U.S. - TAIWAN RELATIONS

TAYWAN RELATIONS ACT (1979)

“To help maintain peace, security, and stability in the Western Pacific and to promote the foreign policy of the United States by authorizing the continuation of commercial, cultural, and other relations between the people of the United States and the people on Taiwan, and for other purposes.”

PEACE & SECURITY

- U.S. will “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 or economic system, of the people on Taiwan.”

- The U.S. will "consider any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means...a threat to...peace and security...and of grave concern to the United States."

- “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.”

STRONG AND STABLE RELATIONS

- Taiwan has rights and responsibilities in U.S. law equivalent to those of a recognized state and government.

- The U.S. supports Taiwan’s membership or participation in international organizations and agreements, including WTO, WHA, APEC, and bilateral accords.

- American Institute in Taiwan and Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office serve as de facto embassies.

- “The preservation and enhancement of human rights of all the people on Taiwan” are “objectives of the United States.”

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ (1982)

The U.S. “intends to reduce gradually its sales of arms to Taiwan.”

SIX ASSURANCES (1982)

The U.S. will not:

1. “set a date for termination of arms sales”
2. “alter the terms” of the Taiwan Relations Act
3. “consult with China” before making Taiwan arms sales decisions
4. “mediate between Taiwan and China”
5. alter U.S. position that Taiwan sovereignty is to be “decided peacefully by the Chinese themselves” or “pressure Taiwan” to negotiate with China
6. “formally recognize Chinese sovereignty” over Taiwan

SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUÉ (1972)

“The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China. The United States Government does not challenge that position. It reaffirms its interest in a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves.”

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ (1979)

The United States and People’s Republic of China “have agreed to recognize each other and to establish diplomatic relations.” The U.S. “recognizes the Government of [the PRC] as the sole legal Government of China,” but maintains “cultural, commercial, and other unofficial relations with the people of Taiwan.”

$255.6 million

U.S. Navy conducts Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs) in the Taiwan Strait (4 in the last 6 months)

$17 billion
U.S. FDI in Taiwan

$8 billion
Taiwan FDI in U.S.

Taiwan is the U.S.’s 11th ranked trading partner

Made with

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Key Events

1895 - Treaty of Shimonoseki ends Sino-Japanese War, cedes Taiwan to Japan

1912 - Republic of China established on Mainland China

1937 - Japan invades China, beginning WWII in Pacific

1945 - Japan surrenders, Taiwan under ROC control

1947 - Chinese Communist forces defeat Kuomintang; ROC moves to Taiwan

1954 - First Taiwan Strait Crisis begins with PRC shelling of Taiwan-controlled Quemoy and Matsu

1955 - U.S.-ROC Mutual Defense Treaty established

1958 - Second Taiwan Strait Crisis as PRC shelling of Quemoy resumes

1960 - President Eisenhower visits Taiwan

1971 - PRC replaces ROC in "Chinese Seat" at United Nations

1972 - President Nixon visits China; Shanghai Communique

1979 - Second U.S.-PRC Joint Communique

1982 - Third U.S.-PRC Joint Communique; Six Assurances

1986 - Democratic Progressive Party established

1987 - Martial law lifted on Taiwan; DPP, other non-KMT parties legalized

1988 - Chiang Ching-kuo dies; Lee Teng-hui becomes first Taiwan-born ROC President

1992 - Taiwan holds first legislative elections

1995-96 - Third Taiwan Strait Crisis begins; Lee Teng-hui wins first democratic elections for president in Taiwan

1998 - President Clinton’s “Three No’s” (U.S. non-support for Taiwan independence, “one China, one Taiwan” policy, and Taiwan in states-member-only international organizations)

2000 - President Clinton dispatches U.S. Navy carrier battle groups to region

2008 - U.S. criticizes, and Taiwan voters reject, referendum on seeking UN membership under the name of "Taiwan"

2016 - Ma Ying-jeou (KMT) elected president

2018 - President Trump signs the Taiwan Travel Act and National Defense Authorization Act