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<http://thediplomat.com/2015/09/taiwan-practices-repelling-pla-invasion-as-china-conducts-firing-drills-in-taiwan-strait/>

## Taiwan Practices Repelling PLA Invasion as China Conducts Firing Drills in Taiwan Strait

By Shannon Tiezzi

September 10, 2015

While Taiwan holds its major annual military exercise, China's PLA will conduct live-fire drills in the Taiwan Strait.

China's military will hold live-fire drills in the Taiwan Strait from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Friday through Sunday, the government announced. There were no further details given on the drills, only that they would take place off the coast near Quanzhou, a port city in Fujian province directly across the Strait from Taiwan.

Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense said on Thursday that it was aware of the upcoming PLA drills. Spokesperson Maj. Gen. Luo Shou-he said that the exercise was a routine part of China's annual training. Luo said PLA ground forces in the area conduct regular artillery firing drills.

The drills by the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) will begin on Friday, just as Taiwan's own military drills come to an end. The annual Han Kuang exercises prepare Taiwan's military to face an attack from the PLA. The exercises are held in two parts: computer-aided war games and live fire drills. This year, the computer simulations took place in May; the live-fire portion began on September 7 and will conclude on Friday.

This year's Han Kuang exercises, Han Kuang 31, are larger than last year's and include Taiwan's army, navy, and air force in joint operations. Maj. Gen. Zhong Shu-ming said that Taiwan's navy would conduct five additional drills compared to last year and the air force will hold six more drills.

According to Taiwan's Central News Agency, Han Kuang 31 will also feature new weapons systems, including the P-3C anti-submarine warfare patrol aircraft, the Tuo Jiang (Taiwan's first indigenously-designed stealth missile corvette), the Cloud Leopard armored vehicle, and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Taiwan also deployed an indigenously developed radar system, the Point Defense Array Radar System (PODARS), for the first time during the drills.

One of the showpieces of Han Kuang 31 was an anti-amphibious landing exercise, held Thursday in northern Taiwan. That drill saw Taiwan's soldiers simulate the repelling of an amphibious invasion attempt. The drill incorporated 800 Taiwanese soldiers, 18 8-inch M110 self-propelled howitzers, and 20 M109 self-propelled 155 mm howitzers.

Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou oversaw the anti-amphibious landing exercise, held in Hsinchu County. In remarks to the soldiers, he said that Taiwan will not drop its guard despite warming cross-strait ties, but will remain ready to defend itself against a PLA attack. He said that his administration has worked hard to preserve peace in the Taiwan Strait, calling the current cross-strait relationship the most stable in 66 years. But he also said that Taiwan will remain prepared for war and will continue to improve its defense capabilities.

Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense recently issued a report to the Taiwanese legislature on mainland China's military. The report included a list of scenarios under which Beijing might decide to invade Taiwan, and an overview of how such an invasion might progress. The ministry insisted that Taiwan's military is prepared to defend against a possible attack by the PLA.