

legitimate rights and interests of Taiwanese compatriots will be fully assured. " # Mr. Xi also accompanied his offer of talks with a warning -- one implicitly also aimed at the United States, which provides Taiwan with military equipment and the possibility of support in a crisis. # " We make no promise to abandon the use of force, and retain the option of taking all necessary measures, " Mr. Xi said in a section of the speech that drew rousing applause. Those options, he said, could be used against " intervention by external forces. " # The diverging positions staked out by Mr. Xi and Ms. Tsai have brought into focus how the disputed future of Taiwan remains a volatile question that could erupt into crisis, especially if either side misjudges the intentions of the other -- or of the United States, a key ally that has strengthened support for Taiwan. # Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council, which handles relations with China, said it did not have an immediate comment on Mr. Xi's speech. # Mr. Xi's offer of dialogue appeared unlikely to win over Taiwanese wary of the idea that they could retain autonomy under China's principle of " one country, two systems, " Yun Sun, a researcher on Chinese policy at the Stimson Center in Washington, said by email after the speech. # " Xi is correct in that differences in political systems are the root of the problem, " Ms. Sun said. " But 'one country, two systems' is unlikely to be the answer the Taiwanese people embrace. " # Mr. Xi's speech was a sharp reminder that, even amid many other external disputes, Chinese leaders remain preoccupied with Taiwan, especially their concern that