xiaoping gave guidance to China's foreign and defense establishment that has come to be known as the "24 character" strategy: "observe calmly; secure our position; cope with affairs calmly; hide our capacities and bide our time; be good at maintaining a low profile; and never claim leadership."
2. Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2021, Annual Report to Congress*, p. 99, available at <https://media.defense.gov/2021/Nov/03/2002885874/-1/-1/0/2021-CMPR-FINAL.PDF>.
3. Tim Kelly and Ju-min Park, "[Analysis: With an eye on China, Japan's ruling party makes unprecedented defence spending pledge](https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/with-an-eye-china-japans-ruling-party-makes-unprecedented-defence-spending-2021-10-13/)," *Reuters*, October 31, 2021 available at <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/with-an-eye-china-japans-ruling-party-makes-unprecedented-defence-spending-2021-10-13/>.
4. Andrew Erickson, "Australia Badly Needs Nuclear Submarines," *Foreign Policy*, September 20, 2021, available at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/09/20/australia-aucus-nuclear-submarines-china/>.
5. Yosuke Onchi, "South Korea's tiptoeing on Taiwan avoids Beijing backlash," *Nikkei Asia*, May 29, 2021, available at <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/South-Korea-s-tiptoeing-on-Taiwan-avoids-Beijing-backlash/>.
6. So far in 2021, naval ships from the United Kingdom and Canada transited the Taiwan Strait. French and Australian warships have done the same in previous years. The U.S. Navy routinely transits this international waterway.
7. Chiu Kuo-Cheng, "Taiwan Won't Capitulate to China," *The Wall Street Journal*, November 5, 2021, p. A15, available at <https://www.wsj.com/articles/taiwan-will-not-capitulate-to-china-defense-military-army-plantation-11636056020>.



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8. U.S. officials from the Department of Defense and the National Security Council, as well as other elements of the U.S. Government, consistently urged Taiwan's national security leaders to adopt and implement the principles and priorities embodied by the ODC.
9. While elements of an asymmetric defense are included in Taiwan's QDR, references to the widely respected ODC are not. Taiwan's QDR is available at <https://www.ustaiwandefense.com/tdnswp/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/2021-Taiwan-Quadrennial-Defense-Review-QDR.pdf/>.
10. The TAIPEI Act, the Taiwan Travel Act, and the Asia Reassurance Initiative (ARIA) were passed with bipartisan support in recent years. Newly introduced legislation includes the Taiwan Deterrence Act and the Arm Taiwan Act of 2021.
11. Senator Hawley's bill provides clear guidance on what Taiwan needs to do to deter and defend itself against China. The bill is available at https://www.hawley.senate.gov/sites/default/files/2021-11/Arm%20Taiwan%20Act%20of%202021_0.pdf.
12. Lawrence Chung, "Taiwan's biggest defence budget includes US\$1.4 billion for new warplanes," *South China Morning Post*, August 26, 2021, available at <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3146510/taiwans-biggest-defence-budget-includes-us14-billion-new/>.
13. Vincent Ni, "Xi Jinping vows to fulfil Taiwan 'reunification' with China by peaceful means," *The Guardian*, October 9, 2021, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/oct/09/xi-jinping-vows-taiwans-reunification-with-china-will-be-fulfilled/>.
14. There are numerous sources available for estimates of defense budgets including official government sources, SIPRI, IISS, and others.
15. Daniel Darling, "Taiwan Cleared for \$1.8 Billion Worth of FMS Purchases," *Defense and Security Monitor*, October 22, 2020, available at <https://dsm.forecastinternational.com/wordpress/2020/10/22/taiwan-cleared-for-1-8-billion-worth-of-fms-purchases/>.
16. See Wendell Minnick, "Taiwan Moves on \$14.7B Indigenous Shipbuilding, Upgrade Projects," *Defense News*, June 23, 2016, available at <https://www.defensenews.com/naval/2016/06/23/taiwan-moves-on-14-7b-indigenous-shipbuilding-upgrade-projects/>. Also see Xavier Vavasseur, "Taiwan Starts Construction of New IDS Submarine for ROC Navy," *Naval News*, November 24, 2020, available at <https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2020/11/taiwan-starts-construction-of-new-ids-submarine-for-roc-navy/>. It's generally accepted that a major factor behind the decision to construct a variety of naval vessels, surface and sub-surface, in Taiwan was the economic impact it would have domestically.
17. See Aaron Tu and Jake Chung, "MND to purchase US missile system," *Taipei Times*, May 29, 2020, available at <https://taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2020/05/29/2003737239/>. Also see J. Michael Cole, "Taiwan Signs USD 1.75 Billion in Defense Contracts With US," *Janes*, June 17, 2021, available at <https://www.janes.com/defence-news/news-detail/taiwan-signs-usd175-billion-weapons-contract-with-us/>.
18. The cover features illustrations of a main battle tank, a submarine, and a fighter aircraft.
19. Congressional Research Service, *The Army's Multi-Domain Task Force (MDTF)*, November 5, 2021, available at <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11797>.
20. Joint Publication (JP) 3-05.1, *Joint Special Operations Task Force Operations*, defines UW as: Activities conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt or overthrow a government or occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary, and guerrilla force in a denied area.
21. Former Taiwan Chief of General Staff, Admiral (retired) Lee Hsi-Min has spoken and written prominently on this topic as has former Taiwan National Security Council official Enoch Wu.



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22. There is an abundance of publicly available information on various countries' reserve forces and mobilization systems including IISS' annual *Military Balance* series.
23. Paul Huang, "Taiwan's Military Is a Hollow Shell," *Foreign Policy*, February 15, 2020, available at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/02/15/china-threat-invasion-conscription-taiwans-military-is-a-hollow-shell/>.
24. The Swedish example is particularly noteworthy given the roll-back of previous legislation ending conscription as well as other measures to enhance deterrence and defense needs.
25. Joseph Choi, "Taiwan defense chief: Tensions with China worst in 40 years," *The Hill*, October 6, 2021, available at <https://thehill.com/policy/international/asia-pacific/575538-taiwan-defense-chief-tensions-with-china-worst-in-40-years/>.
26. *Republic of China (ROC) National Defense Report 2021* is available at <https://www.ustaiwandefense.com/tdnswp/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Taiwan-National-Defense-Report-2021.pdf>

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