

US pledges to send warships through Taiwan Strait in standoff with China

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Following U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's trip to Taiwan, which deliberately provoked the greatest crisis in the region in a quarter century, the United States has announced plans for its next provocation: sending aircraft and warships through the Taiwan Strait.

The US will conduct "air and maritime transits through the Taiwan Strait in the next few weeks," White House spokesperson John Kirby said.

In June, *Fortune* reported that Beijing told US officials that China sees the Taiwan Strait as its territorial waters, leading to the possibility Chinese military forces could seek to block a transit by a US warship, potentially leading to a military clash.

Kirby announced that the USS Ronald Reagan carrier strike group, which is operating in the waters outside Taiwan, will extend its deployment in the area.

The US announcement came amid a military standoff over Taiwan. After Pelosi's visit, China carried out live-fire exercises in the waters on all sides of Taiwan, forcing the cancellation of flights and the re-routing of ships.

China deployed over 100 aircraft and over 10 warships in its largest-ever military drills in the Taiwan Strait. China fired at least 11 ballistic missiles, some flying directly over mainland Taiwan, and deployed drones that flew over Taiwan's Kinmen Islands.

Over 900 flights involving 18 international air routes have been adjusted, and 66 flights have been cancelled.

The *Global Times* reported that the military drills "featured advanced weapons, including long-range rocket artillery, anti-ship ballistic missiles, stealth fighter jets and an aircraft carrier group with a nuclear-powered submarine, as well as realistic tactics that simulated a real reunification-by-force operation."

For the first time, the Chinese drills included a "carrier group deterrence exercise," the *Global Times*

reported, and at "least one nuclear-powered submarine has been deployed."

Both of China's aircraft carriers were reported to have been steaming toward Taiwan, and either one or both participated in the drills.

Critically, China also fired missiles into Japan's territorial waters, in what was interpreted as a message about its ability to strike US bases in Japan. The *Global Times* wrote: "The PLA exercise zones set in the northeast, east and south of Taiwan island are designated not only to blockade Taiwan and hit targets on the island, but also to prevent external forces like the US from intervening from its bases in Japan and Guam via the Philippine Sea."

Japan, whose population overwhelmingly opposes militarism following Japan's crimes in World War II and the US mass murder of the populations of the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, is being swept into the US-led war drive against China. This year, officials pledged to double Japan's defense spending, up to 2 percent of GDP, and politicians have proposed stationing US nuclear missiles on Japan.

Even as the US made clear it would continue its efforts to goad China into military conflict, White House officials asserted—which neither they nor anyone else believe—that Pelosi's visit was meaningless.

Kirby, the White House spokesperson, said in a statement Thursday: "I want to reiterate, as I've been saying all week: Nothing—nothing—has changed about our One China policy, which is guided by the Taiwan Relations Act, the Three Joint US-PRC Communiqués, and the Six Assurances. And we say it that way every time because it's exactly consistent."

He added: "The provocateur here is Beijing. They didn't have to react this way to what is completely normal travel by congressional members to Taiwan...

The Chinese are the ones who are escalating this.”

Kirby’s claims were refuted in an article published in the *Washington Post* by Qin Gang, China’s ambassador to the United States, noting that: “In the past 18 months alone, the United States has made five rounds of arms sales to Taiwan.”

Qin concluded: “Just think: If an American state were to secede from the United States and declare independence, and then some other nation provided weapons and political support for that state, would the US government—or the American people—allow this to happen?”

Amid the ongoing military standoff, the US Senate is moving to formally abolish the One China policy, which is already a dead letter in practice.

The so-called Taiwan Policy Act of 2022, sponsored by Democratic Senator Bob Menendez and Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, would designate Taiwan a “major non-NATO ally” alongside Japan, effectively giving it diplomatic recognition and ending the One China policy.

The bill would provide Taiwan \$4.5 billion in military aid, a figure in order of magnitude greater than current expenditures.

“Our bill is the largest expansion of the military and economic relationship between our two countries in decades,” Graham said, deliberately referring to Taiwan as a country.

Graham added: “If you put this on the floor of the Senate, it would pass overwhelmingly.”

The relentless efforts by the Biden administration to provoke a war with China represent an enormous danger to the population of Taiwan, China, the Asia-Pacific region and the whole world. In an effort to preserve US military and economic hegemony and suppress political opposition at home, the United States is putting all of humanity in jeopardy.



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