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US turning Taiwan into 'powder keg' – China

Beijing says Washington's weapons on the island 'will not shake our resolve' regarding the breakaway territory



Soldiers recuperate after an amphibious landing drill during the Han Kuang military exercise, which simulates China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) invading the island, on July 28, 2022 in Pingtung, Taiwan © Getty Images / Annabelle Chih/Getty Images

Washington's recent approval of a \$345 million military aid package for Taipei only serves to transform the island into an "ammunition depot," China said on Saturday. Beijing considers Taiwan to be part of its sovereign territory.

"No matter how much of the ordinary people's taxpayer money the... Taiwanese separatist forces spend, no matter how many US weapons, it will not shake our resolve to solve the Taiwan problem," Chen Binhua, spokesperson for Beijing's Taiwan Affairs Office, said in

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a statement. *“Or shake our firm will to realize the reunification of our motherland.”*

Chen added that Washington’s continued military assistance is *“turning Taiwan into a powder keg and ammunition depot, aggravating the threat of war in the Taiwan Strait.”*

Beijing’s riposte comes after the US greenlit a \$345 million aid package to be supplied to Taiwan to boost its military stockpiles. The White House said on Friday that the package would include defense and education training for Taiwanese people.

It will also include MANPADS surface-to-air missile systems and other weaponry to boost its military capabilities, the Associated Press reported on Saturday, citing an anonymous source.

Unlike some previous military aid packages, the latest comes as part of a presidential authority that was approved by the US Congress last year, meaning that the weapons will be supplied directly from US stockpiles in order to expedite the arrival of the equipment.



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Taiwan has previously purchased around \$19 billion worth of equipment from the US – some of which has not yet arrived on the island as military production is lagging behind demand. Under the terms of the United States’ Taiwan Relations Act authorized by the Jimmy Carter administration in 1979, Washington is legally required to provide Taiwan with weapons of a defensive nature.

Beijing has frequently objected to US military assistance for Taiwan, which it views as a breakaway

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province that will ultimately be unified with the mainland. Washington diplomatically acknowledges the 'One-China' policy, which states that there is only one true Chinese government, but maintains informal ties with Taipei.

China has routinely conducted military exercises in and around the Taiwan Strait at times of heightened collaboration between Washington and Taipei. On Sunday, Taipei said it had identified six Chinese Navy vessels in waters close to its shores, according to its Ministry of National Defense.

Earlier this month, Taiwan said some 16 Chinese warships had been tracked performing military exercises close to the island over a period of 24 hours.

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