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## *China Says Its Increased Military Activity a Response to US-Taiwan ‘Collusion’*

**Chinese flights near Taiwan nearly doubled in 2022 as US support for the island increased**

A Chinese official said this week that the rising number of Chinese flights in areas around Taiwan is a direct response to “collusion” between the US and Taiwan, making clear Beijing’s motives for its stepped-up military activity.

Ma Xiaoguang, a spokesman for China’s Taiwan Affairs Office, said that recent drills conducted by China’s People’s Liberation Army (PLA) are a “solemn warning against Taipei’s increased provocation, which damaged peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.”

Ma said that Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen’s ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) has “recently intensified military collusion with the US.”

The PLA held major drills around Taiwan on December 25th in response to President Biden signing the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which includes unprecedented military aid for Taiwan. The bill allocates \$2 billion in loans for Taipei to purchase US-made weapons each year until 2027.

Since Washington severed formal diplomatic relations with Taipei in 1979, the US has always sold weapons to Taiwan but has never financed the deals. China hawks in Congress say the aid is needed to deter China from invading, but Beijing’s actions make it clear that more US support for Taipei will make war more likely.

In 2022, PLA flights in areas around Taiwan nearly doubled as the US stepped up support for Taiwan. Many of the flights came after former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) visited the island in August despite strong warning against the move from Beijing. Since her trip, China now regularly crosses the median line that separates the Taiwan Strait, an unofficial barrier Chinese warplanes used to avoid.

New US support for Taiwan continues as a [trade delegation led by an assistant US trade representative](#) is set to arrive on the island this Saturday. Ma reiterated that Beijing is “opposed” to the trade talks, which Beijing views as an affront to the one-China policy.

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