

THE FUTURE OF U.S. POLICY ON TAIWAN

HEARING

BEFORE THE

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THE FUTURE OF U.S. POLICY ON TAIWAN

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2021

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:39 p.m., in room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Kaine, Markey, Booker, Van Hollen, Risch, Romney, Young, Cruz, and Hagerty.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order. Let me thank Ambassador Kritenbrink and Dr. Ratner for joining the committee today.

This hearing on the future of U.S. policy and strategy with Taiwan may well prove to be one of the more consequential hearings that this committee holds this year, and that is for one clear reason—Beijing’s increasingly aggressive rhetoric and action.

Its threats and coercion underscore that the Taiwan Strait remains one of the most dangerous divides in the world today and one of the handful of places in the world where miscalculation could lead to a war with potentially catastrophic global consequences.

Xi Jinping has orchestrated Beijing’s hyper-nationalist aggression for his own domestic ends as he imposes his authoritarian neo-Maoist vision on the Chinese people.

His relentless incursion into Taiwan’s air defense identification zone this year are a significant threat to the people of Taiwan and the entire international community.

It may be that with Beijing’s cynical manipulation of its hosting of the Olympic Games that we will have a period of “calm” over the next few months, but there should be no question about Xi’s mindset.

So we may have a crucial window of opportunity for the United States and our partners to reinvigorate our strategy for the challenges ahead, but let us be clear. The starting point for U.S. policy is a recognition that Taiwan’s flourishing democracy and free market economy is one of the world’s real success stories.

It should be a point of great pride, something to be cherished, for all people on both sides of the Strait. We, certainly, cherish it here on both sides of the aisle.

Let us also be clear, the U.S. commitment to the people of Taiwan and our obligation to safeguard Taiwan's space to make its own determinations about its own future without threat of coercion or use of force must be unequivocal.

There should be no doubt or ambiguity about the nature, depth, and strength of that commitment or of our endurance as an Indo-Pacific power or of our determination as a people and as a nation to stand with those, like Taiwan, who share our interests and our values.

Beijing should have no doubt or question that any cross-Strait military or kinetic contingency directly affects the United States and our interests and values, directly affects our commitments under the Taiwan Relations Act and the Six Assurances, and there should be no doubt, question, or misunderstanding that we will respond appropriately.

As Beijing also seeks to reset baselines through coercive measures in the "gray zone" it should also understand that we remain committed to the essential constituent elements of deterrence across the Strait as well.

Likewise, the United States must stand prepared and ready to assist Taiwan as it seeks to build its own security capabilities and to deter potential PRC military pressure.

While I do not expect Dr. Ratner to get into sensitive specifics in an open setting, I am interested in hearing about how the Department of Defense is thinking about priorities in this area.

I know the ranking member has a narrow bill that he has introduced on security assistance to Taiwan and, as he knows, I am working on a larger bipartisan package into which we hope to incorporate his bill, and I hope to work with him and other colleagues on it during the course of the balance of this year and to next.

Beyond military and security matters, trade and economic ties also lie at the heart of the U.S.-Taiwan relationship. I am interested to hear the outcomes of the most recent round of the Prosperity and Partnership Dialogue with Taiwan through the State Department, as well as other initiatives to deepen bilateral trade and commercial ties and to enmesh Taiwan in regional economic architecture, especially given Taiwan's centrality to secure semiconductor supply chains.

Building closer and more enduring economic ties between Taiwan and the world is also crucial to assure that Taiwan and others have the wherewithal to withstand Beijing's efforts at economic coercion.

As I know Ambassador Kritenbrink is aware, I have been deeply concerned about the pressure Beijing has been bringing to bear on Lithuania for its willingness to stand by Taiwan, for example, and I am interested in your thoughts on what else the United States can do to support Lithuania and others who stand with Taiwan.

Lastly, let me flag that I am interested in the Administration's thinking about how to open and expand Taiwan's diplomatic space, be it how we engage with Taiwan here in Washington and how we work with our partners to assure Taiwan's meaningful participation in appropriate international organizations like the World Health Assembly, or consistent with the bill I just introduced, the Inter-American Development Bank.

So we have a very rich and full agenda today. With that, let me turn to the ranking member, Senator Risch, for his remarks.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Tensions, as we all know, are high in the Taiwan Strait and we all know why. China is taking increasingly aggressive actions to pressure Taiwan to unify. We are seeing more and more disinformation, political attacks, economic coercion, and military downright belligerence.

I am glad this committee is holding this hearing at this critical time on Taiwan. As we increase the time, energy, and resources devoted to supporting this Indo-Pacific democracy, we need to be able to tell the American people why it is so important.

We also need more extensive discussions with civilian and military leaders, including in a classified setting, to properly engage on the issues at hand. I hope we can work together to hold classified briefings on Taiwan early after the first of the year.

A unilateral change in the status quo regarding Taiwan would not only threaten the security and liberty of 23 million Taiwanese, but also significantly damage vital U.S. interests and alliances in the Indo-Pacific.

We would lose a model democracy at a time of creeping authoritarianism. It would give China a platform in the First Island Chain to dominate the Western Pacific and threaten, indeed, U.S. homeland. The consequences for Japan's security and, therefore, the U.S.-Japan alliance are hard to overstate.

Semiconductor supply chains would fall into China's hands, and it would embolden China in other territorial disputes, including with India and in the South China Sea. Many U.S. allies and partners fear Taiwan would just be China's first step, and China's aggressive actions give us no reason to believe otherwise.

To deter the Chinese Communist Party from coercing Taiwan, the United States must be laser-focused on concrete actions that put Taiwan in the best possible position to defend against the Chinese military.

Last month, I introduced, as the chairman indicated, the Taiwan Deterrence Act with several colleagues. The bill authorizes \$2 billion in foreign military financing for Taiwan every year through 2032.

Such a program would accelerate Taiwan's acquisition of asymmetric capabilities and incentivize closer U.S.-Taiwan joint defense coordination. I look forward to working with the chairman as he puts his bill forward and melding the two bills together.

This is not, I am sure the chairman would agree, a partisan matter. This is a matter that is important to all American people.

I applaud President Tsai's commitment to important defense reforms, defensive reforms that we have been urging, including recent purchases of key capabilities and the planned establishment of an agency for civilian resilience.

More needs to be done to ensure the Taiwanese military fully implements her reform-minded vision. Close coordination with our executive and legislative branches is essential. The U.S. Government

should prioritize getting the right capabilities to Taiwan quickly and enhancing other important forms of defense engagement.

If there is a problem, the executive branch should tell Congress and we all need to fix it. We should be delivering the same messages on reform to our friends in Taiwan.

What we do in the next 2 years is of great importance, but what we say also matters. I am deeply concerned by confused and varying statements on our Taiwan policy from high members in the current Administration, including the President.

This confusion demonstrates weakness, and weakness always invites more aggression. Our Taiwan policy has remained consistent, regardless of the false claims by Chinese leaders. U.S. policy towards Taiwan has always called for robust support for its defense. This is enshrined in the Taiwan Relations Act.

There has been much talk recently about U.S. policy regarding Taiwan, and I would urge anyone, whether they are friends or enemies, to read the Taiwan Relations Act. This is United States law. This is not a suggestion. It is not a thought. It is law that was put in place on January 1, 1979, and it is called the Taiwan Relations Act. It sets forth the policy of the United States regarding Taiwan. It is binding. It is the law. It is not a suggestion. It is a commitment to ourselves, it is a commitment to our allies, it is a commitment to Taiwan, and it is a commitment to the world.

I will quote very, very briefly from the Act. In Section 2(b)(5) it says that it is the policy of the United States to provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character and it is the policy of the United States, in (6), to maintain the capacity of the United States to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security or the social economic system of the people on Taiwan.

Section 3 goes on to say—that is, 3(a)—in furtherance of the policy set forth in Section 2 of this act, the United States will make available to Taiwan such defense articles and defense services in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability.

This is the law of America. It is the law that has been in place since January 1, 1979. So any debate that is going on right now needs to start with this law. This is where we begin.

In 1982, President Reagan wrote that the linkage between U.S. policy on arms sales to Taiwan and whether China pursues a peaceful resolution across the Taiwan Strait is a permanent imperative of U.S. foreign policy.

Today, China sends large numbers of military aircraft into the Taiwan Strait for what they call rehearsals for future operations. It threatens to take all necessary means to unify with Taiwan and uses its economic might to punish countries that engage with Taiwan.

These are not tenets of a peaceful resolution, which is what is called for in the United States policy. These actions, coupled with China's massive military buildup, create a very different geopolitical environment. The United States must continue executing our long-standing Taiwan policy in a manner that matches today's geopolitical realities.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch, for those remarks, and we are very much in sync here.

Let us turn to Ambassador Kritenbrink first and then Dr. Ratner. We will have your full statements included for the record, without objection. We would ask you to summarize them in about 5 minutes or so so that members of the committee could engage in a conversation with you.

Let us start off with Ambassador Kritenbrink.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. DANIEL KRITENBRINK, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today about our growing partnership with Taiwan.

As you know, Taiwan is a leading democracy, a technological powerhouse, and a force for good. Our shared values, commercial and economic links, as well as people-to-people ties form the bedrock of our friendship and serve as the impetus for our expanding engagement with Taiwan. This sentiment, shared across multiple administrations from both parties, is the lodestar in managing our critically important unofficial relationship with Taiwan.

Our One China policy, as guided by the Taiwan Relations Act, the Three Joint Communiqués, and the Six Assurances has promoted peace and prosperity in the region for more than 40 years.

Our policy also maximizes our ability to broaden and deepen U.S.-Taiwan cooperation and best ensures the future of Taiwan is determined by its people, peacefully and free of PRC coercion.

Through the American Institute in Taiwan, our cooperation with Taiwan has increased in recent years. Taiwan has become an important U.S. partner in trade and investment, health, semiconductor and other critical supply chains, investment screening, science and technology, education, and democratic governance.

Under this Administration, we have advanced these cooperative efforts in a number of ways, including convening the second annual U.S.-Taiwan Economic Prosperity Partnership Dialogue, to build secure and resilient supply chains and counter economic coercion, and inviting Taiwan to share its expertise to combat disinformation and/or authoritarianism at the Summit for Democracy.

We have also expanded the global cooperation and training framework in which we, Japan, and now Australia work together to showcase Taiwan's expertise around the world.

Our relationship with Taiwan brings tremendous benefits to the American people. As just one example, cutting-edge semiconductors from Taiwan are key components for many of our most important industries.

Taiwan companies, most notably TSMC, are now investing billions of dollars in the United States to create high-paying jobs and help ensure our semiconductor supply chains are resilient.

The United States is firmly committed to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, where we have an enduring national interest. We continue to oppose unilateral changes to the status quo and we call for cross-Strait issues to be resolved in a peaceful manner

consistent with the wishes and best interests of the people on Taiwan.

It is for this reason that we view that PRC's growing military, diplomatic, and economic coercion toward Taiwan with serious concern. These actions are destabilizing to the region and risk a miscalculation that could harm the global economy.

In response, the United States has and will continue to make available to Taiwan the defense articles and services necessary to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act.

The United States has notified Congress of more than \$32 billion worth of arms to Taiwan since 2009, but we should be clear that arms sales alone are not enough.

We also are encouraging Taiwan to prioritize asymmetric capabilities that complicate PRC planning, and to implement defense reforms that will strengthen the resilience of Taiwan society against PRC coercion.

The PRC also continues to execute campaigns to sway Taiwan's few remaining diplomatic partners into breaking official ties, to bully countries such as Lithuania when they seek to deepen engagement with Taiwan, and to block Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organizations.

These campaigns are part of a broader PRC effort to diminish Taiwan's international space, which ultimately robs all of us of the many benefits derived from Taiwan's expertise.

We continue to work with like-minded countries to ensure Taiwan is acknowledged as a respected and constructive democratic actor in global affairs. Maintaining Taiwan's international space is fundamental to preserving the cross-Strait status quo and denying the PRC the political conditions it views as conducive for coerced unification.

To that end, it is critical that we have our Senate-confirmed ambassadors in country to help shore up our alliances and push back against malign influence.

Our nominees to some of the most important countries in the region, including Japan, Vietnam, and China itself are awaiting confirmation in the Senate after being voice voted out of this committee with broad bipartisan support. I respectfully ask the committee's help in confirming them as quickly as possible.

The United States continues to raise the importance of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait with our allies and partners. We have publicly and privately urged the PRC to abide by its commitment to peacefully resolve cross-Strait issues and to engage Taiwan in a meaningful dialogue to deescalate tensions.

As a result of the PRC's actions, the global community has become more vocal in supporting Taiwan. Several countries' parliamentarians have visited Taiwan or passed measures of support.

Many U.S. allies and partners have also publicly raised their concerns about maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. Congress has played a critical role in championing continued U.S. and international support for Taiwan, for which we are very grateful.

In summary, our relationship with Taiwan is truly rock solid. Taiwan time and again has proven to be a valuable partner. Only

by continuing all our efforts to work with Taiwan—to work with and support Taiwan can we ultimately preserve peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific that undergirds a strong global economy and our national interest.

Thank you very much. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Kritenbrink follows:]

Prepared Statement of Daniel J. Kritenbrink

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished Members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today about our partnership with Taiwan, including our expanding security cooperation, and our efforts to coordinate with like-minded countries to preserve peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.

Taiwan is a leading democracy, a technological powerhouse, and a force for good. Our shared values, commercial and economic links, as well as people-to-people ties form the bedrock of our friendship and serve as the impetus for our expanding engagement with Taiwan. This sentiment is the lodestar in managing our critically important unofficial relationship with Taiwan.

Our one China policy, as guided by the Taiwan Relations Act, the Three Joint Communiqués, and the Six Assurances, has promoted peace and prosperity in the region for over 40 years across multiple administrations from both parties. Our policy also maximizes our ability to broaden and deepen U.S.-Taiwan cooperation, and best ensures the future of Taiwan is determined by its people, peacefully and free of PRC coercion.

Through the American Institute in Taiwan, our cooperation with Taiwan has increased in recent years, including in several new areas. Taiwan has become an important U.S. partner in trade and investment, health, semiconductor and other critical supply chains, investment screening, science and technology, education, and democratic governance. Under this Administration, we have advanced these cooperative efforts in a number of ways, including:

- Resuming Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) talks to further interlink our economies;
- Inviting Taiwan to share its expertise at the Global COVID-19 Summit;
- Holding the U.S.-Taiwan Consultations on Democratic Governance in the Indo-Pacific to advance human rights in a region under pressure from authoritarian regimes;
- Convening the second annual U.S.-Taiwan Economic Prosperity Partnership Dialogue (EPPD) to build secure and resilient supply chains between our economies, counter economic coercion, and pave the way for deeper cooperation on next generation technologies and scientific endeavors; and
- Inviting Taiwan to share its expertise on using digital tools to combat disinformation and authoritarianism at the Summit for Democracy.

As Taiwan's response to the pandemic has shown, it is also a willing partner with significant expertise to help solve global challenges. The United States, Japan, and now Australia, have worked together to showcase Taiwan's ability to help the world through the Global Cooperation and Training Framework, or GCTF. The GCTF provides training and technical assistance to third-country participants, which builds support for Taiwan around the world by demonstrating the value of its participation on the global stage. Since its inception in 2015, the GCTF has provided training to more than 3,000 participants in dozens of workshops ranging from building media literacy to empowering women entrepreneurs. This year, we have started a "franchise program" that enables U.S. embassies to work with Taiwan representative offices and likeminded partners to hold GCTF events on pressing regional problems. I am particularly grateful for congressional support for GCTF, which will significantly enhance the program's reach.

Our relationship with Taiwan brings tremendous benefits to the American people. As just one example, cutting-edge semiconductors from Taiwan are key components for many of our most important industries. Taiwan companies, most notably TSMC, are now investing billions of dollars in the United States to create high-paying jobs and help ensure our semiconductor supply chains are resilient. And we still remember with great gratitude Taiwan's donation of millions of articles of PPE at the start of the pandemic last year. As part of our partnership on health, the United States has provided Taiwan with 4 million doses of Moderna vaccine.

The United States is firmly committed to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, where we have long had an enduring national interest. We continue to oppose unilateral changes to the status quo and call for cross-Strait issues to be resolved in a peaceful manner that is consistent with the wishes and best interests of the people on Taiwan. It is for this reason that we view the PRC's growing coercive and provocative behavior toward Taiwan with serious concern.

Since the 2016 election of Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen, the PRC has used military, diplomatic, and economic coercion to undermine the status quo in the Taiwan Strait. These actions are destabilizing to the region and risk a miscalculation that could harm the global economy.

In response to the growing PRC military threat, the United States has and will continue to make available to Taiwan the defense articles and services necessary to enable it to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability, consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act. The United States has notified Congress of more than \$32 billion worth of arms to Taiwan since 2009, but we should be clear that arms sales alone cannot ensure Taiwan's ability to defend itself. As my Department of Defense colleague will note, we also are encouraging Taiwan to prioritize asymmetric capabilities that complicate PRC planning and to implement necessary defense reforms that will strengthen the resilience of Taiwan's society against PRC coercion.

In addition to increased PLA military activity near Taiwan, the PRC continues to execute campaigns to sway Taiwan's few remaining diplomatic partners into breaking official ties; to bully countries, such as Lithuania, when they seek to deepen engagement with Taiwan; and to block Taiwan's participation in international organizations. These campaigns seek to coercively influence how countries decide the contours of their policy with respect to cross-Strait issues. It is also part of a longer PRC campaign to diminish Taiwan's international space, which ultimately robs the global community of the many benefits derived from Taiwan's expertise in solving shared challenges.

To preserve Taiwan's "international space," we continue to work with likeminded countries to ensure that Taiwan is acknowledged as a respected and constructive democratic actor in international affairs. Maintaining Taiwan's international space is fundamental to preserving the cross-Strait status quo and denying the PRC the political conditions it views as being conducive for coerced unification on Beijing's terms.

To that end, it is critical that we have our Senate-confirmed Ambassadors in the region, to help shore up our alliances and push back against malign influence. Unfortunately, our nominees to some of the most important countries in the region, including Japan, Vietnam, and China itself, are awaiting confirmation in the Senate after being voice-voted out of this Committee with broad bipartisan support. I respectfully ask for your help in confirming them as quickly as possible.

Through our diplomatic channels, the United States continues to raise the importance of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait with our allies and partners, and to express our strong concerns to the PRC regarding its actions and behavior toward Taiwan. We have publicly and privately urged the PRC to abide by its commitment to peacefully resolve cross-Strait issues and to engage Taiwan in a meaningful dialogue to deescalate tensions.

As a result of the PRC's actions, the global community has become more vocal regarding its concerns over the Taiwan Strait and its support for Taiwan's international space. Several countries' parliamentarians have visited Taiwan or passed measures expressing support for Taiwan. Many U.S. allies and partners also have publicly raised their concerns about maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. Congress has played a critical role in championing continued U.S. and international support for Taiwan, for which we are grateful. This support is important in demonstrating to the PRC that Taiwan is not merely a so-called "internal affair," but rather a matter of great consequence and importance to the global community and economy.

In summary, our relationship with Taiwan is truly "rock solid." Taiwan time and again has proven to be a valuable partner. The United States will continue to support Taiwan publicly. We will continue to work with Taiwan on initiatives that demonstrate the value it brings to the international community. And we will continue to encourage like-minded countries' engagement with and public demonstrations of support for Taiwan. Only then can we ultimately preserve the peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific that undergirds a strong global economy and our national interest.

Thank you. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.
Dr. Ratner.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. ELY RATNER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INDO-PACIFIC SECURITY AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. RATNER. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to be here today to describe how the Department of Defense is supporting Taiwan's ability to defend its vibrant prosperous democracy.

I would like to begin with an overview of why Taiwan's security is so important to the United States. As you know, Taiwan is located at a critical node within the First Island Chain, anchoring a network of U.S. allies and partners that is critical to the region's security and critical to the defense of vital U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific.

Geographically, Taiwan is also situated alongside major trade lanes that provide sea lines of communication for much of the world's commerce and energy shipping. It is in part for these strategic reasons that this administration, like those before it, has affirmed our commitment to our One China policy as guided by the Taiwan Relations Act, the three joint U.S.-PRC communiqués, and the Six Assurances.

Taiwan is also integral, as you know, to the regional and global economy. Its free market economy embraces innovation, entrepreneurship, and private sector-led growth, which has helped Taiwan become a valuable economic and trade partner for the United States.

Moreover, Taiwan is a beacon of democratic values and ideals. In stark contrast to deepening authoritarianism and oppression in the PRC, Taiwan has proven the possibilities of an alternative path to that of the Chinese Communist Party.

Unfortunately, although the PRC publicly advocates for peaceful unification with Taiwan, leaders in Beijing have never renounced the use of military aggression. In fact, the PLA is likely preparing for a contingency to unify Taiwan with the PRC by force while simultaneously attempting to deter, delay, or deny third-party intervention on Taiwan's behalf.

The PRC threat to Taiwan, however, is not limited to invasion or blockade. The PLA is conducting a broader coercive campaign in the air and maritime domains around Taiwan. These operations are destabilizing, intentionally provocative, and increase the likelihood of miscalculation.

Nevertheless, although the PLA's actions are real and dangerous and PLA modernization is unlikely to abate, the PRC can still be deterred through a combination of Taiwan's own defenses, its partnership with the United States, and growing support from like-minded democracies.

Through smart investments in key reforms, Taiwan can send a clear signal that its society and armed forces are committed and prepared to defend Taiwan. Without question, bolstering Taiwan's self-defenses is an urgent task and an essential feature of deterrence.

We, therefore, appreciate that President Tsai has prioritized the development of asymmetric capabilities for Taiwan's self-defense that are credible, resilient, mobile, distributed, and cost effective.

Asymmetric capabilities, however, are only one part of the deterrence equation. Taiwan must complement investments in these critical capabilities with equal focus on enhancing resilience, supporting civil-military integration, and building a strategy that includes defense in-depth.

Now, in addition to the provision of defense arms and services to Taiwan, the department remains committed to maintaining the capacity of the United States to resist the resort to force or other forms of coercion that may jeopardize the security of the people on Taiwan.

Let me be clear that this is an absolute priority. The PRC is the Department of Defense's pacing challenge and a Taiwan contingency is the pacing scenario. We are modernizing our capabilities, updating U.S. force posture, and developing new operational concepts accordingly.

I should also underscore that the department's efforts to deter PRC aggression and enhance Taiwan's defenses will not be in isolation. Countries throughout the Indo-Pacific and beyond recognize that PRC aggression against Taiwan would have serious consequences for their own interests and are increasingly voicing concerns about PRC coercion and potential aggression against Taiwan.

As evidenced by a number of recent multilateral operations and exercises, the Department is focused on enhancing our regional cooperation as a means of bolstering deterrence.

Finally, I would like to close by thanking all of you for your strong bipartisan support for Taiwan. It is my firm belief that this bipartisanship is one of our most powerful assets in the defense of Taiwan and should be nurtured and treated as such.

In that context, the Department's partnership and bipartisan collaboration with Congress are critical to ensuring that we continue to meet our commitments under the Taiwan Relations Act.

Thank you for your time and attention today, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Ratner follows:]

Prepared Statement of Dr. Ely Ratner

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity today to describe how the Department of Defense is supporting Taiwan's ability to defend its vibrant, prosperous democracy.

I'd like to begin with an overview of why Taiwan's security is so important to the United States. As you know, Taiwan is located at a critical node within the first island chain, anchoring a network of U.S. allies and partners—stretching from the Japanese archipelago down to the Philippines and into the South China Sea—that is critical to the region's security and critical to the defense of vital U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific. Geographically, Taiwan is also situated alongside major trade lanes that provide sea lines of communication for much of the world's commerce and energy shipping. It is in part for these strategic reasons that this Administration, like those before it, has affirmed our commitment to our one-China policy, as guided by the Taiwan Relations Act, the three Joint U.S.-PRC Communiques, and the Six Assurances.

Taiwan is also integral to the regional and global economy. Its free-market economy embraces innovation, entrepreneurship, and private-sector led growth, which has helped Taiwan become a valuable economic and trade partner for the United States. Indeed, our economy—like many others around the world—has come to count on Taiwan as a critical supplier of high-technology, including semiconductors.

Moreover, Taiwan is a beacon of democratic values and ideals. In stark contrast to deepening authoritarianism and oppression in the PRC, Taiwan has proven the possibilities of an alternative path to that of the Chinese Communist Party.

THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA (PRC) THREAT

Unfortunately, although the PRC publicly advocates for peaceful unification with Taiwan, leaders in Beijing have never renounced the use of military aggression.

In fact, the PLA is likely preparing for a contingency to unify Taiwan with the PRC by force, while simultaneously attempting to deter, delay, or deny third-party intervention on Taiwan's behalf.

The PRC's options for military campaigns against Taiwan are bolstered by the PLA's rapidly advancing capabilities, including the sophistication of its surface ships and submarines, advances in combat aircraft and air defenses, the increased quantity and quality of ballistic and cruise missiles, and the development of tools for cyber and information warfare.

The PRC threat to Taiwan, however, is not limited to invasion or blockade. The PLA is conducting a broader coercive campaign in the air and maritime domains around Taiwan. These operations are destabilizing, intentionally provocative, and increase the likelihood of miscalculation. They put the prosperity and security of the region at risk, and are part of a pattern of PRC military coercion and aggression against other U.S. allies and partners in the region, including India, Japan, the Philippines, and Vietnam.

DOD PRIORITIES FOR TAIWAN

Although the PLA's actions are real and dangerous, and PLA modernization is unlikely to abate, the PRC can still be deterred through a combination of Taiwan's own defenses, its partnership with the United States, and growing support from like-minded democracies. Through smart investments and key reform efforts, Taiwan can send a clear signal that its society and armed forces are committed and prepared to defend Taiwan. Without question, bolstering Taiwan's self-defenses is an urgent task and an essential feature of deterrence.

We therefore appreciate that President Tsai has prioritized the development of asymmetric capabilities for Taiwan's self-defense that are credible, resilient, mobile, distributed, and cost-effective. In short, these are affordable investments in lethal capabilities tailored to counter the military threat from the PRC. These capabilities are aimed to strengthen multi-domain deterrence and ensure that an invasion or attack could neither succeed rapidly nor occur without substantial costs. DoD is taking an increasingly proactive approach to supporting these efforts as we continue upholding our commitment under the Taiwan Relations Act to make available to Taiwan relevant defense articles and services.

Asymmetric capabilities, however, are only one part of the deterrence equation. Taiwan must complement investments in these critical capabilities with equal focus on enhancing resilience, supporting civil-military integration, and building a strategy that includes defense-in-depth. In this regard, President Tsai's determination to reform Taiwan's reserve forces and integrate civilian and military agencies under the All-Out Defense Mobilization Agency is critical to enhancing Taiwan's overall preparedness—and in doing so will further strengthen deterrence. DoD will continue to work with relevant U.S. departments and agencies to support Taiwan's efforts in this regard.

DOD'S FOCUS ON TAIWAN

In addition to the provision of defensive arms and services to Taiwan, the Department remains committed to maintaining the capacity of the United States to resist the resort to force or other forms of coercion that may jeopardize the security of the people on Taiwan. Let me be clear that this is an absolute priority: The PRC is the Department's pacing challenge and a Taiwan contingency is the pacing scenario. We are modernizing our capabilities, updating U.S. force posture, and developing new operational concepts accordingly.

I should also underscore that the Department's efforts to deter PRC aggression and enhance Taiwan's defenses will not be in isolation. Countries throughout the Indo Pacific and beyond recognize that PRC aggression against Taiwan would have serious consequences for their interests, and are increasingly voicing concerns about PRC coercion and potential aggression against Taiwan. As evidenced by a number of recent multilateral operations and exercises, the Department is focused on enhancing our regional cooperation as a means of bolstering deterrence.

Finally, I'd like to close by thanking all of you for your strong, bipartisan support for Taiwan. It is my firm belief that this bipartisanship is one of our most powerful assets in the defense of Taiwan, and should be nurtured and treated as such. In that context, the Department's partnership and bipartisan collaboration with Congress are critical to ensuring that we continue to meet our commitments under the

Taiwan Relations Act. Please be assured that the Department of Defense understands the growing threat from the PRC and its military, and we are committed, in line with our longstanding policy, to ensure Taiwan's ability to deter and defend its successful and prosperous democracy.

Thank you for your time and attention, and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you both very much. We will start a series of rounds of 5-minute questions and I will recognize myself.

Given the increased muscle flexing and threatening rhetoric from Beijing, some policymakers and analysts have called for an end to the policy of strategic ambiguity with regards to Taiwan.

What is your views on the advantages and disadvantages of maintaining strategic ambiguity? Is it time for additional clarity or a new framework for managing the cross-Strait relations?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Mr. Chairman, if it is okay I would like to reply first.

The CHAIRMAN. Sure.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Mr. Chairman, I would say, first of all, I fully agree that the coercive and bullying behavior that we have seen from the People's Republic of China directed at Taiwan is concerning. It is destabilizing and it risks undermining peace and stability in the region.

Mr. Chairman, we continue to believe that our One China policy and the framework provided by the Taiwan Relations Act provides us with all the tools that we need to counter that threat and to continue to maintain peace and stability across the Strait.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you think China is undoubtedly convinced that we will be as vigorous in our support of Taiwan and in defense of it as we assert here?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Mr. Chairman, I think that is our goal and it is an urgent one. We think that contributing to that stability and providing that deterrence that we believe provides that stability is a here and now problem, and we are committed to that on an urgent basis, on a daily basis.

My view, Mr. Chairman, is that our policy over the last four decades—as you noted, a bipartisan policy with leadership from both the executive and congressional branches—I think, has succeeded and has allowed Taiwan to prosper.

The CHAIRMAN. I appreciate that and I am in strong support of that and of the view that not only as it relates to Taiwan, but in anything that we can do as it relates to foreign policy the strength of bipartisanship is an incredibly important message globally—

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. —and to the country.

My question really revolves around, okay, that has been the reality of how we have approached the cross-Straits relationship, but we have not had the hyper nationalism of Xi Jinping. We have not had the type of rather overt threats that have taken place.

Is the Defense Department of the same view as the Department of State?

Dr. RATNER. Senator, I know there has been a very robust public discussion of this issue and I have deep respect for folks on both sides of this debate.

In addition to agreeing with everything that Ambassador Kritenbrink said, my personal view is that a change in U.S. declar-

atory policy would not meaningfully strengthen deterrence, and I would be happy to say more about that in a classified setting.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. We will leave it at that then.

What is your assessment? I am concerned that in recent years the PLA military operations near Taiwan have become more sophisticated and more frequent, including recent incursion into Taiwan's air defense identification zone and, frankly, I am concerned that these incursions would circumnavigate the island and demonstrate Beijing's ability to execute a blockade of Taiwan.

What is your assessment of the current cross-Strait military balance? Are you concerned that the PRC can take unilateral military action against Taiwan?

Dr. RATNER. Senator, I am concerned about China's military modernization. The Defense Department recently provided an extremely detailed report on China—the annual China Military Power Report—and clearly, they are engaging in increased coercion and aggressive behaviors, not only toward Taiwan, but around the region. This has effects in terms of tempting miscalculation and crisis. It has effect on Taiwan's readiness.

I think our job at the Department of Defense is to strengthen deterrence and to ensure that we are taking actions such that Beijing understands that it would not be able to achieve its military objectives and, certainly, not without facing substantial risks and costs, and we are doing that by supporting Taiwan's defenses and reforms, by bolstering our own deterrence, and by working on this issue with the broader international community.

The CHAIRMAN. Ambassador, what would trigger such a step by Beijing?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Mr. Chairman, I am reluctant to speculate what might be in President Xi Jinping's mind on any given day, but I would just say that we feel the urgent need every day to take a broad range of steps that we have tried to outline in our opening statements to deter such a step and to provide that stability.

If I could add one point to my colleague, Assistant Secretary Ratner's, comment, we do believe that to contribute to that stability we have to do more than just focus on military deterrence. It is vitally important, we believe, to continue to bolster and expand Taiwan's international space and also to deepen our engagement with Taiwan and to help enable Taiwan to resist economic coercion. We also think those are important parts.

The CHAIRMAN. In that regard—then we will close on this for myself. I have a lot more, but I will stop here. In that regard, if we want to expand Taiwan's diplomatic space when we succeed at it—because there are many countries that have succumbed to China's closing the doors on Taiwan even though they had official recognition and relationships with Taiwan—we have seen Taiwan's diplomatic channels close due to Chinese pressure in multiple capitals.

Indeed, since 2016, eight former Taiwan diplomatic partners have switched diplomatic recognition to the PRC, and even now we are watching as Beijing places significant economic pressure on a country like Lithuania for authorizing the opening of a Taiwanese representative office.

How is the Administration supporting our democratic partners in countering undue Chinese influence and helping Taiwan to establish and maintain formal relationships?

If we cannot help Lithuania, who is being threatened in economic terms, supply chains and whatnot, which I view as a test for the West, then if we fail that test then, ultimately, we will face the consequences of it when others say it is not worth to stand up to China—the U.S. will not be there for us.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Yes, sir. Mr. Chairman, I would say that when we focus on trying to expand and strengthen Taiwan's diplomatic space we work with a range of partners to demonstrate what Taiwan has to offer to the international community and what the benefits of engaging with Taiwan are.

You mentioned both diplomatic partners and then countries like Lithuania, who have simply tried to expand their engagement with a Taiwan representative office.

In the case of Lithuania, Mr. Chairman, we took a number of steps to assist our Lithuanian partners. We engaged at both the Secretary and Deputy Secretary level to express our support for Lithuania and to hear their concerns.

We engaged in a dialogue that was hosted by the White House that I participated in with the Lithuanian foreign minister. That same day, Lithuania and Ex-Im Bank announced an MOU that involved \$600 million of credits to assist Lithuania and we also dispatched a private sector commercial delegation to Lithuania to try to assist them as well in finding other markets, other supply chains.

That is one example, Mr. Chairman, in which we have taken very seriously the need to assist our partners in resisting Chinese economic coercion in the context of engagement with Taiwan.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Risch.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Maybe just one last comment, Mr. Chairman.

As I mentioned in my opening statement, we have expanded the Global Cooperation and Training Framework as well, which is another way in which we help partners around the world engage with Taiwan and learn about the capabilities that Taiwan can offer, and we are grateful to Congress for the support of that program.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Risch.

Senator RISCH. Thanks for those comments about Lithuania. That is not getting nearly enough ink around the world. We all want to counter this Chinese influence, and when they do it malignly like they did in Lithuania it is important that we do counter that.

The list you just ticked off is an important list, but the world should take note that we are engaged in that sort of thing and will help when it is appropriate.

Most of the areas I want to cover are in the intelligence lane so I am going to be brief here, but tell me your thoughts on the fact, and I—everybody talks about this and that is what China did to Hong Kong and, really, the repercussions were de minimis for China.

Certainly, in China, one would think they are tempted to look at that and say, hey, this was so easy. The next one is not going to be any tougher.

Do they have a sense in China, do you think, that we, the West, particularly America, view the Taiwanese situation entirely different than the Hong Kong situation? Either one of you can start. I would like to hear both your views on that.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Thank you, Mr. Ranking Member.

Obviously, as the Administration has stated clearly, what happened in Hong Kong—and the previous administration as well—what happened in Hong Kong was completely unacceptable, but, Mr. Ranking Member, it would be a grave mistake if China were to conclude from that that somehow it gave them an opportunity to take coercive action vis-à-vis Taiwan, and I know that Secretary Blinken has been quoted extensively, including this past week, in stating what a serious mistake it would be if China were to undertake such a path.

We believe, Mr. Ranking Member, that our job every day is to make sure that we provide a level of deterrence and stability across the Strait so that China is not tempted to take that step.

Senator RISCH. I do not think that that proposition about how we view this can be understated. We need to underscore that and underscore it strongly.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Yes, sir.

Dr. RATNER. Senator, to the specific question of our understanding of Beijing's perception and whether they think we view the Hong Kong problem differently than Taiwan, I think the answer to that is categorically yes.

As you mentioned, these relate to intelligence matters and I would be eager to discuss that with you in a classified setting. The only thing I would add to what Ambassador Krittenbrink said is the Taiwanese themselves took very careful notice of what happened in Hong Kong and it, certainly, in their view, reinforced the unacceptability of some kind of one-country, two-systems bargain, given what they saw what happened to Hong Kong.

Thank you.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Senator CARDIN [presiding]. Well, let me thank both of you for your service. Let me continue this discussion as much as we can discuss in an open setting.

Can you just assess for us how much mainland China is doing within Taiwan itself? It seems like there is shifting politics within Taiwan in regards to the attitude of its relations with mainland China.

Can you just share with us how active the PRC is in regards to politics within Taiwan?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Senator, thank you very much for your remarks and for your question.

In terms of a detailed response, perhaps that would be better in another session, but I think that I could say here in great confidence and safely that, certainly, the PRC's attempts to intimidate and coerce and influence friends on Taiwan does involve activities inside Taiwan as well, which is deeply concerning.

I would pick up on your final comment in that I think attitudes in Taiwan have shifted over time. I have some skepticism about the effectiveness of China's actions. In fact, I think the more that the PRC tries to squeeze, the more it simply pushes Taiwan and the Taiwanese people away.

Senator CARDIN. So let me talk about the U.S. engagement in the Asian Pacific area. With the withdrawal from TPP we know that created a vacuum. We have the issues of so many countries in that region concerned about the free commerce on the China Seas and what PRC has done in that regard.

Our ability to have influence in regards to Taiwan is very much related to how America is perceived as interested in Asian Pacific area. So can you just coordinate for us how your strategies in that region are being arranged in order to deal with PRC's increasing activities in the China Seas as well as its compromising of Taiwan's security?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Yes, sir, Senator. Our goal is to demonstrate the strength and the credibility of America's commitment to the Indo-Pacific region and to our many allies and partners in that region.

We have demonstrated that the Indo-Pacific region is vital to our future security and prosperity and we try to demonstrate that through our actions every day. As you know—

Senator CARDIN. Can you be more specific about that?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Yes, sir.

Senator, as you know, for example, the first two world leaders hosted by President Biden at the White House were the Japanese Prime Minister and the South Korean President. The Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense's first trips to the region were to Japan and Korea.

Just this morning, we announced that Secretary Blinken will travel to Southeast Asia next week to visit Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand to, again, demonstrate the strength of our commitment to our partners and allies in ASEAN.

In addition, of course, to that diplomatic engagement, Senator, we are carrying out a very aggressive policy vis-à-vis the maritime domains in the South China Sea and the East China Sea to both diplomatically garner support for pushing back against Chinese illegal behavior and bullying and to strengthen support for the international rule of law.

Secondly, we are providing hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of maritime assistance to partners in the region to increase their domain awareness and their ability to defend their own interests, which we think contributes to stability in the region.

Then, finally, of course—and I will turn to Assistant Secretary Ratner—we are developing and exercising our own capabilities on a regular basis in both the South and East China Seas and elsewhere in the region, all, again, designed to contribute to stability and demonstrate the strength of our commitment.

Finally, Senator, you mentioned our economic engagement as well. The President announced recently last month—at the end of October, rather—at the East Asia Summit his desire to launch a new Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, and that will, certainly, be a focus of our engagement in the weeks and months ahead.

Dr. RATNER. Senator, I will only say Secretary Austin has said repeatedly that allies and partners are, perhaps, our biggest strategic advantage in our military competition with China.

They have capabilities they can bring to bear on their own and with us, they support our force posture in forward deployments in the region, and they exercise and operate with us to ensure a free and open region.

I will say, for my part, I have been in this role since the summer, and right down the line from the Republic of Korea, where we were last week, to Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, Australia, Vietnam, India, in every one of these instances there is incredible positive momentum in those defense partnerships, and in most instances those relationships are stronger than they have ever been.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Senator Romney is recognized.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I do not know that we have laid out a comprehensive strategy for supporting the people of Taiwan and the capacity of the people to determine their own destiny, but if I were to jot down several of the elements that I think would be part of that, I am afraid that on almost all of them we are failing, not succeeding, and I say that a bit to get your response.

One of the ones that we are succeeding on is the attitude of the people of Taiwan themselves. That is not due to anything we have done, I do not imagine, but instead due to the fact that the Chinese have been brutal against the Uighurs and against the people of Hong Kong and, of course, the people of Tibet, and that has concentrated the thinking of the people of Taiwan. So we have been successful there.

Other elements, it strikes me, that we are not being successful. So one element of our strategy would surely be to make sure that world opinion is watching this and is concerned about what China is doing and wants to see Taiwan have its capacity for self-rule. Yet, as has already been mentioned, we are seeing greater and greater diplomatic isolation of Taiwan by nations around the world.

A second element or a third element would be the—if you will, the military porcupining, if you will, the capacity of Taiwan to make decisions to make itself a very difficult target and to make sure that Chinese aggressors would recognize that the cost of invasion would be a severe, indeed.

On that one, I know this is not a classified session so we cannot go into that in-depth, but I do not come away thinking that that has become as—much stronger as we would have liked it to become.

The next would be communication of severe economic consequence were there to be an incursion against Taiwan, and while we talk about that, I do not know that we have communicated to the Chinese or collaborated with our friends around the world a decision of just what we would do to inform China in advance of what we, the collective nations of the world, would do were they to take aggressive action against Taiwan.

The final element of our strategy might be our commitment to the region and communicating our commitment to the region, and the decision made by the prior administration and not yet reversed

by this one to back out of the TPP does not communicate commitment to the region.

There are some things we do that, obviously, are able to so commit, but that decision was not. There was a discussion made that we do not like multilateral trade agreements. We like bilateral agreements, but we did not enter into bilateral agreements. So we are just sort of—we disappeared. There would be opportunities, for instance, with the ASEAN nations to enter into a digital trade agreement and to begin the process again, but I am concerned that—if I were China looking at this, I would say this is getting easier, not harder.

Am I misreading that? I do not mean to be blaming just this administration. I am looking back over the last several years of American policy, but it strikes me that on almost every dimension of an effective strategy we are not winning. We are losing.

Ambassador, please.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Senator, thank you very much for your comments and your question.

Senator, none of us underestimate the scope of the challenge, but I would argue that there are also reasons for optimism. In terms of world opinion and the interest of our partners around the world, I think it is quite significant that for the first time in many instances or the first time in a long time many of our allies and partners have spoken up together with us in joint statements and in other venues to express publicly their concern for the situation in Taiwan and the national interest that they see in peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, and I am thinking about the statements made publicly by Japanese leaders, our South Korean allies, by the G-7, just last week by the Secretary General of the EU External Action Service and the like.

I think there are an increasing number of partners and allies around the world who recognize the importance of peace and stability across the Strait and they are publicly stating that fact.

In terms of our military deterrence strategy, I will let Assistant Secretary Ratner reply to that in more detail, but what you have outlined, Senator, precisely is our strategy, assisting Taiwan to develop an asymmetric defense and that is what we are focused on every day.

Certainly, the economic consequences of any conflict across the Strait would be severe and I think that we are making that clear, and it is up to us every day to, I think, demonstrate that, and as Secretary Blinken has said recently, this would be a serious mistake if China were to ever take that step, with very serious consequences.

In terms of our commitment to the region, Senator, I would say it is what animates our actions every day. I know from my most recent travels to the region over the last month and the engagement of our leadership from the President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense on down, we demonstrate on a daily basis our ironclad commitment to the security of our treaty allies, our strong commitment to peace and security and prosperity across the Indo-Pacific region, and that is what animates our actions every day.

Let me stop there, sir.

Senator ROMNEY. Dr. Ratner. Thank you.

Dr. RATNER. Senator Romney, thank you.

I would offer a more optimistic view of, at least, the trajectory of where we are headed on some of the issues that you raised. I share your concerns about the military challenge.

China's military modernization is, certainly, stressing stability across the Strait, but we have seen—particularly, under the leadership of President Tsai, we have seen Taiwan taking incredibly important steps on trying to modernize and reform its own military.

We have seen them increasing their defense budget. We have seen them increasingly focused on asymmetric capabilities and the kinds of capabilities that we think will strengthen deterrence, and we have seen them starting to walk down the road of making some fairly significant reforms, reserve reforms, and in other areas that are going to enable them to defend themselves.

At the same time, at the Department of Defense we are increasingly focused on this challenge. Secretary Austin has articulated China as the top pacing challenge and we are in the process of updating capabilities, expediting experimentation and prototyping, developing new operational concepts and updating our posture in the region to be better prepared to deter aggression in this area.

As it relates to allies and partners, I think we are seeing increasing concern and increasing action including on the security side. We had our very first ever combined, meaning with another country, Taiwan Strait transit within the last couple months. That was with Canada.

We have held major military exercises with partners from inside and outside of the region including multi-carrier operations with aircraft carriers from the U.K., large-deck amphibs from Japan, a number of countries participating. We have seen countries in the region starting to do their own Taiwan Strait transits.

So I think we are seeing countries stepping up their military presence in the region and their willingness to support deterrence in a way that we have not before.

Collectively, I agree with you. It is an enormous challenge, but I think the urgency is there and we have got the right formula and we are moving as fast as we can.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Shaheen is recognized.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you both for being here.

Just to follow up on your comments about our allies and what they are doing because we know that our messages are going to be much more effective when they are delivered with our allies, I noticed that the European Parliament sent its first official parliamentary delegation to Taiwan last month and it adopted a nonbinding resolution to deepen ties with Taiwan.

Can you discuss to what extent the Administration is engaging with our European allies around issues and working to align our policy toward Taiwan?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Senator, thank you very much for the question. Yes, I would say that if I were to summarize in one line our approach to the Indo-Pacific it would be allies, partners, and friends, and our efforts are focused not just on our partners within the region, but without as well as, those outside of the region who

also see the Indo-Pacific as being vital to their future and the EU is very important in that regard.

Just 3 weeks ago, I held 2 days of consultations with my EU counterpart on these very issues, both focused on our engagement across the Indo-Pacific and, specifically, vis-à-vis China, and that included a discussion of Taiwan.

Just last week, as I mentioned, the EU Secretary General of the EU External Action Service was in Washington for consultations with Deputy Secretary Sherman, and I think, as you may have seen from the public readout, there was a very robust discussion of all of these issues.

The word that I would use to describe our consultations is convergence. If you look at what the EU has done, what our friends in Japan have done, what ASEAN itself has done, we have all talked about the principles that ought to define behavior in the Indo-Pacific and the principles that are most important for supporting peace and stability, and we all share those principles.

Our focus now, whether it is with the EU or many other allies and partners across the region, is what is the concrete action that we can take together. That was, certainly, the nature of our discussion with the EU and it is with the rest of our partners as well.

Senator SHAHEEN. I assume these discussions would be even more effective if we had ambassadors to the EU and to China to engage in these conversations. Can you speak to the impact that it is having not having our diplomats in those critical positions?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Yes, ma'am. I am honored, of course, to be in this chair and I am grateful to the members of this committee and in the larger Senate for their support regarding my confirmation, but we are truly hamstrung in the region when we do not have our fully-confirmed capable ambassadors on the ground. No doubt in every capital we have very capable representatives, whether they are ambassadors or our talented charges d'affaires.

There is simply no substitute for a fully-confirmed U.S. Ambassador in terms of their capabilities, the legitimacy they have within that country, and their ability to fully operate and to have influence.

So yes, ma'am, respectfully, as I mentioned in my opening statement, we would be grateful for the Senate taking quick action to confirm as many of our ambassadors as possible. I do believe it represents a real vulnerability for us in the field, including in East Asia and Pacific region, for which I am responsible.

Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Risch, I think it is particularly concerning that these positions are being held up by members of this committee, who ought to understand better than most people in the Senate just why it is so important to have our diplomats in position when we are trying to engage in our foreign policy.

I would add, by the way, that it also is hamstringing Americans' interests in China, for example, where we have a number of Americans who are being held hostage by the government of China and we have no one in the position of Ambassador to advocate on behalf of those people.

Again, I think we should note that this is an area that is affecting our national security because our colleagues on the other side of the aisle—and it is not all of them—I know Senator Risch has been very active in trying to move these nominations—but we have got a couple of people who are holding things up in a way that is having a real impact on our ability to conduct American foreign policy.

So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Thank you, Senator Shaheen. I agree with you. This is becoming, increasingly, a critical issue. It would be great if we had an ambassador in China right now, both on Taiwan and as we try to get China to join us against the challenges of Iran and others.

Senator Hagerty.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank both the chairman and the ranking member for your holding this meeting. We wrote and asked for this, and I so appreciate your accommodation of this and I appreciate our witnesses here today to provide insight on a very challenging area.

I would like to start with you, Assistant Secretary Ratner, if I might. I want to focus on the importance of Taiwan to the broader security of the Indo-Pacific region.

Earlier this year, Japanese Defense Minister Kishi stated that the peace and stability of Taiwan are directly connected to Japan. Building on that statement, just last month, former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said, and I quote, “A Taiwan emergency is a Japanese emergency and, therefore, an emergency for the U.S.-Japan alliance.”

As former U.S. Ambassador to Japan, I understand the strategic importance of Taiwan to the U.S.-Japan alliance, but I also believe an emergency in the U.S.-Japan alliance will also represent an emergency for our alliances both in Korea and in Australia. Protecting Taiwan is key to protecting the entire U.S. Alliance Network within the Indo-Pacific.

First, I would just like to start with yes or no questions, Secretary Ratner. Is the security of Taiwan important to the security and stability of the Indo-Pacific region?

Dr. RATNER. Senator, I would say it is essential.

Senator HAGERTY. I agree. Then I just would like to then ask you how Taiwan impacts our defense posture in the Indo-Pacific and our ability to work with, to protect and defend Japan, Korea, and Australia.

Dr. RATNER. Senator, I would describe our partnership with Taiwan as an anchor to our network of allies and partners in the region.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you.

I will come to my good friend, Ambassador Kritenbrink.

China is engaged in a deeply destabilizing nuclear arms race right now. It is currently building underground silos for intercontinental ballistic missiles. It is improving its nuclear triad of land-based, of sea-based, of air-based weapons, and it is testing nuclear-capable hypersonic weapons.

General Mark Milley, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, described China's recent hypersonic missile test as a Sputnik moment.

General John Hyten, who, until recently, served as Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, described these nuclear-capable hypersonics as likely a first-use weapon or a first-strike weapon.

Our allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific are increasingly alarmed about China's laser focus and emphasis on their strategic capabilities. The United States needs to maintain a credible extended deterrence commitment to our allies in the Indo-Pacific.

Ambassador Kritenbrink, do you agree with the premise that the United States should do all it can to maintain credible deterrence?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Senator Hagerty, thank you very much for the question. Absolutely. I believe it is a vital American national interest to demonstrate the credibility and the sanctity of our security treaty commitments to our allies in the region using all of our capabilities.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you.

In November, Japan's chief cabinet secretary publicly stated that adopting a no-first-use policy in terms of using nuclear weapons would, and I quote, "make it difficult to ensure Japan's national security."

I would come to both of you now and ask if you agree that the United States should seriously take into consideration the views of Japan as well as our other allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific with respect to U.S. declaratory policy.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Senator, what I would say I would simply reiterate my comment from a moment ago that it is a vital American national interest to demonstrate the credibility of our security treaty commitments involving all of our capabilities, including our extended deterrence capabilities.

Senator HAGERTY. Secretary Ratner.

Dr. RATNER. Senator, as you know, the Department is currently conducting its Nuclear Posture Review. In the context of that process, we have been engaging deeply and repeatedly with allies around the world, including our allies in the Indo-Pacific, and we have heard their concerns and, certainly, Secretary Austin has spoken repeatedly about the importance of our extended deterrence commitments.

Senator HAGERTY. Secretary Ratner, thank you for the comment and I would just encourage you, as I hear from our allies in the region as well, they have very strong views on this. Their proximity makes those views very relevant, and thank you for taking those views into account.

Thank you both. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Booker, who is with us virtually.

Senator BOOKER. First, I just want to echo the concerns that were expressed by both the chairman and, obviously, by Senator Shaheen about our lack of full diplomatic corps in a time that we are seeing on multiple continents that we are—have flashpoints and crisis points, and the urgency of diplomacy.

I want to add to that that there are still a number of positions at the State Department that are unfilled that are necessary for

national security, and, perhaps, to the Secretary of State, that is true, right? These are important positions when it comes to U.S. national security and should not be held up with the urgencies that we have. Would you agree?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Senator, yes, sir. I do believe it is a major hindrance to the conduct of our foreign policy not to have our full team on the field and, again, I would express my thanks to the Senate for their support in my nomination and others.

I would respectfully ask that we please move as quickly as possible on the many remaining nominations both for ambassadors in the field and our many positions unfilled here domestically.

Senator BOOKER. I am grateful. I am grateful for that.

I know this has been covered a little bit, but I would like to just ask you again. You know, China had made a lot of statements about pursuing a peaceful rise and it just does not—and they were not really seeking confrontation.

Clearly, we have seen that change, and the aggressive actions taken in Taiwanese airspace, international waterways, and more is indicative of a change in posture.

I am wondering, this rhetoric, how much is it really—and these actions, is it, in your opinion, not only belying their claims, but, really, reflecting a real intention? Or is this, in some ways, just to satisfy internal Chinese politics and sort of the wolf warrior constituency and others? Do you really think that they are looking to, potentially, engage in more overt conflict of a military nature?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Senator, thank you very much for—

Senator BOOKER. That is for either of them. Yes.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Senator, thank you very much for the question.

Our focus here today is, of course, on Taiwan and the situation across the Strait, but we are deeply concerned about a range of destabilizing and aggressive and coercive actions that we have seen the People's Republic of China carry out across the region and, in some instances, around the world, whether it is in the maritime domain, whether it is this situation on the Paracels, or the border with India, whether it is economic coercion that it has carried out regarding a range of countries around the world, or its increasingly aggressive and coercive activities in the South and East China Seas. We are laser-focused on the threat posed by those aggressive and coercive actions and that is what animates much of our policy.

I would just say, Senator, I think you noted at the top of your comments, whatever PRC rhetoric may say, I think we have to focus on China's actions and base our policies there, and that is why we are focused, Senator, so intently on supporting and maintaining the rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region that we believe is under threat from the PRC and that order, we believe, is so vital to our future, security, and prosperity and that of our allies.

Therefore, our intention is to work closely with our many like-minded partners around the region to support that order, which is, as I said, under threat.

Senator BOOKER. I am sorry, was there another comment?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. No, sir.

Senator BOOKER. I am concerned about, in my visits to Africa, the incredible influence that the Chinese have there and their erosion of diplomatic relations between African nations and Taiwan.

They have been incredibly successful. I think it is Eswatini and Somaliland that are the last two that have maintained diplomatic relations with Taiwan, and I think this is indicative of a larger picture of Chinese influence in—on the continent and, in many ways, undermining our position and our interests there as well.

I am wondering what can the U.S. Government do to help reverse the erosion and encourage countries to support, really, our democratic principles, ideals, as well as be supportive of a larger effort to contain China's influence?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Senator, thank you.

Whether it is in the context of trying to shore up international support for Taiwan or Taiwan's international space, or ensuring that countries and regions around the world, including Africa, are not subject to Chinese coercion, I think this, again, has to be and is a central focus of our policy and our efforts, and our intent is, one, to remind countries of some of the risks, for example, of taking on certain Chinese investments or incurring certain debts vis-à-vis the PRC and what those implications for a country's sovereignty may be down the line.

Secondly, we need to demonstrate the benefits of partnering with the United States and other like-minded partners, and thirdly, we need to continue to highlight the importance of a rules-based order and the values that we all hold dear, and that is what we are doing and that is what we intend to continue to do.

Certainly, the scope of the challenge is growing, Senator. I agree.

Senator BOOKER. I appreciate that. Mr. Chairman, I just want to reaffirm I have been pleased to hear a bipartisan commitment to our relationships with Taiwan. I feel very strongly with that.

I think what is happening there and the fear and insecurity they are creating in the country is unacceptable to such a strong partner of the United States, and I know, on behalf of a lot of Taiwanese Americans, that a strong American posture in support of that democracy is something that we all should be doing everything we can to support.

So thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Van Hollen.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank both of you for your testimony. Thank you for your service.

I have been trying to keep track of the testimony in the hearing as it has gone on, but I apologize if I ask questions that have already been covered.

We know from what has been said and following developments in the area that we see real Chinese aggressive moves. We saw the military moves up against toward Taiwanese airspace. We have seen other actions taken.

Obviously, the United States also has sort of held its position in the region. What are we doing now? What is in place now to avoid miscalculations that could lead to unintended escalation and conflict?

If you could each talk from the vantage views of your perspectives of your departments.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Senator, thank you for your comment and for your questions as well.

I would say, from our position, in order to prevent the miscalculation and the risk of that that you have outlined, we are doing a number of things.

First of all, we are taking a range of actions to demonstrate the strength of our—the strength of our commitment to the region and the strength of our deterrent capabilities and those of our allies and partners and friends. We are trying to strengthen countries' abilities to resist Chinese coercion in all its forms.

I think those actions are the most important steps that we can take, and the main focus for this Administration and me in my job is how can we best support our allies, partners, and friends across the region to support that rules-based order that is under pressure from the People's Republic of China.

Secondly, Senator, there is an element involved in our diplomacy directly with the People's Republic of China as well. As you have seen, President Biden recently engaged in a virtual meeting with President Xi Jinping.

One of the main objectives of that meeting was to make sure as our competition becomes increasingly intense, we also engage in intense diplomacy at the most senior levels to reduce the risk of miscalculation that could veer into an unintended conflict.

I do think that that is an important element of what we do. We do need to continue to signal at senior levels to the PRC leadership the depth of our concerns and a desire to avoid miscalculation.

Again, Senator, I would say the most important part of what we are doing, I would argue, across the region is to work with our allies and partners to shore up the regional order.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I agree with the overall strategy that the President has put forward, but I do want to push a little bit more maybe on the defense side as well as to what operationally is in place to make sure lines of communication are open in order to avoid miscalculation?

Dr. RATNER. Between the United States and the PRC specifically, Senator?

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Yes.

Dr. RATNER. Yes. So I would echo Ambassador Kritenbrink's comments that, clearly, one of the key priorities for the Administration, and the President has said this clearly, is to try to develop guardrails on the relationship, and there is going to be follow-up to the President's meeting to try to do that in practice.

From the perspective of the Defense Department, we have been working to renew military-to-military relations with the PLA over the course of the last year with a very laser-focus on questions of crisis communications and crisis management.

We have had interactions within the Office of the Secretary of Defense and interactions with INDOPACOM and some of their PLA counterparts. We are in the process of renewing those efforts.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I appreciate that, obviously, and I know the chairman and others have mentioned that if we had an ambassador in place, those kind of communications could be even more

effective and more clear. I think it is hurting our national security every day that the—Ambassador Nick Burns' nomination is being held up.

My last question is this. Look, China has long taken the position that eventually they want what they claim will be the peaceful reunification of China. Obviously, their actions have been anything, but peaceful.

Do you note a real change in the position taken and the tone taken by President Xi in his comments on Taiwan compared to many of his predecessors?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Senator, thank you.

I do not know that the tone or the rhetoric has been dramatically different from Beijing. There is still occasionally a reiteration of a stated desire to resolve the situation, in their view, peacefully, and yet, China has never ruled out the use of force and that continues to this day.

I think the dramatic change that we have seen in recent months and years has been in Chinese actions and behavior, including its coercive and bullying behavior vis-à-vis Taiwan and that is our primary concern, and that is what is driving primarily our response rather than a focus on rhetoric, Senator.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Young is with us virtually.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome before the committee, gentleman.

Recent press reports have highlighted concerning developments with Taiwan's domestic defense strategy and capability. Reserve forces are in need of reform and there are questions around Taiwan's recent shift in favor of counterstrike weapons rather than adopting a porcupine strategy of strategic denial capabilities.

Beyond weapons sales, gentlemen, what is the Administration doing to support Taiwan's domestic military readiness?

Dr. RATNER. Thank you, Senator Young. It is a hugely important question and we have to always remember that Taiwan's ability to defend itself is more than just its arms purchases and that as a government we ought to be taking a—widening our aperture as much as we can and its reserve reforms are an important element of that insofar as Taiwan's shift to an all-volunteer force and the subsequent decrease of its active force strength has led to the need to ensure that its reserve forces are prepared to assume increasingly difficult missions.

The good news is that President Tsai and Minister of Defense Chiu have begun walking down this path. As you know, they have approved changes to reservists' training requirements, increasing the number of days required for reservists, and they have also been creating requirements for more realistic combat training.

In addition to that, as was mentioned earlier in the hearing, Taiwan is slated at the beginning of next year to establish an all-out defense mobilization agency—an ADMA—which is geared to combine mobilization and reserve functions in one agency to better align training exercises and force development requirements.

We think they are making real tangible progress on this. Some of it is very much initial, and we are going to do everything we can to support these efforts.

Senator YOUNG. Dr. Ratner—okay, so that was my question. Were there things that you think we should be doing, perhaps, this committee can be helpful with as it pertains to supporting Taiwan and its efforts to reform its reserve forces?

Dr. RATNER. Absolutely, Senator. I would be happy to explain that in some detail in a closed session. What I will say is that we are taking a more proactive approach to supporting Taiwan in some of these reforms, working with them on some of their defense concepts doctrine, supporting them in some of their—

Senator YOUNG. Why do we not just take it to a classified setting, Doctor? I will pick up on that thread with you at a later date. Thank you.

Dr. RATNER. I would be happy to do that, Senator.

Senator YOUNG. So are the—what capabilities are most needed for asymmetric defense? Because my sense is the legacy systems and weapons that Taiwan has relied on in the past are not sufficient, are not adequate, for a robust defense of the island right now.

Dr. RATNER. Senator, that is right. That is precisely the argument that the Administration has been making and the Trump administration was making as well.

Again, we support President Tsai's commitment to achieve greater balance of asymmetric capabilities. To your question specifically, these include coastal defense cruise missiles, short- and medium-range air defenses, defensive naval mines, enabling C4ISR and other capabilities, but those would be at the top of our priorities.

Senator YOUNG. Okay. Lastly, and in what time period do you see the greatest risks for conflict between CCP and, perhaps, Taiwan?

Dr. RATNER. Senator, my answer to that is that the China challenge is a today problem, a tomorrow problem, a 2027 problem, a 2030 problem, a 2040 problem and beyond. I do not think there is a date we ought to pick on the calendar, and we got to make sure that we are sustaining deterrence from today and maintaining it, going forward.

Senator YOUNG. It is a today problem. That is all I need to hear. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Coons.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch, for this hearing and thank you, Ambassador Kritenbrink, Dr. Ratner, for your testimony and your public service.

You mentioned in your testimony, Dr. Ratner, the significance of bipartisanship and it being a key part of our relationship and our defense of Taiwan and that it should be nurtured.

I will just mention at the outset that I think bipartisanship in this hearing and in the actions of members of this committee and in partnership with the Administration has been a long and a critical part of our work together.

I have visited Taiwan twice in recent years, coordinating with the Trump administration and the Biden administration before doing so, and I went on a bipartisan trip just a few months ago to deliver vaccines.

I think it is striking how the status quo and the support of both Republican and Democratic administrations, including through defensive arms sales, has served its successful and free market democracy.

Dr. Ratner, what is the most critical investment that we in Congress could make to help both ensure and strengthen deterrence and U.S. military readiness in the Indo-Pacific, most important investment in Taiwan both in terms of arms sales, but moving forward some of the strategic and military reforms that previous members have discussed, but also, most important investment in terms of the Indo-Pacific region in strengthening our partnership with our allies?

Dr. RATNER. Senator, I think the answer I would give to that is rather—and if the question is around U.S. capability or investment in terms of strengthening Taiwan’s capabilities?

Senator COONS. Both.

Dr. RATNER. I think the list that I just provided to Senator Young would be at the top of our prioritization list in terms of the types of capabilities that are mobile and resilient and cost-effective for Taiwan, including coastal defense, cruise missiles, and defensive naval mines and others—I think we have articulated those—as well as the reserve reforms and civil-military integration efforts that Taiwan is undergoing. We support—

Senator COONS. Doctor, there continues to be some ongoing tension within Taiwan military planning between those who want to invest in expensive, but, perhaps, less critical capabilities and those who agree with the vision that you just laid out. How do we help move forward Taiwan’s defense reforms?

Dr. RATNER. Senator, this is a question we often get. I would say I am encouraged by the direction that President Tsai and Taiwan’s minister of national defense are heading in terms of its capability development, its reserve reforms, other defense reforms.

As in any bureaucracy, there are going to be competing priorities. There are going to be service rivalries, especially in a resource-constrained environment. I think what we need to do is speak with one voice as an administration, as a Congress, as a government, and work with allies and partners in the region as well on this issue.

Senator COONS. How much harm would a year-long CR where we do no more appropriation, no more policy through appropriation as well—how much harm would that do possibly to our Indo-Pacific strategy?

Dr. RATNER. Senator, leaders at the Defense Department have been clear from the Secretary on down about concerns about a CR and the need for stability in our budgeting cycles.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Ambassador, I would like to see us work in close coordination with our European allies and partners to strengthen our trade investment relationships.

Taiwan is one of the world's most significant sources of advanced semiconductor chips. We currently have just come through some real supply chain disruptions and significant shortages.

What do you think we could do to develop the standards for the 21st century for the digital economy in partnership with Taiwan, including them in the world community of open societies that is, in part, convening through the Summit for Democracy this week, and what do you think we could do to better engage our European allies in that work in strengthening both economic ties and, potentially, security ties with Taiwan?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Senator, thank you very much for your question.

On the issue of Taiwan's role in the global economy and the importance of resilient and diverse supply chains, I think that is absolutely critical for Taiwan. It is absolutely critical for the global economy and for our prosperity as well.

We have engaged in a range of fora and via a range of dialogues with our Taiwan partners on those very issues, including assisting Taiwan in making sure that its supply chains are more diverse and secure and that Taiwan carries out the export control and other screening policies designed to protect its most important technologies and trade secrets as well.

Our European partners are absolutely critical in this effort as well, given their, obviously, central role in the economy and these same supply chains, and this has been, in fact, an area of discussion between the EU and the United States, including in the recent engagements with the EU that I mentioned earlier, both at my level and at the deputy secretary level.

Senator, I could not agree more with the importance of the issue, the importance of Taiwan's role in these supply chains and in the global economy and in the importance of the EU's role in achieving our goals.

Senator COONS. Thank you both.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Cruz.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome to the witnesses.

Over the last year, the world has gotten much more dangerous and, unfortunately, that danger is a direct consequence of a series of foreign policy failures by the Biden-Harris administration. We have seen President Biden's weakness over and over again translating into making America less safe.

In Afghanistan, we saw an absolute catastrophe with Biden's surrender to the Taliban, abandoning Americans behind enemy lines, and the chaos that resulted. When that occurred, every enemy of America looked to Washington and took measure of the man in the Oval Office, and whether it was Russia or Iran or North Korea or China, they all determined that the President was too weak to be a serious threat to them and, unfortunately, as a consequence, each of them has gotten substantially more bellicose, substantially more aggressive.

As we sit here today, over a hundred thousand Russian troops are massed on the border of Ukraine preparing to invade Ukraine because Joe Biden surrendered to Vladimir Putin on the Nord

Stream 2 pipeline and paved the way for Putin to take a major step towards his long-term goal of rebuilding the Soviet Union and, once again, posing a massive threat to the safety and security of Americans.

In China, the weakness of the Biden administration, from abandoning Afghanistan, from surrendering to Putin, has been noticed and the Afghanistan disaster, I believe, made it substantially more likely that China will launch an amphibious military assault against Taiwan sometime between now and the end of 2024 because for the same reason that Putin is preparing to launch an invasion of Ukraine our enemies have determined this President is too weak to stand up to them.

That has been complicated even further by the Biden administration's incoherence and undermining of Taiwan, which, unfortunately, serves as an encouragement to the Chinese Communist government to engage in military hostilities directed at Taiwan.

Every few weeks we see another example of bumbling and incompetence from this Administration when it comes to Taiwan. Over the summer, for instance, the White House's official Twitter account first posted and then deleted a tweet about vaccination donations in Taiwan because the tweet included a flag of Taiwan.

Our Taiwanese allies were forced to publicly ask the White House not to cause unnecessary speculation or misunderstanding from all walks of life due to the removal of the related tweet.

The Biden White House publicly retreated from Taiwan to avoid angering the communist overlords in China. More broadly, the Biden administration has imposed a policy forbidding our Taiwanese allies from displaying symbols of their sovereignty, whether flags or medals or uniforms, on U.S. soil. It is the policy that goes back to 2015 when the Obama administration capitulated to the Chinese Communist Party demands to restrict Taiwanese activities.

I fought for the Trump administration to change this policy. It took 4 years to get it done, but, ultimately, they did. They changed the policy to allow our Taiwanese allies to display their flags on military uniforms.

The Biden administration reversed that policy and it did so knowing it was over the objection of Republicans and Democrats in the Senate on this committee.

I introduced legislation in this committee to restore the policy allowing Taiwan to display its symbols of sovereignty. It passed overwhelmingly in this committee with bipartisan support, it passed the Senate overwhelmingly with bipartisan support, and yet the Biden administration is defying the United States Senate and continues to impose this policy undermining our ally, Taiwan.

I have even heard recently from officers at several bases that DoD is asking for stricter enforcement of the ban after a Taiwanese graduate of the Air Force Academy wore the Taiwanese flag at a graduation ceremony.

Meanwhile, we hear from Biden administration officials that they have actually loosened contact guidance for Taiwan.

Dr. Ratner, what is the Biden administration's actual policy regarding the ability of our Taiwanese allies to display their national

symbols of sovereignty and has that policy been memorialized in a written memo that is being distributed within the Administration?

Dr. RATNER. Senator, I am going to defer to my State Department colleague, who has oversight of that particular piece. What I will say is I am not familiar with the case that you raised vis-à-vis DoD and I will look into that. Thank you.

Senator CRUZ. Your office has not circulated any guidance within DoD?

Dr. RATNER. State Department determines contact guidance for the Department—for the U.S. Government as a whole.

Senator CRUZ. Okay. Then same question.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Senator, first, I would say that everything that animates our approach to the Indo-Pacific is designed to demonstrate the credibility of our commitment to the region and to our allies, and no one should doubt the strength of that commitment and the capabilities that America brings to bear.

Under this administration and since I have had the honor of having this job, America has revitalized its engagement with allies and partners across the region in a way that improves our national security and our prosperity that counters the aggressive and coercive actions by the PRC that—

Senator CRUZ. I just asked what the policy was on Taiwan.

The CHAIRMAN. I am sorry. I am sorry.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Yes, Senator, and then on second part—

The CHAIRMAN. The time of the Senator—

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. If I can respond, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Secretary.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Yes. I am sorry, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. I am sorry, but the time of the Senator is well past expired. There have been members who have been waiting here. The Senator used—

Senator CRUZ. He has not answered the question at all.

The CHAIRMAN. The Senator used 5 minutes to make a statement before he ever got to a question. I cannot allow all members to do that or we will be here forever. I am happy for it be included to the record.

Senator CRUZ. You are not going to allow him to answer the question?

The CHAIRMAN. No. You can speak for 5 minutes if you choose to, but then you cannot speak for 5 minutes and then think you can ask a series of questions. It is unfair to—

Senator CRUZ. I asked one question. I asked one question that he has refused to answer.

The CHAIRMAN. No, this is your third. This is your third.

Senator CRUZ. I asked one question.

The CHAIRMAN. It is unfair to the other members who have been waiting here.

Senator CRUZ. I asked one question. The DoD witness said he could not answer. The State Department—

The CHAIRMAN. The Secretary will answer it for the record.

Senator Kaine.

Senator CRUZ. Let the record reflect that the chair is protecting the Biden administration from admitting their policies' undermining of Taiwan.

The CHAIRMAN. Let the record reflect that when the Senator from Texas turns his back to the chair and thinks that he can run out the clock and then begin to ask questions, that dog will not hunt here.

Senator CRUZ. I actually just look at the person to whom I am speaking.

The CHAIRMAN. That dog will not—

Senator CRUZ. I look at the witnesses when I am asking them questions—

The CHAIRMAN. You see the clock—

Senator CRUZ. —and I am looking at you now when you are trying to prevent the witness from answering the question.

The CHAIRMAN. I know you enjoy this because you put it up on your YouTube channel. You cannot run the clock in statement, which you are free to do, and then ask questions.

Senator CRUZ. Look, your exchange has taken longer than it would take for them to answer the question.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Kaine is recognized.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have one item I would like to ask each of you about. I do believe the Biden administration is earnestly trying to rebuild and shore up alliances around the world and that is a positive thing.

I think with respect to this particular region, the elevation of importance of the Quad is an important component. I think U.S. support for vaccine delivery in Taiwan has been very positive as well as vaccine delivery around the world.

We are the most generous donor of vaccines. That is a good thing. I think the announcement of a more potent Indo-Pacific partnership between the U.S., Australia, and the United Kingdom is positive, but now my critique and my question. I have yet to get an answer from the Administration about why that particular partnership—U.S., Australia, U.K.—blindsided France or at least was perceived to have been blindsiding France.

Since France is an ally and France is an Indo-Pacific nation, it would seem like we would want to include France in our efforts in the Indo-Pacific, that that would be a real positive, and instead, the U.S.-Australia-U.K. partnership around submarines was perceived to be blindsiding France and left France out of something that, I think, it would be in our interest and other nations in the region for France to be included.

So I want to ask each of you from the DoD perspective and from the State perspective were you individually involved in crafting this U.S.-U.K.-Australia partnership around submarines and, if so, why was not France included?

If I could start with you, Dr. Ratner, from the Defense side.

Dr. RATNER. Sure, Senator. The answer to your last question is yes, I was involved in the latter stage of the negotiations. They had been underway for several months by the time I was confirmed, but I did participate in the final development of the MOUs and some of the other elements of the AUKUS agreement.

I guess what I would say there is it is a particular agreement around three sets of countries which have—and is very particular to the strategic context and as well as our existent bilateral cooperation with each.

As it relates to the question of France, one of the reasons why the negotiations were so secret is because of the sensitivity of the subject, and I guess I will leave it to the Australians to explain their own engagement with the French on the question of their own submarine deal.

Senator KAINE. You would agree with me, would you not, that France is an Indo-Pacific country?

Dr. RATNER. Absolutely, Senator, and we are actively—

Senator KAINE. France is a great military ally of the United States?

Dr. RATNER. They are, and I have met with—

Senator KAINE. If we want to be, you know, engaged with allies in the Indo-Pacific in a way that will support other allies like Taiwan and, potentially, be a bit of a deterrent to China, the involvement of France in those efforts would be a positive, correct?

Dr. RATNER. It is a positive. It is existent. We engage with them on defense issues in the Indo-Pacific and we look forward to doing even more of that into the future. They are a resident power in the Indo-Pacific. They have got their own relationship—

Senator KAINE. I gather from your answer that you were involved in negotiations between three nations, France was not part of those negotiations, and the U.S. expectation was that Australia would somehow give notice to France about what was going on at the appropriate time?

Dr. RATNER. Senator, my own conception of the AUKUS agreement is that it is complementary to what is a very diverse set of security relationships and arrangements in the Indo-Pacific and globally.

So we have AUKUS. We have the Quad, as you mentioned. We have a number of trilateral arrangements with the Japanese and the Koreans, with the Australians and the Japanese. We, of course, have our approach to ASEAN and these are meant to be complementary. None is meant to be exclusive of the other.

Senator KAINE. Let me ask you, Mr. Ambassador. Were you involved from the State Department side in discussions about the AUKUS framework or agreement and why was France blindsided and should we not be including France in the Indo-Pacific Alliance efforts?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Thank you, Senator.

All of that happened, Senator, before I was confirmed and sworn in, but I would say that, as you outlined, I think the progress made by the Quad and the announcement of the AUKUS agreement, I think these are very significant strategic moves that contribute to peace and stability across the region.

I think that the President has stated publicly that the rollout in particular could have been handled better and I think you have seen the Administration take a number of steps even since I have been in this position to engage intensively with our French allies and our EU partners to recognize their critical role in the region.

We recognize it, we value it, and we are in touch on a regular basis how to advance our shared interests.

Senator KAINE. Thank you. I have exceeded my time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Markey.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Ratner, then Vice President Joe Biden said in January of 2017, “Given our nonnuclear capabilities and the nature of today’s threats, it is hard to envision a plausible scenario in which the first use of nuclear weapons by the United States would be necessary or make sense.”

Do you agree with the President in the context of the East Asia and Pacific region that you oversee that his statement as Vice President is accurate?

Dr. RATNER. Senator, what I would say is the Nuclear Posture Review and these types of questions are currently under review at the Department and likely to be completed early next year in terms of the role of nuclear weapons and U.S. nuclear doctrine.

Senator MARKEY. I hope that your Department’s Nuclear Posture Review will be drawing inspiration from the President’s own views, namely, that we do not need to be the first country to escalate a nonnuclear conflict into a nuclear conflict, and if a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, as President Biden reiterated in Geneva this summer, surely, we should have no issue stating that the sole purpose of nuclear weapons is to deter nuclear attacks against the United States and its allies, but that we would never be the first country to use nuclear weapons in a nonnuclear war setting.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs recently called China’s test of an orbital hypersonic missile as a Sputnik moment, suggesting that there is a technological gap with respect to China that the United States needs to fill.

Dr. Ratner, is it true the United States exceeds the next 11 countries combined in defense spending, one of which is China?

Dr. RATNER. I do not have the data at my fingertips, sir, but, certainly, Senator, the United States has the largest defense budget in the world.

Senator MARKEY. I will confirm for you that, yes, our budget is larger than the next 11 combined, including China, just so that we do not get back to 1960s missile gap. We are looking over our shoulders at number two, three, and four.

Dr. Ratner, Department of Defense witnesses have testified that China’s development of nuclear-capable hypersonic missiles is meant to counter U.S. missile defenses, but does our regional or homeland-based missile defense architecture pose a threat to China’s strategic deterrent, be it from a traditional Chinese ICBM or a hypersonic glide vehicle?

Dr. RATNER. Sorry, Senator. Could you repeat the question? Is our missile—

Senator MARKEY. Does our regional or homeland-based missile defense architecture pose a threat to China’s strategic deterrent, be it from a traditional Chinese ICBM or a hypersonic glide vehicle?

Dr. RATNER. Senator, the purpose of our missile defense is to enhance stability and deter aggression. It does not pose a threat to China, no.

Senator MARKEY. It does not pose a threat? Thank you. That is the answer. It does not pose a threat.

Is it not true that U.S. ICBMs that we have right now are actually faster than the hypersonic glide vehicles that the United States, Russia, and China are all rushing to develop?

Dr. RATNER. Senator, I would be happy to discuss that in a classified setting.

Senator MARKEY. I appreciate that. The Union of Concerned Scientists says that our ICBMs are 20 times the speed of sound—I just think it is important to get that out there—and I do not think there is any evidence thus far that the Chinese hypersonic weapons are going to be able to exceed what we can do in our country.

I always hate it when they make out the Chinese or the Russians to be 10 feet tall and we are midgets. It is just the opposite, and I just think we have to keep that out there.

Is it true that even if China were to have 1,000 deliverable warheads by 2030 it would still be one-fourth of what is already in our active nuclear weapons inventory of 3,750? Is that correct?

Dr. RATNER. That is correct, though, of course, we deploy lower numbers than that, Senator.

Senator MARKEY. We have the capacity right now in our active nuclear weapons inventory to counter the 300 that they have right now or the 1,000 that they might have by the year 2030? Is that correct?

Dr. RATNER. That is correct, Senator, though there are still reasons to be concerned about China's nuclear buildup despite the United States having a larger overall size.

Senator MARKEY. I appreciate that perspective. I just want to say, though, that the Pentagon should not be hyping the threat from hypersonics or goading us into an arms race.

We should absolutely engage with China on talks to reduce nuclear risks. We should be prepared to acknowledge mutual vulnerability with China as we did with the former Soviet Union.

We just should not be trying, which I really feel the arms manufacturers are trying to do and many in the Pentagon, to just create artificial fear in the United States. It is not a Sputnik moment. One hundred percent it is not a Sputnik moment and the Pentagon should not be saying it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Markey.

Senator Risch.

Senator RISCH. Very briefly, Mr. Chairman.

Notwithstanding the row here with Senator Cruz, there is a lot of us that do have an interest in that question that he asked and you indicated they would answer it for the record, and I guess I would be interested in hearing that answer.

The CHAIRMAN. If you want to use your time now, Senator Risch, I am happy to have the secretary answer you. I am not afraid of the answer nor am I hiding, Senator.

Senator RISCH. Yes. This—yes. No, I get that. Mr. Secretary, I just appreciate you never got to the answer to the question. You

talked about all the good stuff we were doing and we appreciate that. We really do, but we have all heard anecdotal stories about suppression of the Taiwanese flag and what have you. Is there an official policy on this? Do we have anything in writing on this?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Mr. Ranking Member, thank you very much for the question and I am happy to answer it to the best of my ability.

Senator RISCH. Please.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. I would state, first, we have tremendous respect for our Taiwan partners. We treat them with great respect and dignity in every interaction.

However, over the last four decades, it has been United States policy to not allow Taiwan partners to display symbols of sovereignty on U.S. facilities. That includes flags. That includes military uniforms. That has been long-standing American policy for the last 40 years and it remains as such.

Senator RISCH. Is there a written policy in that regard?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Senator, there is a written policy regarding our contact guidelines and the guidance that we give and the encouragement that we give to U.S. Government officials to meet with Taiwan partners in a way that is fully in accordance with our unofficial, but vitally important relationship with Taiwan. I do not know if the contact guidelines covers the uniform or flag issue, but I would be happy to research that immediately—

Senator RISCH. If you could check that, that is fine.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. —and get back to you, but what I can state with confidence is that the policy on symbols of sovereignty has been long-standing over these many decades.

Senator RISCH. I appreciate that, and like I said, we hear anecdotal stories that are unique to a particular situation. It can be—awkward would be a good word. Whatever you can provide in that regard, I think, a lot of us would be interested in it.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Yes, sir.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Dr. RATNER. Mr. Chairman, if I could just clarify for the record. I said earlier in response to Senator Cruz that the Defense Department does not issue its own guidance. The Defense Department does issue guidance. That guidance requires adherence to the State Department guidance. Just to clarify the record there.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Let me ask some final set of questions. I want to just to follow this up fully. At the end of the Trump administration, Secretary Pompeo rescinded previous Department guidance on executive branch contacts with Taiwan.

This past April, the State Department issued new guidance that allows working-level meetings with Taiwan counterparts in federal buildings. Is that the case, Mr. Secretary?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Yes, Mr. Chairman, that is the case.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. Which is different than the question of symbols, but meetings are taking place in federal—with Taiwanese counterparts in federal buildings.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. It was reported earlier this year that the U.S. was “seriously considering changing the name of the Taiwan office from the Taiwan Economic and Cultural Office to the Taiwan Rep-

representative Office to elevate our treatment of Taiwan consistent, however, with the One China policy and the Taiwan Relations Act.” Has Taipei made an official request for the United States to consider changing the name of TECRO?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Mr. Chairman, my understanding is that we are continuing to assess a request to that effect.

The CHAIRMAN. So they have made a request?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. That is my understanding, but I will confirm that and get back to you.

The CHAIRMAN. Would you confirm that for the record? Also if, in fact, they have made a request, I would like to know the status of the Administration’s consideration of TECRO’s name change.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. They have also asked or engaged in conversations that I have had on two things that they are very interested in pursuing. One is forward deployment of our Customs personnel, as we do in other countries, so that those who are transiting from Taiwan to the United States could go through that forward deployment. Are you cognizant of that?

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Mr. Chairman, I am not tracking that issue, but I would be happy to check into it and get back to you.

The CHAIRMAN. If you would. I would like to know that.

Dr. Ratner, I understand that one of their other issues is surplus defense equipment. Are you aware of that?

Dr. RATNER. Yes, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Are we engaged with them in that?

Dr. RATNER. I would be happy to discuss that in a classified setting, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. I would like to—I am going to follow up on that.

Then, finally, let me ask you—you touched upon this a little bit, but I want to get a sense of what is the view of the Biden administration in prioritizing, providing Taiwan with asymmetric weapons for the island’s force modernization and how do you, meaning the Department, define asymmetric? Thirdly, is that definition shared with Taipei, including Taiwan’s military leadership?

Dr. RATNER. Senator, we view Taiwan’s development of asymmetric capabilities as an absolute priority not only for Taiwan, but a priority for the United States.

We have defined those capabilities as—in my both written and oral statement as capabilities that are credible, resilient, mobile, distributed, and cost effective.

By and large, there is consensus between the United States and Taiwan on the definition of asymmetric defense capabilities and strategies, and the Department of Defense and the U.S. Government as a whole is taking a proactive approach to try to support Taiwan’s development of these. Again, I would be happy to get into details in a closed session.

The CHAIRMAN. I would like to know that, including are we prioritizing providing Taiwan with those asymmetric weapons as defined by your testimony.

Dr. RATNER. Absolutely, Senator. Without question.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. Then what operational concept is most appropriate to follow for an overall defense concept when we are talking about Taiwan?

Dr. RATNER. Senator, as I mentioned earlier, in addition to just the provision of arms there is a wide range of reforms and capabilities that are going to be important to Taiwan's defense and we are engaged across the board, including on issues of concept development and analysis, doctrine, and otherwise.

Again, not—happy to get involved in specific questions related to concept development, but we would be looking at operational concepts that are taking advantage not only just of Taiwan's geography, but also its technology, its economic strength, and some of its capabilities' strengths, and also helping it develop the role of its reserves, as we discussed earlier, greater civil-military integration and what we describe as defense in-depth as well—concepts that build upon all of those efforts, not just the provision of arms.

The CHAIRMAN. Finally, is the Administration presently delaying any DSP-5 license for arms sales to Taiwan?

Dr. RATNER. I believe that would be a question for Ambassador Kritenbrink.

The CHAIRMAN. I am sorry.

Ambassador.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Mr. Chairman, I would be happy—I do not know, but I would be happy to check into that and get back to you.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Well, let me help your situational awareness.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. I am aware of at least one DSP case that has been sitting at State after clearing DoD for 5-plus months. It, basically, covers upgrades for Taiwan's M-60 tanks, which is not a cutting-edge ask, but as we seek to normalize arms sales and avoid returning to a packaged approach, it makes no sense that we would be sitting on it at this point, after DoD's clearance and 5 months to make a consideration.

So I would like to hear back from the Department on that.

Ambassador KRITENBRINK. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Ratner, I am going to be asking my staff to set up a classified briefing with you and whoever else you want to bring from the Department to answer some of the questions we have not been able to pursue in a public hearing, which I understand, but I want to hear the answers to.

Dr. RATNER. Senator, I am keen to do that. I think we have got a great story to tell. I would look forward to that.

The CHAIRMAN. We are always listening, ready to listen to great stories, especially when it comes to Taiwan. So we are happy to hear it.

No other members seeking recognition, the record for this hearing will remain open until the close of business on Thursday, December 9. Please ensure that questions for the record are submitted no later than Thursday. We, certainly, ask you to answer them expeditiously.

With the thanks of the committee for your service and your testimony here today, this hearing is adjourned.
[Whereupon, at 4:30 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF DANIEL KRITENBRINK TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

SUPPLY CHAINS

Taiwan is the world's leading producer of semiconductors, including cutting-edge computer chips essential for mobile devices, artificial intelligence, and many other strategic technologies. Having so much of the world's supply of this critical resource concentrated in one place raises obvious concerns—especially when Taiwan sits a short distance from mainland China.

Question. What steps is the Biden administration taking to collaborate with Taiwan to address current market shortages and to bolster supply chain security in the future?

Answer. The semiconductor shortages caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have highlighted the critical functions these chips play in our society and put a spotlight on Taiwan as a leader in global semiconductor supply chains.

Supply chains were a focus of the U.S.-Taiwan Economic Prosperity Partnership Dialogue (EPPD) held on November 22. We discussed the importance of coordinating between the United States and Taiwan (through AIT and TECRO), as well as with industry, to build a more resilient semiconductor supply chain.

TSMC's planned \$12 billion investment in Arizona is just one example of the great potential and opportunity that comes with increased high-tech cooperation between our two economies.

Question. How might the semiconductor issue affect Beijing's thinking around unification?

Answer. We are closely tracking Beijing efforts to undermine Taiwan's semiconductor industry, including through talent poaching and intellectual property theft. Taiwan's semiconductor industry is highly valued and is on the cutting edge globally. The Biden-Harris administration continues to emphasize our economic relationship with Taiwan, focusing on making critical supply chains, such as those for semiconductors, secure and resilient. This was a primary topic during the November 22 U.S.-Taiwan Economic Prosperity Partnership Dialogue.

Question. We've seen consistent Chinese efforts to compete with or subvert Taiwan's semiconductor industry—for example, by recruiting Taiwanese engineers and executives to state-backed chipmakers in China. Are these efforts succeeding? How should the United States respond?

Answer. We are closely tracking Beijing efforts to undermine Taiwan's semiconductor industry, including through talent poaching and intellectual property theft. We are actively working to mitigate the PRC threat to Taiwan's semiconductor industry through our work under the U.S.-Taiwan Economic Prosperity Partnership Dialogue and by working to strengthen Taiwan's existing export controls to prevent advanced semiconductor technology from going to the PRC for military purposes.

TAIWAN/U.S. PORK REFERENDUM

As you know, the Taiwanese people will be going to the polls to vote on a referendum on December 18. Among the questions on the ballot will be whether or not Taiwan will lift the restrictions on the importation of U.S. pork imports.

Question. Secretary Krittenbrink, as we contemplate deepening economic and trade ties, what are the broader foreign policy implications of a negative vote on U.S. pork imports on the referendum?

Answer. Taiwan is our ninth largest trading partner in goods in 2020 with two-way trade totaling \$90.6 billion. U.S. exports of agricultural products to Taiwan totaled \$3.3 billion in 2020, making Taiwan our eighth largest agricultural export market.

We note that the December 18 referendum on imports of pork containing ractopamine did not pass. Regardless, we will continue to engage on agricultural trade issues through mechanisms such as USTR's agricultural working group under

the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement talks through AIT and TECRO, which was restarted during the Biden-Harris administration.

Question. What are the stakes for the referendum on our bilateral relationship?

Answer. Our partnership with Taiwan is diverse, robust, and multifaceted, and goes beyond this one issue. We note that the December 18 referendum on imports of pork containing ractopamine did not pass. We have consistently messaged that U.S. pork is safe to consume, and we will continue to engage on agricultural trade issues through mechanisms such as the USTR's agricultural working group under the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement talks through AIT and TECRO, which was restarted during the Biden-Harris administration.

CYBER OPERATIONS

Taiwan is on the frontlines of Chinese cyberattacks and digital disinformation campaigns. Taiwanese authorities have linked Chinese hackers to cyberattacks on government agencies, universities, and major companies, including Taiwan's strategically critical semiconductor industry.

Question. What can the United States do to help strengthen Taiwan against this digital coercion? And what can the United States learn from Taiwan's strategy in order to strengthen our own defenses against Chinese cyber aggression?

Answer. We have discussed with Taiwan our shared experience with PRC malicious cyber activity and are working together to strengthen both sides' cyber resilience and capacity. The recent Economic Prosperity Partnership Dialogue (EPPD) with Taiwan, held under the auspices of AIT and TECRO and led by Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, Jose Fernandez, focused on exchanging views and ideas for how we can work together to build more resilient supply chains, including for semiconductors, combat economic coercion, and strengthen the digital economy and 5G network security.

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Global health, international aviation security, and transnational crime are all matters of global importance requiring cooperation from stakeholders from all around the world. Indeed, Congress has passed legislation requiring the State Department to support Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).

Question. What is the Biden administration's strategy for supporting Taiwan's participation in international institutions and within the international community?

Answer. We support Taiwan's membership in international organizations where statehood is not a requirement, and meaningful participation when it is. We continue to show the world that engagement with Taiwan brings substantive benefits, and we encourage more countries to deepen their engagement with Taiwan, which is a leading democracy, a vibrant economic partner, and a technology powerhouse. Through the Global Cooperation and Training Framework, we are able to show concretely Taiwan's ability and willingness to address global challenges.

Question. What steps will the United States take to bolster Secretary Blinken's October statement calling on all UN members to support Taiwan's robust and meaningful participation in the UN system?

Answer. Increasing Taiwan's meaningful participation in the UN system and in other international and regional organizations is an important priority, as the Secretary made clear in his October 26 statement on this subject.

The East Asian and Pacific Affairs and International Organizations Bureaus also lead semiannual talks with Taiwan on international organizations, which was held most recently on October 22 under the auspices of the American Institute in Taiwan and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Relations Office.

These discussions focus on supporting Taiwan's ability to participate meaningfully at the UN and contribute its valuable expertise to address global challenges, including global public health, the environment and climate change, development assistance, technical standards, and economic cooperation.

We also continue to engage likeminded partners on how to protect and expand Taiwan's meaningful participation in the UN and other international organizations.

PRESIDENT TSAI AND ELECTIONS

I don't mean to suggest that President Tsai, whom I have great regard for, should be considered a lame-duck just yet ...

Question. However, what is the United States doing to prepare for post-Tsai relations with Taiwan?

Answer. Our rock-solid commitment to and partnership with Taiwan will continue, as it has for 40 years, irrespective of the political party or leadership.

TAIWAN DEMOCRACY

In November, the PRC placed top Taiwan officials on a blacklist and barred institutions affiliated with these individuals from cooperating with PRC entities, as well as punishing firms that make financial donations to Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party.

Question. What is your assessment of the implications of this decision? How can the United States continue to support Taiwan's democracy and resist this type of economic coercion from Beijing?

Answer. As we have seen in the recent case of PRC coercion against Lithuania, the United States has a range of actions that we can take. We can coordinate with the U.S. interagency to help those facing PRC coercion access USG programs and financial resources, including working with our commercial service to help diversify supply chains and identify U.S. substitutes for inputs the PRC may cut off. During the November 22 U.S.-Taiwan Economic Prosperity Partnership Dialogue, conducted through AIT and TECRO, we also discussed with Taiwan ways to make our economies more resilient to economic coercion as well as how to ensure our supply chains are secure and resilient.

 RESPONSES OF DANIEL KRITENBRINK TO QUESTIONS
 SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question. Strategic ambiguity is a longstanding informal tactic, but it is not enshrined in any formal U.S. policy document, and is arguably at odds with the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), the legal foundation of Taiwan policy since 1979. While the TRA did not fully commit the United States to Taiwan's defense, it also did not strike a tone of neutrality either. Congress embedded a strong presumption of intervention throughout the TRA. It described aggression against Taiwan as a "grave concern" to the United States. Subsequent decades of steady U.S. support for Taiwan have further solidified the widespread perception in capitals around the world that we are Taiwan's protector.

Do you believe that the provisions in the Taiwan Relations Act and the decades-long political, military and economic support the U.S. has provided to Taiwan imply that the United States should come to Taiwan's defense in the event of a PRC invasion?

Answer. Our "one China" policy, as guided by the Taiwan Relations Act, the Three Joint Communiques, and the Six Assurances has fostered peace and prosperity in the region for over 40 years across multiple administrations.

We seek to minimize miscalculations on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, maximize our ability to broaden and deepen the U.S.-Taiwan relationship, and best ensure the future of Taiwan is determined peacefully and in accordance with the wishes and best interests of the people in Taiwan.

We will continue to make available to Taiwan the defense articles and services necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability, consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and our "one China" policy.

Question. Given that U.S. law and our decades of support lead many around the world to already assume we'd come to Taiwan's defense, how does the United States benefit from maintaining a stance of strategic ambiguity?

Answer. Our "one China" policy, as guided by the Taiwan Relations Act, the Three Joint Communiques, and the Six Assurances, has fostered peace and prosperity in the region for over 40 years across multiple administrations from both parties.

Question. Do you acknowledge that U.S. inaction in the event of a PRC military campaign against Taiwan would irreparably damage the credibility of U.S. leadership in the Indo-Pacific and beyond?

Answer. We have publicly reaffirmed that the United States' support for Taiwan is rock-solid. Taiwan knows it has no better friend than the United States.

Consistent with our assessment of the threat posed by the PRC, we will continue to provide Taiwan defense articles and services necessary to deter the PRC's increasingly provocative behavior toward Taiwan, consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and our "one China" policy.

Question. The TRA made clear that "the United States' decision to establish diplomatic relations with the PRC rests upon the expectation that the future of Taiwan will be determined by peaceful means." This is an ongoing expectation, and one that the PRC is increasingly flouting. In past years, when Washington indulged in ambiguity about its strategic intentions, such a posture had tactical value. It supported Beijing in its pledge to pursue "peaceful development" of cross-Strait relations, which they said would lead to their eventual goal of "peaceful unification." Many Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leaders stressed that "unification" could wait for decades if necessary, and that the political disputes between Beijing and Taipei should be laid aside in favor of a focus on developing economic and cultural ties. Since Xi Jinping became the CCP's paramount leader, belligerent rhetoric and aggressive military maneuvers have become the norm.

What purpose is served by maintaining strategic ambiguity when Beijing has changed both its rhetoric toward Taiwan and its conduct in the Taiwan Strait?

Answer. Our "one China" policy, as guided by the Taiwan Relations Act, the Three Joint Communiques, and the Six Assurances, has fostered peace and prosperity in the region for over 40 years across multiple administrations from both parties. We continue to make adjustments to our engagement with Taiwan consistent with our "one China" policy to reflect our deepening unofficial relations with Taiwan as well as the increasing threat from Beijing. We seek to minimize miscalculations on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, maximize our ability to broaden and deepen the U.S.-Taiwan relationship, and best ensure the future of Taiwan is determined peacefully in accordance with the wishes and best interests of the people in Taiwan. We will continue to make available to Taiwan the defense articles and services necessary to enable it to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability, consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and our "one China" policy.

Question. Because the U.S. decision to establish diplomatic relations rests upon the expectation that the future of Taiwan will be determined by peaceful means, do you believe that the U.S. should cut diplomatic relations with the PRC should the PRC attempt to absorb Taiwan under threat of force?

Answer. As guided by our "one China" policy and the policy reflected in the Taiwan Relations Act, we continue to consider any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means to be a threat to the peace and security of the region and of grave concern to the United States.

RESPONSES OF DR. ELY RATNER TO QUESTIONS
SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question. In 2018, a RAND Corporation study drew the following conclusion: "Clarity and consistency of deterrent messaging are essential. Half-hearted commitments risk being misperceived." Another RAND study concluded the same, arguing that "perceptions [of the potential aggressor] are the dominant variable in deterrence success or failure." To avoid misperception and miscalculation, the United States should be as clear as possible about what it seeks to deter—the use of force by Beijing—as well as what it is prepared to do if deterrence fails—defend Taiwan.

- What kind of strategy has the best odds of deterring conflict in the Taiwan Strait?
- Does ambiguity or clarity better serve the goal of deterrence?

Answer. Although the PLA's coercive actions are real and dangerous, and PLA modernization is unlikely to abate, the PRC can still be deterred through a combination of Taiwan's own defenses, its partnership with the United States, and growing support from like-minded democracies. Through smart investments and key reform efforts, Taiwan can send a clear signal that its society and armed forces are committed and prepared to defend Taiwan. Without question, bolstering Taiwan's self-defense provides the best odds of deterring conflict in the Taiwan Strait.

We therefore appreciate that President Tsai has prioritized the development of asymmetric capabilities for Taiwan's self-defense that are credible, resilient, mobile, distributed, and cost-effective. In short, these are affordable investments in lethal capabilities tailored to counter the military threat from the PRC. These capabilities are aimed to strengthen multi-domain deterrence and ensure that an invasion or at-

tack could neither succeed rapidly nor occur without substantial costs. DoD is taking an increasingly proactive approach to supporting these efforts as we continue upholding our commitment under the Taiwan Relations Act to make available to Taiwan relevant defense articles and services.

The debate we're seeing on the merits of strategic ambiguity versus clarity reflects bipartisan concern of PRC's increasingly assertive military actions and coercion against Taiwan. Strategically, I believe the United States has been very clear to both Taiwan and the PRC regarding our policy, and that policy has endured for 40 years. As I indicated in my testimony, I do not believe a change in U.S. declaratory policy would meaningfully strengthen deterrence. I would be happy to follow up on that point in a classified setting.

Question. It is clear that the United States must do much more to provide Taiwan with the military platforms and equipment that it needs to deter conflict in a much more expeditious manner. The Foreign Military Sales (FMS) process as it pertains to Taiwan is in serious need of reform.

- What is the Biden administration doing to expedite the internal processing of Taiwan FMS requests?
- Once FMS requests have been approved, what more can be done to ensure that U.S. defense contractors prioritize Taiwan's FMS orders ahead of countries that do not face as severe of a security threat?
- What is the Biden administration doing to help Taiwan's Air Force respond to the high frequency of incursions by PLA fighters into Taiwan's airspace?

Answer. We are working closely with industry and our other security cooperation partners to find ways of ensuring Taiwan has the capabilities they need in a timely manner, and are exploring all options to expedite cases. As you know, this Administration is not bundling arms transfer requests; we process each request as soon as we receive it through the foreign military sales and export control processes. However, the speed of arms sales also depends on Taiwan moving as quickly as possible to request and confirm transfers and on U.S. industry to deliver these capabilities.

We have encouraged our industry partners to further support Taiwan's self-defense through the co-development and co-production of capabilities that best provide for a credible multi-domain deterrent. Given Taiwan's focus and need for high-quality, indigenous, asymmetric weapons systems, it is critical that our respective defense industrial bases—not just our political and military leadership—are poised to foster such forms of cooperation. Taiwan is a priority for the United States and for all the reasons I outlined previously, we are working to ensure it remains a priority for our industry partners as well.

The PLA's flights into Taiwan's Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) are destabilizing and significantly increase the risk of miscalculation. The flights serve to undermine the Taiwan Air Force's readiness and Taiwan's broader resilience. It is important to note that these flights are occurring alongside diplomatic and economic pressure and targeted socioeconomic coercion. These coercive methods have been observed most clearly since 2016, when President Tsai came into office. Furthermore, these flights need to be considered within the greater context of PRC coercion around the region, including in the East and South China Seas and against India.

The United States Government has previously issued statements highlighting the PRC's coercive actions against Taiwan, including PLA flights into Taiwan's ADIZ. I defer to the Department of State for further specifics on these statements. In the Department of Defense, we continue to work closely with Taiwan on its F-16 retrofit and new buy programs to ensure Taiwan maintains the capacity to respond to these events.

RESPONSES OF DANIEL KRITENBRINK TO QUESTIONS
SUBMITTED BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

Question. You testified to the importance of initiatives of the U.S.-Taiwan-Japan Global Cooperation and Training Framework (GCTF) in expanding Taiwan's international partners. If provided additional resources by Congress, how would the Department expand the scope and geographical reach of GCTF to showcase Taiwan's expertise in public health, humanitarian assistance, and the other sectors where it is a global leader?

Answer. The United States, Japan, and now Australia, have worked together to showcase Taiwan's ability to help the global community through the GCTF, consistent with their unofficial relationships. The GCTF provides training and technical assistance to participants, which builds support for Taiwan around the world by

demonstrating the value of Taiwan’s participation on the global stage. Since its inception in 2015 through the American Institute in Taiwan and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States, the GCTF has provided training to more than 3,000 participants in dozens of workshops ranging from building media literacy to empowering women entrepreneurs. This year, we have started a “franchise program” that enables U.S. embassies around the world to work with Taiwan representative offices and likeminded partners to hold GCTF events on pressing regional problems. I am particularly grateful for Congressional support for GCTF, which will significantly enhance the program’s reach.

Question. The *Innovation and Competition Act (S.1260)* includes the bipartisan and bicameral Taiwan Fellowship Act, which will send up to 10 of our best public servants to Taiwan in a flexible fellowship lasting of up 2 years. The fellowship, modeled on the Mansfield Fellowship with Japan, will include intensive study in Mandarin and assignment in a ministry on Taiwan. Will the President include a funding request in fiscal year 2023 required to fully implement the Taiwan Fellowship Program?

Answer. The Administration is committed to supporting Taiwan as it faces an ongoing PRC pressure campaign to shrink Taiwan’s international space. We look forward to continuing to work with Congress on legislation to deepen our people-to-people ties and enhance our ability to work with our Taiwan friends. In so doing, we hope to ensure any proposed legislation that proceeds is framed as permissive authorities and preserves our shared goals as well as the Department’s flexibility.

Question. Would the Department of State actively support Track 1.5 and Track 2 strategic dialogues with China to avoid the inadvertent escalation between militaries operating in the region? If no decisions have been made, what are the types of considerations that will inform whether the Department will actively support such dialogues going forward?

Answer. The State Department has actively participated in and funded several unofficial efforts to enhance mutual understanding and reduce the risks of miscalculation with the PRC in the strategic arena. Going forward, unofficial and official efforts will continue to pursue these objectives in parallel. As we work to engage the PRC in conversations on risk reduction and strategic stability, a key consideration will be to ensure Beijing engages meaningfully in both official and unofficial channels.

RESPONSES OF DANIEL KRITENBRINK TO QUESTIONS
SUBMITTED BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

Question. Displaying Taiwan’s symbols of sovereignty would be an appropriate reflection of the robust bilateral relationship we maintain with Taiwan, and would publicly demonstrate U.S. support for Taiwan’s independence and democracy. I sponsored a measure, the Taiwan Symbol of Sovereignty (Taiwan SOS) Act, which was included in the Senate-passed U.S. Innovation and Competition Act (USICA) with bipartisan support. While the Biden administration’s policy to restrict contact guidelines for official U.S. engagement with Taiwan remains, it’s important for the Department of State’s website to be comprehensive when presenting facts about Taiwan, in order to ensure U.S. citizens are fully informed, for their safety and security, especially when it comes to international travel. A basic measure would be to display the national flag of Taiwan on the Department’s website.

Will the Department of State display Taiwan’s flag on the Department’s website?

Answer. We have great respect for our Taiwan friends and treat them with the dignity they deserve as a strong, democratic partner. However, in keeping with the unofficial nature of our relationship, we do not permit displays of Taiwan’s flag on the Department’s website. This is a long-standing policy that has been followed by multiple administrations from both parties in line with our “one China” policy as guided by the Taiwan Relations Act, the Three Joint Communiques, and the Six Assurances.

RESPONSES OF DR. ELY RATNER TO QUESTIONS
SUBMITTED BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

Question. Taiwan Travel—In September, the Foreign Minister of the Republic of China (Taiwan), Joseph Wu, visited the United States. Due to a ban on government officials from Taiwan making official visits to the U.S., Foreign Minister Wu was forced to travel to Annapolis, Maryland instead of Washington D.C. This ban exists

despite dozens of Senators and Representatives meeting with Foreign Minister Wu throughout his time in office.

The Taiwan Travel Act (Public Law No. 115–135) encourages visits and engagement between officials from the United States and Taiwan at all levels. As both the U.S. and Taiwan have been facing an increase in political and security challenges from the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), it is critical for Taiwan’s Foreign Minister and Defense Minister to be able to engage directly with their U.S. counterparts.

China’s increased military aggression and economic coercion across the Taiwan Strait and throughout the Indo-Pacific region has raised concerns of the U.S. and our regional allies and partners. It is critical that like-minded democracies work together at the ministerial level to counter China’s malign influence. However, Taiwan’s Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Defense are still barred from visiting Washington, DC to directly engage with their counterparts and Members of Congress on issues of mutual interests.

Do you believe that allowing the Minister of Defense from Taiwan to make an official visit to the Pentagon for ministerial level engagements would be beneficial to increasing coordination on the issue of security in East Asia?

Answer. In keeping with the unofficial nature of our relationship, our official contacts are guided by State Department policy consistent with E.O. 13014 (Maintaining Unofficial Relations with the People on Taiwan). Consistent with the Taiwan Assurance Act, the Biden Administration has taken steps to broaden and deepen our unofficial relationship with Taiwan. I defer to the State Department on the specifics of these policies.

I agree it is important to maintain a robust engagement with Taiwan’s defense officials, and DoD will continue to advocate for engagement that advances our national security interests and aligns with U.S. policy.

Question. Symbols of Sovereignty—This past summer, the official Twitter account of the White House first posted, and then deleted, a tweet about vaccination donations to Taiwan, because the tweet included a flag of Taiwan. Our Taiwanese allies were forced to publicly ask the White House “not to cause unnecessary speculation or misunderstanding from all walks of life due to the removal of the related tweet.”

The Biden administration has a policy of restricting our Taiwanese allies from displaying symbols of their sovereignty, whether flags or medals or uniforms on U.S. soil. This is a policy that dates back to 2015, when the Obama administration circulated an internal memorandum outlining contact guidelines, at the behest of the CCP.

The Biden administration reversed the Trump administration’s move to de-regulate contact with the Taiwanese. In response, this Committee approved language I authored, which was ultimately included in the Senate-passed U.S. Innovation Competition Act (USICA), which would restore the ability of our Taiwanese allies to display their symbols of sovereignty.

Nevertheless, the Biden administration has continued to restrict that ability. There are reports from officers at several bases that DoD is requesting stricter enforcement of the ban after a Taiwanese graduate of the Air Force Academy wore the Taiwanese flag at a graduation ceremony.

Mr. Ratner, what is the Biden administration’s policy regarding the ability of our Taiwanese allies to display their national symbols of sovereignty on U.S. military bases, and are you aware of any efforts to further address the display of the Taiwanese flag on U.S. military bases?

Answer. Consistent with E.O. 13014 (Maintaining Unofficial Relations with the People on Taiwan), the State Department has been delegated the responsibility for managing our unofficial relations with Taiwan. In this regard, DoD engagements with Taiwan are wholly conducted pursuant to State Department guidance.