

# China Urges U.S. to End Arms Deal With Taiwan



Senior Colonel Tan Kefei, spokesperson for the Ministry of National Defense (MND) of the People's Republic of China (PRC), answers reporters' questions at a regular press conference.

BEIJING (Dispatches) – Beijing has renewed its call for the U.S. to end an arms deal with Taiwan, which China believes is its “breakaway province”.

Tan Kefei, a spokesperson for China’s Ministry of National Defense, issued a brief statement asking that Washington “revoke” the planned arms sale worth \$1.1 billion to “China’s Taiwan region”.

He said the U.S. should “immediately stop arms sales to Taiwan and cease military public broadcasts from the island”, Chinese public broadcaster CGTN reported.

The new defense deal between Washington and Taipei will include 60 Harpoon anti-ship missiles, 100 Sidewinder air-to-air missiles, and support for a surveillance radar system.

If approved by the U.S. House of Representatives, it will be the fifth and largest arms sale to the self-ruled island since Joe Biden took office.

Mao Ning, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, also demanded of Washington to cease military contacts and sales with Taipei.

“The arms deal between the U.S. and the island of Taiwan is a blatant violation of the one-China principle and the three China-U.S. joint communique. It also infringes on China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and sends a seriously wrong signal to the ‘Taiwan independence’ forces,”

Mao had said, noting that China will take “firm countermeasures to safeguard its sovereignty and security interests”.

Taipei has insisted on its independence since 1949 and maintains full diplomatic relations with 14 nations.

Meanwhile, a U.S. lawmaker delegation arrived in Taiwan on Wednesday on a previously unannounced trip, the latest group of senior officials from the country to visit the island and defying Beijing which has reacted with anger to such trips.

The de facto U.S. embassy in Taiwan said the eight lawmakers, led by Stephanie Murphy, a Democrat from Florida who sits on the House Armed Services Committee, would be staying until Friday as part of a larger visit to the Indo-Pacific region.

“The delegation will meet with senior Taiwan leaders to discuss U.S.-Taiwan relations, regional security, trade and investment, global supply chains, and other significant issues of mutual interest,” it added.

“U.S. Deliberately Escalating Taiwan Situation”

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said in an interview with TASS on the sidelines of the Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) on Wednesdays

said that the U.S. is deliberately disbalancing the situation with Taiwan and escalating it.

“What is a global clash? That provocative activity that is being carried out by the United States in the region and in the context of the situation around Taiwan, and more broadly? This is a violation of the strategic balance of power, a violation of the region’s very fragile security. Given that not everything has been easy and there have been protracted conflicts and so on,” she said when asked if there could be a global clash between China and Taiwan.

“This U.S. has done this for many years, and deliberately. The situation is being deliberately thrown off balance. For what reason? There is such a term as controlled chaos when defining U.S. policy. There are other ways to describe the situation, as an external factor for developing a resolution to the internal crises and contradictions. Numerous explanations can be provided and labels are given for their actions, but this is obvious. It is a matter of turning up the heat. We can see that the US is going for escalation,” the diplomat added.

“Because in the last month alone, U.S. officials have made a huge number of these visits for provocative purposes. And the statements we hear from Washington from various branches of the US government are nothing to talk about,” she added.

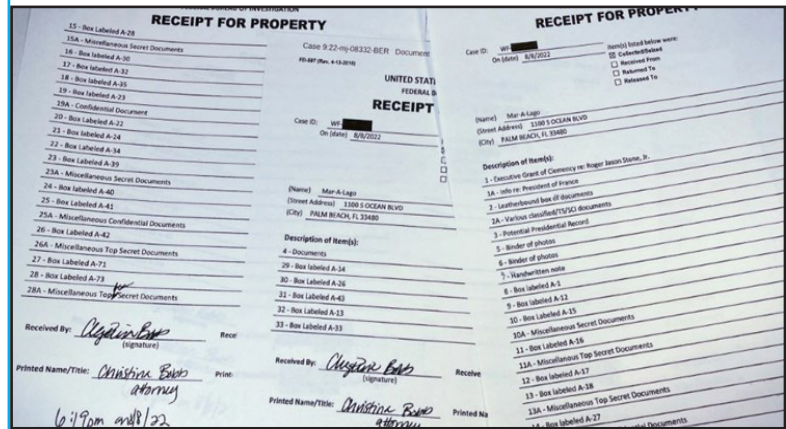
Washington’s policy on Taiwan seeks to goad China into orchestrated belligerency, Zakharova said.

Tensions remain high between China and the U.S. since a controversial visit by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taipei early last month.

A delegation of five French lawmakers and another group from the U.S. Congress are expected to visit Taiwan this week. The visit by the French delegation would be the first by high-level Europeans following a string of trips by U.S. officials and lawmakers that have drawn China’s ire.

Taipei’s foreign ministry said the French delegation would arrive on Wednesday for a 4-day visit. The delegation is scheduled to meet Vice President William Lai, it said.

## FBI Seized Documents on Foreign Nation’s Nuclear Capabilities at Trump’s Residence – Report



A document describing a foreign government’s military defenses, including its nuclear capabilities, was found in the FBI’s search last month of former U.S. president Donald Trump’s Florida home

BRUSSELS (Euro News) – The FBI has found a document describing a foreign government’s nuclear capabilities while it

was searching former U.S. President Donald Trump’s residence, according to the Washington Post.

## Pakistan Looks ‘Like a Sea’ After Floods, PM Says

SEHWAN, Pakistan (Reuters) – Parts of Pakistan seemed “like a sea”, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Wednesday, after visiting some of the flood-hit areas that cover as much as a third of the South Asian nation, where 18 more deaths took the toll from days of rain to 1,343.

As many as 33 million of a population of 220 million have been affected in a disaster blamed on climate change that has left hundreds of thousands homeless and caused losses of at least \$10 billion, officials estimate.

“You wouldn’t believe the scale of destruction there,” Sharif told media after a visit to the southern province of Sindh. “It is water everywhere as far as you could see. It is just like a sea.”

The government, which has boosted cash handouts for flood victims to 70 billion Pakistani rupees (\$313.90 million), will buy 200,000 tents to house displaced families, he added.

Receding waters threaten a new challenge in the form of water-born infectious diseases, Sharif said.

“We will need trillions of rupees to cope with this calamity.”

The United Nations has called for \$160 million in aid to help the flood victims.

Many of those affected are from Sindh where Pakistan’s largest freshwater lake is dangerously close to bursting its banks, even after having been breached in an operation that

displaced 100,000 people.

National disaster officials said eight children were among the dead in the last 24 hours. The floods were brought by record monsoon rains and glacier melt in Pakistan’s northern mountains.

The raging waters have swept away 1.6 million houses, 5,735 km (3,564 miles) of transport links, 750,000 head of livestock, and swamped more than 2 million acres (809,370 hectares) of farmland.

Officials in Sindh expect the waters to recede in the next few days, said provincial government spokesperson Murtaza Wahab.

“Our strategy right now is to be prepared for wheat cultivation as soon as the water recedes,” he added.

But with more rain expected in the coming month, the situation could worsen further, a top official of the United Nations’ refugee agency (UNHCR) has warned.

Already, the World Health Organization has said more than 6.4 million people need humanitarian support in the flooded areas.

Pakistan has received nearly 190% more rain than the 30-year average in July and August, totalling 391 mm (15.4 inches), with Sindh getting 466% more rain than the average.

## U.S. Faces Biggest Strike Ever as 350,000 Workers Demand Better Conditions



UPS’ contract is set to expire on July 31, 2023, and 350,000 of its 534,000 employees are expected to go on strike to demand better conditions .

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Over the past year, the nascent labor movements at mighty corporations like Starbucks and Amazon have grabbed national attention. But less well-known is a looming high-stakes clash between one of America’s oldest unions and the world’s biggest package courier.

Contract negotiations are set to begin in the spring between UPS and the Teamsters Union ahead of their current contract’s expiration at the end of July, 2023. Already, before the talks have even started, labor experts are predicting that the drivers and package handlers will go on strike.

“The question is how long it will be,” said Todd Vachon, professor of Labor Relations at Rutgers. “The union’s president ran and won on taking a more militant approach. Even if they’re very close [to a deal], the rank and file will be hungry to take on the company.”

If that happens, a strike at UPS would affect nearly every household in the country. An estimated 6% of the nation’s gross domestic product is moved in UPS trucks every year. The explosive growth of online retail has made the company and its drivers more crucial than ever to the nation’s struggling supply chain. Beyond the company’s home deliveries, it also delivers many of the goods found in stores, factories and offices.

About 350,000 Teamsters work at UPS as drivers and package sorters out of a global workforce of 534,000 permanent employees. And that’s growing fast — the company has added some 72,000 Teamster-represented jobs since the start of the pandemic.

While there are competing services at FedEx, the U.S. Postal Service and Amazon’s own delivery service, none of them have the capacity to handle more than a small fraction of the 21.5 million U.S. packages that UPS moves daily.

“We want a contract that provides wins for our employees and that provides UPS

the flexibility to stay competitive in a rapidly changing industry,” the company said in a statement this month. “UPS and the Teamsters have worked cooperatively for almost 100 years to meet the needs of UPS employees, customers, and the communities where we live and work. We believe we’ll continue to find common ground with the Teamsters and reach an agreement that’s good for everyone involved.”

The union has not gone on strike against UPS since a nearly two-week protest in 1997. If the union does go on strike, it would be the largest strike against a single business in nation’s history.

### Seattle Cancels First Day of School as Teachers Go on Strike

Seattle Public Schools canceled Wednesday’s first day of school after teachers voted overwhelmingly to authorize a strike over issues that include pay, mental health support, and staffing ratios for special education and multilingual students.

Seattle Education Association President Jennifer Matter announced Tuesday that 95% of ballots returned by the union’s membership favored going on strike absent an agreement with Seattle Public Schools. Contract talks continued.

“No one wants to strike,” Matter said. “But SPS has given us no choice. We can’t go back to the way things have been.”

The district said in an email to parents that it was “optimistic the bargaining teams will come to a positive solution for students, staff, and families.”

Districts around the country have faced labor challenges as the pandemic put extraordinary stress on teachers and students alike. An infusion of federal stimulus money has helped stabilize school district budgets, and teachers unions have sought to improve pay, resources and working conditions after a difficult few years.

## Tunisia Opposition to Boycott Polls, Slams Electoral Law Written ‘by President Alone’



A protest against Tunisia’s new constitution handing President Kais Saied sweeping powers in Tunis on July 23, 2022.

TUNISIA (AFP) – Tunisia’s main opposition alliance said Wednesday its members including the once-powerful Ennahdha party would boycott December polls to replace a parliament dissolved by President Kais Saied.

The vote is set for nearly a year and a half after Saied suspended the Ennahdha-dominated assembly and sacked the government, later pushing through a constitution enshrining his one-man rule.

“The National Salvation Front has definitively decided to boycott the upcoming elections,” said Ahmed Nejib Chebbi, head of the front which

is made up of parties and movements opposed to Saied.

He said the move was in response to an electoral law written “by Saied alone”, part of a “coup against constitutional legitimacy”.

Saied’s power grab was welcomed by many Tunisians tired of what they saw as a fractious and corrupt system established after the 2011 revolution.

But opposition forces say his moves, culminating in a new constitution confirmed by a widely boycotted July referendum, amount to a return to autocracy in the only democracy to have emerged from the Arab Spring.

## News in Brief

PARIS (AFP) – Britain’s new Prime Minister Liz Truss sparred with opposition Labour leader Keir Starmer at the House of Commons at her first session of Prime Minister’s Questions on Wednesday. The often rowdy weekly session, which saw the prime minister quizzed by MPs, tested Truss’s political mettle and rhetorical skills as well as her level of Conservative support. Speaking at her first session of Prime Minister’s Questions, Truss said Britons want a government that would help fix their problems, notably a sharp rise in the cost of living and energy in particular. She said she would announce her plan to help people pay spiralling energy bills on Thursday.

OTTAWA (Reuters) – Canadian police searched into a fourth day on Wednesday for the remaining suspect in a stabbing spree in which 10 people were killed in and around an indigenous community, rattling a country unaccustomed to acts of mass violence. Myles Sanderson, 30, whose brother and accused accomplice was himself found killed a day after Sunday’s attacks in Saskatchewan province, was briefly believed to have resurfaced on Tuesday in the vicinity of the rampage, about 320 km (200 miles) north of the provincial capital of Regina. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) issued an alert on Tuesday of a possible sighting of the surviving brother in the indigenous reserve of James Smith Cree Nation, urging residents to remain indoors and be vigilant. CBC News reported a heavy police presence on the indigenous reserve following that alert, but then said its investigation had determined the suspect was elsewhere.

BEIJING (Reuters) – China has reopened roads leading to the epicenter of Monday’s 6.8 magnitude earthquake in the southwestern province of Sichuan and traffic has resumed, state media reported on Wednesday, while the death toll has risen to 74. In addition, a total of 259 people were injured in the disaster and 26 remained missing as of Tuesday night, the People’s Daily reported. The strongest earthquake to hit the province since 2017 destroyed numerous buildings and caused severe damage to power and water infrastructure as well as telecommunications.

YAOUNDE, (Reuters) – At least six civilians were killed and eight injured when separatists in south-west Cameroon opened fire on a public bus, officials and the head of a regional hospital said. Anglophone insurgents fighting to carve out an independent state out of Cameroon’s English-speaking North West and South West regions have escalated attacks, killings and kidnappings this year. The bus, travelling from the economic capital Douala to the city of Kumba, came under fire near the town of Ekona, said a transport syndicate official who did not wish to be named for security reasons.

SAO PAULO (Reuters) – Former Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva’s lead over President Jair Bolsonaro ahead of the October election has narrowed to 10 points from 12, a Genial/Quaest poll released on Wednesday showed. Lula is seen winning 44% support in a first-round vote against Bolsonaro’s 34%, the poll said. They had 44% and 32%, respectively, a week ago. In an expected run-off, Lula’s lead has also shortened by two percentage points to a 12-point gap – taking 51% of the votes against Bolsonaro’s 39%.