

The 8th Plenum of the Foreign and National Defense Committee,

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**Impact of Rising Cross-Strait Military Tensions on
Taiwan's National Defense Preparedness and US-
Mainland China-Taiwan Relations**

Mainland Affairs Council

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Honorable Chairperson, Members of the Legislative Yuan, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I'm honored to be invited by this committee to present the report titled the "Impact of Rising Cross-Strait Military Tensions on Taiwan's National Defense Preparedness and US-Mainland China-Taiwan Relations" on behalf of the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC).

1. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been threatening to use force to coerce Taiwan into accepting unification; its constant and targeted military exercises and training around Taiwan have severely undermined regional peace and stability. In early October this year, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) aircraft made incursions into Taiwan's southwest airspace in a significantly heightened intensity and number. This has led to tensions across the Taiwan Strait and in the region, and drawn attention and criticism from the international community. Mainland China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO), and Ministry of National Defense have made unreasonable justification for the PLA exercises, saying that they are directed at Taiwan independence separatists and the interference of foreign forces. It also said that the PLA is on 24-hour standby and ready for combat at a moment's notice. Meanwhile, the CCP stressed that Taiwan belongs to mainland China and criticized the United States for sending out the wrong signals. In addition, the CCP continues to publicize its military exercises in recent days, such as war zone beachhead landings, maritime reconnaissance, and tactical airlift, as it works on developing and test-firing new weapons. The CCP authorities refuse to renounce the use of force against Taiwan and threatens Taiwan to capitulate to their political framework; these actions have undermined the cross-Strait status quo and disrupted the equilibrium of regional security. Beijing's non-peaceful, scapegoating approach and incessant strategic expansion are the biggest cruxes of unease across the Taiwan Strait and obstruction to benign cross-Strait interactions.

2. The US and other members of the international community pay close attention to the cross-Strait situation and demand that mainland China scale back its coercive military actions. The international community is paying increasing attention to the security situation across the Taiwan Strait; specifically, officials and parliaments of the US, Japan, European Union, UK, Germany, Australia, South Korea, and other countries remain concerned and have adopted countermeasures in response. Joint statements issued at the G7, US-Europe, NATO Summit, Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), and other conferences have all underscored the importance of peace across the Taiwan Strait. World leaders pointed to China's authoritarian and assertive actions as threats to the security and order of the world and urged Beijing to take responsibility. Australia, the UK, and the US took a step further by forming the AUKUS security alliance. The prolonged US-China rivalry has also affected developments in the Indo-Pacific and cross-Strait situation. Recently, mainland China has repeatedly voiced opposition to a new US-China Cold War and the US using Taiwan to contain mainland China, and demanded that the US correct its mistakes and not cross China's red line. US President Joe Biden, the US National Security Council, State Department, and Department of Defense have all emphasized a "rock-solid" commitment to Taiwan and warned that the CCP's increased military activity in the region could pose risks of miscalculation.

3. Beijing pursues strategies of "anti-independence and pro-unification" and "offering peace while provoking war" to show determination to achieve the historical mission of unification. CCP leader Xi Jinping stated at events such as the centenary of the party's founding and commemoration of the 110th anniversary of the 1911 Revolution this year that it is the historical mission of the CCP to resolve the "Taiwan issue" and achieve unification. He blamed Taiwan independence separatism as the chief obstacle and a hidden threat to unification. He reiterated adherence to political positions of "peaceful unification" and the "one country, two systems" formula while emphasizing mainland China's "strong

determination, firm will, and powerful ability." Moreover, the TAO made unreasonable criticism of President Tsai Ing-wen's National Day Address as an "independence-seeking provocation" and her statement of the two sides across the Taiwan Strait "not subordinate to each other" as touting the "two-state" theory. In addition, it maintained that Taiwan's participation in the activities of international organizations must comply with the "one China" principle, and persistently distorted United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 to denigrate Taiwan. In response to international concern and support for Taiwan, Beijing blasted Taiwan for "relying on the US to seek independence" and "resisting unification by force," saying these moves would lead to an eventual fall. Furthermore, it promotes the policy of the so-called "exchanging resources, giving benefits, and fostering emotional connection" with Taiwan as part of its united front work aimed at dividing Taiwan. It has also shied away from dialogue and suspended imports of custard apples and wax apples in a deliberate attempt to disrupt Taiwan's internal environment and exert pressure on our government.

4. The CCP prioritizes stability maintenance and demonstrates a firm stance ahead of the 20th CCP National People's Congress (NPC). It is also promoting China-US relations and stepping up intimidation of Taiwan. CCP leader Xi Jinping is expected to win the re-election at the 20th NPC next year; the sixth plenum of the CCP Central Committee in November will also see the passage of a third "Historical Resolution" representing the era of Xi's leadership. To prevent internal or external dynamics from undermining Xi's leadership authority or his political agenda, Beijing will spare no effort to maintain stability. The CCP has recently strengthened security, governance, and control of all sectors at home and shown its firm stance on safeguarding its sovereignty, territory, and development interests abroad. The CCP will also highlight the Taiwan issue more often in its dealings with the US to curb advancement of Taiwan-US relations and press the US for stricter compliance with its position on the three China-US Joint Communiqués. In addition, Beijing will continue pushing through its Taiwan work

by consolidating its "one China" principle and justifying unification in the international arena, strengthening the PLA's military preparedness, and further normalizing military intimidation against Taiwan; these actions are all meant for pressuring Taiwan into shifting its political position. Our overall assessment is that there has not been a continued or sharp escalation of situation across the Taiwan Strait. The MAC will closely monitor future China-US interactions and developments of CCP actions towards Taiwan to form proper and prudent responses.

5. The government is committed to maintaining peace across the Taiwan Strait and deepening cooperation with friendly countries. It also calls on the other side across the Taiwan Strait to handle cross-Strait relations rationally and pragmatically. Our government adheres to the principle of not acting provocatively or rashly and is committed to maintaining the status quo in the Taiwan Strait. It will also continue to deepen exchanges and cooperation with and seek broad support from the US, Japan, Europe, and the rest of the international community. President Tsai has emphasized that Taiwan's only option is to become stronger, more united, and more determined to defend ourselves so that no one can force us down the path set by the CCP. According to the polls released by the MAC over the years, the mainstream public opinion in Taiwan opposes the CCP's "one country, two systems" formula and its political and military suppression of Taiwan while supporting the government to strengthen national security and self-defense capabilities. We call on the Beijing authorities to face up to the cross-Strait reality and the "four commitments" presented by President Tsai. Only when the CCP renounces military threats and provocations and embraces the principles of democracy, parity, peace, and dialogue will the two sides across the Taiwan Strait be able to unfold benign interaction and relations.

This concludes my report. Thank you.