

WORLD

China halts military and climate ties with U.S. and sanctions Pelosi in fury over Taiwan visit

The latest retaliation came as military drills launched by Beijing sent warplanes, naval ships and missiles menacingly close to the small island democracy despite growing criticism.



China halts cooperation with U.S. in military dialogue, climate talks



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By Rhoda Kwan

TAIPEI, Taiwan — [China](#) said Friday it would [halt cooperation with the United States](#) on areas including military relations and climate change while imposing sanctions against [House Speaker Nancy Pelosi](#), as Beijing stepped up its [retaliation to her Taiwan visit](#).

The new measures were announced as military drills Beijing launched furiously in the wake of her trip earlier this week sent [warplanes, naval ships and missiles menacingly close](#) to this small island democracy despite growing criticism.

The U.S. delegation's unannounced visit to Taiwan has fueled a mounting crisis, raising fears of conflict in the region and stoking tensions between Washington, its allies and Beijing.

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— Large screens broadcast news about China's military exercises encircling Taiwan, in the center of Beijing on Aug. 4, 2022. Noel Celis / AFP - Getty Images

Beijing said Friday it will cancel phone calls between regional military commanders, defense meetings, talks on maritime safety and on climate change. It also said it would end cooperation with the U.S. on anti-drug efforts, returning illegal immigrants and transnational crime. Earlier, China took personal action against Pelosi, announcing sanctions on the speaker and her immediate family in response to what the [Chinese Foreign Ministry](#) called her “egregious provocations.”

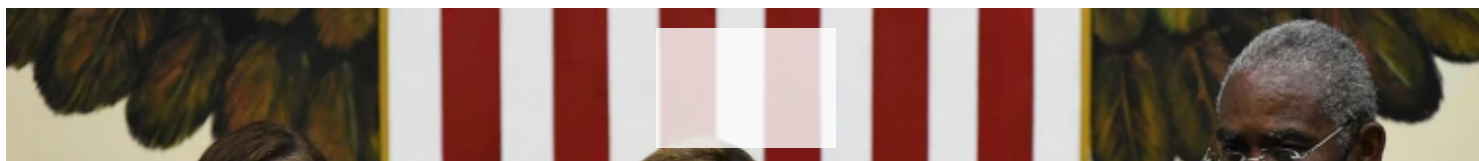
The unspecified sanctions, China's latest retaliation for the brief trip to the self-ruling island it claims as its own territory, came as Washington and its allies urged de-escalation.

The U.S. summoned the Chinese ambassador Thursday to lodge a formal protest over Beijing's actions against Taiwan and reiterate that Washington does not want to stoke a crisis in the region, National Security Council spokesman John Kirby confirmed. The Washington Post first reported news of the rebuke.

Pelosi, in Japan for the last stop of her Asia tour, said China would not be allowed to succeed in its efforts to isolate Taiwan.

“They may try to keep Taiwan from visiting or participating in other places, but they will not isolate Taiwan by preventing us to travel there,” she said Friday hours before the sanctions against her.

Pelosi: China will not ‘isolate Taiwan’ after trip sparks outrage in Beijing



China's response had until now largely been directed at the island of over 23 million people that lies just across the Taiwan Strait.

Beijing began a second day of military drills surrounding the island Friday morning, sending multiple military vessels and aircraft across the median line in the strait that had been an unofficial buffer zone for decades.

A day earlier, it fired ballistic missiles, at least one of which it boasted had flown directly over the island and five of which Japan said had landed in its exclusive economic zone waters.

Chinese military aircrafts made 68 sorties while 13 warships conducted frequent exercises around the Taiwan Strait as of 5pm local time (5 a.m. ET) on Friday, Taiwan's military news agency said, citing the defense ministry.

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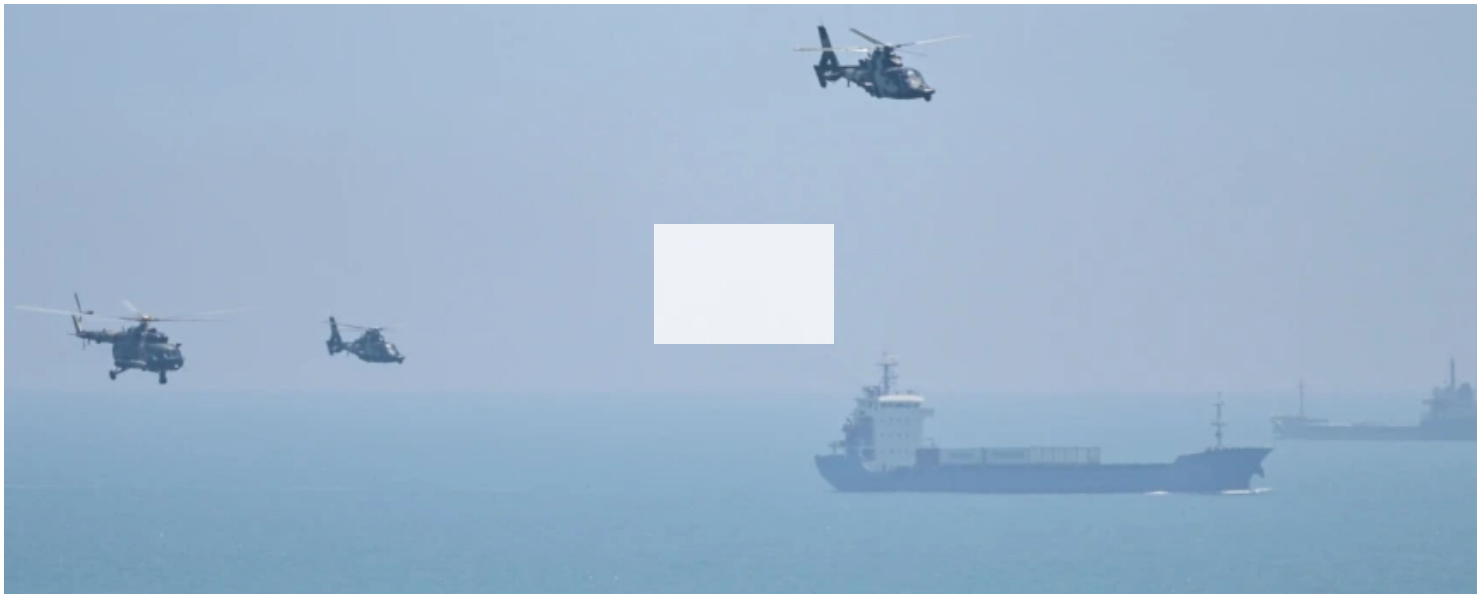
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The Ministry of National Defense condemned the Chinese military's deliberately crossing the middle line of the Strait and infringing on the sea and airspace around Taiwan, stressing that the Taiwanese military will take resolute actions to safeguard national security and ensure that democracy and freedom are not threatened," the agency quoted the ministry as saying.

The ministry has neither confirmed nor denied that missiles flew over Taiwan. If true, it would mark the first time Chinese missiles have flown over the self-ruled island.

China starts live-fire military drills near Taiwan after Pelosi's controversial visit



The Taiwanese Defense Ministry slammed the exercises as "highly provocative," saying it would "take resolute actions to safeguard national security and ensure that democracy and freedom are not threatened" but adding that it was committed to not escalating the situation, according to the news agency.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken also condemned China's ongoing drills Friday, calling them a "significant escalation."

"China has chosen to overreact and use Speaker Pelosi's visit as a pretext to increase provocative military activity in and around the Taiwan strait," he said at a media briefing during a meeting with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Cambodia

"There is no justification for this extreme, disproportionate and escalatory military response."

The drills, which began Thursday, are expected to last until Sunday.

During the last Taiwan crisis, China's military was outmatched by U.S. forces. Not now.

The Chinese Communist Party has never ruled Taiwan, but claims it as its own territory. While Chinese President Xi Jinping sees Taiwan's "reunification" with the mainland as a historic inevitability, recent public opinion polls show the majority of Taiwanese have no desire to become part of China, and instead want to maintain the status quo.

China repeatedly warned the U.S. against the visit, which it said "seriously infringes upon China's sovereignty and territorial integrity." The White House says the speaker's visit was consistent with U.S. policy on Taiwan and should not be used to precipitate a crisis.

Taiwan's neighbors and U.S. allies in the region have expressed growing concerns about China's display of aggression.

Tokyo on Friday called on China to immediately stop its drills. "China's actions this time around have a serious impact on the peace and stability of our region and the international community," Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said.

Beijing defended the military drills, saying they were "in line with international law and international practice."

"As for the 'exclusive economic zone' you mentioned, you should know, and the Japanese side should also know that China and Japan have not yet demarcated the relevant waters, so there is no such thing as 'Japan's exclusive economic zone'," Hua Chunying, a spokesperson for the Chinese Foreign Ministry, told a news briefing.

Rhoda Kwan

Rhoda Kwan is a Taipei-based journalist.

Peter Alexander contributed.

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