**We affirm.**

**Our sole contention is FANNING THE FLAMES.**

**Subpoint A is ESCALATION.**

**Despite decades of military support, the US is closer than ever to conflict over Taiwan.**

**Khan wrote in May** [Sulmaan Wasif Khan 24, 5/12/2024, Denison chair of international history and diplomacy at Tufts University’s Fletcher School, China and the U.S. Are Numb to the Real Risk of War, Foreign Policy, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2024/05/12/china-us-taiwan-strait-war-nuclear-weapons-military-biden-xi-history/)//> YALE CO-CHAMPION JASON ZHAO + sumzom + OA]

On the morning of April 5, 2023, Taiwan’s president, Tsai Ing-wen, met with then-U.S. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy in Simi Valley, California. This was a meeting Beijing had warned against in the strictest of terms. It was therefore a meeting that both sides found necessary to have. China had to be shown that it could not dictate whom either Taiwan or the United States met with. On this, both Taipei and Washington were agreed. China delivered on its promised forceful response by engaging in military drills and sending **warships** and **planes** scudding **around Taiwan**. The median line and Taiwan’s air defense identification zone were breached. One aircraft carrier, the Shandong, entered the waters just south of Japan. Violations of the “One China” principle, Beijing had to make clear, were not going to be taken **quietly**. And in seeking to Commentators dismissed Beijing’s response to the Tsai-McCarthy meeting as less intense than the one that had attended then-U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s visit to Taiwan in 2022. But the dismissal itself highlighted the gravity of the problem. A certain level of military activity had become **normalized**. It was as though the world now took for granted the presence of **missiles** and **aircraft carriers**, the shows of force that demanded a response in kind. The week after the meeting in California, the United States and the Philippines launched their largest joint military exercise to date. It was a way of showing China that there were other militaries that could operate in the region. The new normal meant more **ships** and **planes** operating **in close proximity** to one another, mutual recrimination, and **mutual suspicion**. Beijing and Washington have become **desensitized to the risk** these circumstances pose. But in the militarization of foreign policy and the failure to grasp the full significance of that militarization, the pair are **one accident** and a bad decision removed from a **catastrophic war**. Mathematicians speak of the “edge of chaos”: the final point separating order from doom. A system operating at this edge has no room for error. This is where the accumulated weight of the past has brought the United States, China, and Taiwan. They walked right up to the edge of a war that could go **nuclear** several times in the past: in 1954-55, 1958, and 1996. Now, they seem to be living on that **edge permanently**.

**That’s because our current strategy doesn’t account for China’s policies. They believe support is pushing Taiwan toward independence and are more driven by national commitments than they are deterred by force.**

**Swaine explained in 2023** [Michael D. Swaine 23, 1/23/2023, Senior research fellow in the Quincy Institute’s East Asia Program, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, served as a senior policy analyst at the RAND Corporation, What the US Gets Wrong About Taiwan and Deterrence, <https://thediplomat.com/2023/01/what-the-us-gets-wrong-about-taiwan-and-deterrence/)//> YALE CO-CHAMPION JASON ZHAO + OA]

The past year has seen a **significant escalation** in **tension** between Washington and Beijing over Taiwan, with many strategists warning that China seems **poised to invade** the island. In order to preserve U.S. interests, they argue, Washington must rely primarily, if not entirely, on military deterrence. But this strategy would **almost certainly** backfire. **Rather than preventing** a war with China over Taiwan, a policy centered on military deterrence could **spark one**. Those who advocate an approach based almost exclusively on deterrence believe China aspires to replace the United States as the dominant regional power in Asia through largely military means. Seizing Taiwan by force or intimidation, they say, is a necessary first step toward subjugating other Asian nations, including U.S. allies like Japan. They believe that once it has gained broader military access to the Pacific by controlling Taiwan and dominating other nearby powers, China could then go on to threaten Hawaii and the continental United States. According to this analysis, the only option for the United States is to double down on its military presence in the region, push its allies to greatly increase their defense spending and support for the U.S. stance, and move closer to Taiwan both politically and militarily, making it a de facto security ally in Asia. The clear implication is that Taiwan, as a critical strategic location, must never be unified with China. But this approach to the Taiwan situation is based on a very dubious analysis of both Taiwan’s purported strategic value and China’s regional intentions. In fact, despite the views of some American and Chinese defense analysts today, historically, neither Washington nor Beijing have ever regarded Taiwan as a key strategic linchpin in the region. For China, reunification with Taiwan is above all else an issue of **territorial integrity** and **national pride**; as such, it is critical to the **legitimacy** of the Communist **Party** regime in the **eyes of its people**. For the United States, Taiwan is linked to Washington’s credibility as a loyal supporter of a democratic friend and an ally to others such as Japan and South Korea. From a purely military perspective, it is highly problematic to assert that control over Taiwan would give Beijing decisive leverage over Japan, South Korea, or other Asian countries, much less the United States. And there is **no clear evidence** to show that China believes its security depends on militarily defeating or intimidating its **Asian neighbors**. Moreover, while some Asian countries are certainly hedging against China’s growing military power and the danger of a Sino-American conflict by increasing their defense spending, the region as a whole is more worried about economic issues such as recovering from the pandemic, overcoming recession, and promoting sustainable growth through continued close economic ties with both the United States and China. For the United States, a deterrence policy predicated on keeping Taiwan separate from China for strategic reasons is **totally incompatible** with its one China policy, whereby Washington opposes any unilateral move toward Taiwan independence, maintains strategic ambiguity regarding its defense of Taiwan, and remains open to the possibility of peaceful, uncoerced unification. This position remains the **core of the understanding** reached in 1972, which formed the **basis** of the **normalization of Sino-American relations**, in which the U.S. acknowledged the Chinese position that Taiwan is part of China while Beijing stressed that peaceful unification would be a top priority of its cross-strait policy. If the United States were to abrogate that critical understanding by, for example, extending diplomatic recognition to Taiwan, or making the island into a full–fledged **security** ally (as the deterrence-only approach advocates), China would without doubt respond by dropping its part of the understanding and proceed to reverse any such U.S. actions by all means necessary, including **military force**. The PRC government’s legitimacy in the eyes of its citizens would simply not survive if Beijing failed to respond to such a basic challenge to its nationalist credentials. Equally significant, China’s leaders would **almost certainly resort to force** even if the U.S. enjoyed superior military **deterrence** capabilities, a point that is apparently not fully grasped by proponents of the deterrence-only approach. Given the incredibly high political stakes involved, even a failed effort to forcibly prevent the loss of Taiwan would be viewed in Beijing as favorable to doing nothing. The latter would almost certainly result in a severe domestic crisis, putting at risk not only the personal positions of China’s leaders but the stability of the entire PRC regime. The former, however, would leave open the possibility of future rounds of conflict over the island, since any U.S. “victory” in a conventional Taiwan conflict would by necessity remain limited due to the danger of nuclear escalation. The Biden administration seems to be inviting such desperate Chinese calculations with its erosion of the one China policy and its growing reliance on aspects of the deterrence-only approach to Taiwan. President Joe Biden has said repeatedly that the United States will intervene militarily if China attacks Taiwan, thereby treating the island as a sovereign security ally. He has also asserted that Taiwan alone must decide whether it should be independent, which denies the long-standing U.S. stance of opposition to any unilateral move toward Taiwan independence. The government has also designated Taiwan as a non-NATO U.S. ally, giving it a status similar to sovereign nations with which it has formal security ties. It has sent senior U.S. officials to Taiwan under quasi-official conditions and sought to pressure countries against shifting their diplomatic representation from Taiwan to China, despite Washington having taken exactly the same action in 1979. And one senior U.S. defense official recently indicated in congressional testimony that Taiwan is indeed a critical U.S. strategic node central to its entire defense position in the Western Pacific, implying that the United States would be opposed to Taiwan uniting with China under any circumstances. China’s leaders have concluded from these and other actions that U.S. statements in support of the one China policy are **no longer entirely credible**. Beijing has responded by **increasing military pressure** on Taiwan, while acquiring capabilities to **deter U.S. military intervention**. The United States has in turn interpreted China’s military exercises in the Taiwan Strait as evidence of Beijing’s bad faith intentions and possible rejection of peaceful unification. The two countries are thus increasingly locked in an escalating, interactive process, while each **denies responsibility** and **accuses the other**. This confrontational action-reaction cycle greatly raises the risk of a **miscalculation** that could **spark a military conflict**. If the United States and China are sincere in their desire to avoid going to war over Taiwan, they must take meaningful actions to end the **existing vicious cycle**. They can start by rejecting the military-centered, **worst-case assessments** of their hawkish strategists and defuse the Taiwan issue as an escalating object of Sino-American strategic competition. This can only be done by Washington reviving the credibility of the one China policy through actions, not just words, in return for credible Chinese actions that convey Beijing’s clear, continued preference for peaceful unification.

**Indeed, peer reviewed studies have confirmed the escalatory effect of military support exists across decades.**

**Thrall explained in 2018** [A. Trevor Thrall and Caroline Dorminey, Senior fellow for Cato Institute’s Defense and Foreign Policy Department and associate professor at George Mason University’s Schar School of Policy and Government, 3-13-2018, "Risky Business: The Role of Arms Sales in U.S. Foreign Policy" Cato Institute, <https://www.cato.org/policy-analysis/risky-business-role-arms-sales-us-foreign-policy>, accessed: 11-6-2024] OA

Entanglement. **Arms sales** raise the risk of entanglement in two ways. First, they can represent early steps down the **slippery slope** to unwise military **intervention**. Consider a case like the Syrian civil war or the many cases during the Cold War in which the United States wanted to support rebels and freedom fighters against oppressive governments.74 In the majority of those cases, American leaders were wary of intervening directly. Instead, the United States tended to rely on money, training, and arms sales. But by taking concrete steps like arms sales to **support** rebel groups, Washington’s **psychological investment** in the outcome tends to rise, as do the **political stakes** for the president, who will be judged on whether his efforts at support are successful or not. As we saw in the Syrian civil war, for example, Barack Obama’s early efforts to arm Syrian rebels were roundly criticized as feckless, increasing pressure on him to intervene more seriously.75 History does not provide much guidance about how serious the risk of this form of entanglement might be. During the **Cold War**, presidents from Nixon onward viewed arms sales as a substitute for sending American troops to do battle with communist forces around the world. The result was an astonishing amount of weaponry transferred or sold to Third World nations, many of which were engaged in active conflicts both external and internal. The risk of superpower conflict made it dangerous to intervene directly; accordingly, the Cold War–era risk of entanglement from arms sales was low.76 Today, however, the United States does not face nearly as many constraints on its behavior, as its track record of near-constant military intervention since the end of the Cold War indicates. As a result, the risk of arms sales helping trigger future military intervention is real, even if it cannot be measured precisely. The second way in which arms sales might entangle the United States is by creating new disputes or **exacerbating** existing **tensions**. U.S. arms sales to Kurdish units fighting in Syria against the Islamic State, for example, have ignited tensions between the United States and its NATO ally Turkey, which sees the Kurds as a serious threat to Turkish sovereignty and stability.77 Meanwhile, ongoing arms sales to NATO nations and to other allies like South Korea and Taiwan have **exacerbated tensions** with Russia, **China**, and North Korea, raising the risk of **escalation** and the possibility that the United States might wind up involved in a direct conflict.78 Regional Effects. Arms sales do not just affect the recipient nation; they also affect the **local balance of power**, often causing **ripple effects** throughout the region. Though advocates of arms sales trumpet their stabilizing influence, as we have noted above, arms sales often lead to **greater tension**, **less stability**, and **more conflict**. Because of this — and the complementary problem of weapons dispersion — the regional impact of arms sales is less predictable and more problematic than advocates acknowledge. Instability, Violence, and Conflict. First, arms sales can make conflict more likely.79 This may occur because **recipients** of new weapons feel more confident about **launching attacks** or because changes in the local balance of power can fuel tensions and promote preventive strikes by others. A study of arms sales from 1950 to 1995, for example, found that although arms sales appeared to have some restraining effect on major-power allies, they had the opposite effect in other cases, and concluded that “increased arms transfers from major powers make states **significantly more likely** to be militarized dispute initiators.”80 Another study focused on sub-Saharan Africa from 1967 to 1997 found that “arms transfers are significant and positive predictors of increased probability of war.”81 Recent history provides supporting evidence for these findings: since 2011, Saudi Arabia, the leading buyer of American weapons, has intervened to varying degrees in Yemen, Tunisia, Syria, and Qatar. Second, arms sales can also **prolong** and **intensify** ongoing **conflicts** and **erode rather than promote** regional stability. Few governments, and fewer insurgencies, have large enough weapons stocks to fight for long without resupply.82 The tendency of external powers to arm the side they support, however understandable strategically, has the inevitable result of allowing the conflict to continue at a higher level of intensity than would otherwise be the case. As one study of arms sales to Africa notes, “Weapons imports are essential additives in this recipe for armed conflict and carnage.”83 Third, this dynamic appears to be particularly troublesome with respect to internal conflicts. Jennifer Erickson, for example, found that recipients of major conventional weapons are **70 percent more likely** to engage in internal conflicts than other states. Though halting arms sales alone is not a panacea for peace and stability, arms embargoes can help lessen the destructiveness of combat in both civil and interstate wars simply by restricting access to the means of violence.84 Finally, because of their effects on both interstate and internal conflict, arms sales can also erode rather than promote regional stability. As noted in the previous section, where the United States seeks to manage regional balances of power, arms sales often create tension, whether because the American role in the region threatens others or because American clients feel emboldened. The Middle East, for example, has seesawed between violence and tense standoffs for the past many decades, at first because of Cold War competition and more recently because of the American war on terror. The notion that increased U.S. arms sales since 9/11 made the Middle East more stable is far-fetched to say the least. Similarly, though many argue that American security commitments to countries like Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea have produced greater stability, there is a strong case to be made that the opposite is now true. American support of South Korea has driven North Korea to develop nuclear weapons; the presence of U.S. missile defense systems in South Korea has aggravated China, and American support of Taiwan produces **continual tension** between the two powers.85

**Thus,**

**Thrall concludes** [A. Trevor Thrall and Caroline Dorminey, 3-13-2018, "Risky Business: The Role of Arms Sales in U.S. Foreign Policy" Cato Institute, <https://www.cato.org/policy-analysis/risky-business-role-arms-sales-us-foreign-policy>, accessed: 11-6-2024] OA

Forgoing arms sales is likely to be a **superior** strategy even in cases where the United States has an **entrenched interest**. In the case of **Taiwan**, for example, though it is clear that Taiwan needs to purchase weapons from other countries to provide for its defense, those weapons do not have to be made in the United States. Having Taiwan buy from other suppliers would help defuse **U.S.–China tensions**. Even if Taiwan’s defenses remained robust, China would clearly prefer a situation in which American arms no longer signal an implicit **promise to fight** on Taiwan’s behalf. This could also promote more productive U.S.–China diplomacy **in general**, as well as **greater stability** in the Pacific region. Most important, breaking off arms sales would also reduce the likelihood of the United States becoming entangled in a **future conflict** between Taiwan and China.

**This shift is the best of both worlds. It would set the stage for discussions, decrease the threat of China, and spill over.**

**Gilley found in 2010** [Bruce Gilley, Assistant Professor of Political Science @ Portland State University's Mark O. Hatfield School of Government, 1-1-2010, "Not So Dire Straits: How The Finlandization Of Taiwan Benefits U.S. Security" Foreign Affairs, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2010-01-01/not-so-dire-straits>, accessed: 10-27-2024] OA

Even from a strictly realist perspective, there is no need for the United States to keep Taiwan within its **strategic orbit**, given that U.S. military security can be attained through **other Asian bases** and **operations**. Taiwan's **Finlandization** should be seen not as a necessary sacrifice to a rising China but rather as an **alternative strategy** for **pacifying China**. Washington should drop its **zero-sum view** of the Taipei-Beijing relationship and embrace the strategic logic underlying the **rapprochement** -- in effect "losing China" a second time by allowing Taiwan to drift into the PRC's sphere of influence. Ma told a visiting congressional delegation in August 2009 that his détente would be "beneficial to all parties concerned." He is right. As was the case with Finland and the Soviet Union, Taiwan has an inherent interest in a **peaceful** and **democratic China**. Washington needs to **embrace this shift** not only because it serves its own long-term strategic aims in Asia and globally but also because what the Taiwanese people choose to do with their sovereign democratic power is up to them.The overburdened giant should happily watch from a distance and focus on other pressing regional and global issues. SIDELINING UNCLE SAM The United States has played a crucial role in maintaining cross-strait peace and encouraging democracy in Taiwan since 1949. Today, the U.S. role in this process is nearing its end. U.S. policy toward a Finlandized Taiwan will have to be adjusted both **strategically** and **diplomatically**. Expanded official contacts with Taiwan will require consultations with Beijing; the United States and its allies will have to refashion battle plans to exclude Taiwan; Washington will have to support the new approach to cross-strait peace through its public diplomacy; and U.S. intelligence agencies will have to be more careful about scrutinizing technology transfers to the island because the PRC's intelligence gathering on Taiwan will inevitably expand. Most important, Washington will have to **significantly scale back** its **arms sales** to Taipei. In 1982, the United States **pledged** to China that it would reduce its **arms sales** to Taiwan -- a promise that it has **conspicuously broken** ever since. Today, as then, there is a **golden opportunity** to demilitarize the conflict. The U.S. Congress is not particularly interested in pressing President Barack Obama on the issue, and Taiwan's economic decline has moderated Taipei's appetite for major arms purchases anyway. In the past, sales of fighter jets, destroyers, tanks, and missiles to Taiwan were premised as much on the political message they sent to Beijing as on their tactical value. In the new climate, Washington can reinforce the détente by **holding back planned sales** of items such as Black Hawk helicopters, Patriot missiles, and additional fighter jets. The Pentagon must view the shift not as simply a minor adjustment due to reduced cross-strait tensions but as a wholesale rejection of the vision of Taiwan as a militarized base within the U.S. strategic orbit. By signaling that Washington is finally **respecting** China's territorial integrity, these reductions could, in turn, lead to **verifiable force reductions** by China, as well as to an end to its **Taiwan-focused** **military attack drills**. Removing Taiwan as a major player in the United States' Asian security strategy would have ripple effects on U.S. strategy in the region as a whole. Indeed, it is likely that Asian-only security organizations, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum, would increasingly take the lead in defining Asia's future security architecture. The arguments in favor of Finlandization are stronger today than ever before: a Finlandized Taiwan would play a much more transformative role in China itself, thus improving the chances of a **peacefully rising China**. As was the case for Finland in its relations with the Soviet Union, Taiwan could create a model for the **peaceful resolution** of China's **many** resource, boundary, and military **conflicts** throughout Asia. More broadly, the Taiwan-China détente is a test of **liberal approaches** to international relations -- specifically, the notion that a **broad integration** of domestic interests will **pacify relations** between states far more than a militarized balance of power. Taiwan has always been a frontline state in the rivalry between Washington and Beijing. In the past, that meant the United States' fending off China's plans to invade Taiwan and defying Beijing's opposition to the island's democratic development. Today, with Taiwan's territory secure and democracy consolidated, Taiwan's role on the frontlines is changing again. It is now Washington's turn to confront and adapt to this historic shift.

**A war would be devastating. Even without escalation,**

**Jewers warned in January** [Chris Jewers, 1-11-2024, "Chinese invasion of Taiwan would be 'catastrophic' for global economy" Mail Online, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12943501/Chinese-invasion-Taiwan-catastrophic-global-economy.html>, accessed: 11-6-2024] OA

A Chinese invasion of Taiwan would leave **500,000 dead**, devastate the **global economy** and spread Beijing's already growing influence, an expert has warned in a new report ahead of key elections on Saturday. Darren Spinck, a researcher specialising in Indo-Pacific Studies, warned that such an assault would upend sea and trade routes, disrupt global supply chains and - crucially - could destroy Taiwan's **semiconductor foundries**. This, he said, would have a detrimental impact on the UK economy - which is increasingly reliant on maintaining relations across the Taiwan Strait as it continues to make a post-Brexit tilt into the Indo-Pacific region. Taiwan produces 90 percent of the world's advanced chips, the brains in all modern electronic equipment, and any shortage in semiconductors has been described as 'catastrophic' to both the UK and the global economy by experts. What's more, Spinck warns that a Chinese invasion of Taiwan would allow Beijing's People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) to ' project power past Taiwan in the First Island Chain and north toward Japan' and into the Second Island Chain. The human cost, too, would be devastating. The Pentagon has estimated as many as 500,000 people could be killed should a conflict between China and Taiwan occur, while millions more could be **forced to flee** the region. Spinck's warning came in a report released this week by the Henry Jackson Society ahead of the Taiwanese General Election, which will go ahead on January 13.

**Subpoint B is RELATIONS.**

**In addition to stopping war, deescalating these tensions paves a way for a stronger US-China relationship.**

**Gomez explained in 2015** [Eric Gomez, 8-6-2015, independent analyst and recent Master’s graduate of the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University, "Deep Accommodation: The Best Option for Preventing War in the Taiwan Strait" Center for International Maritime Security, <https://cimsec.org/deep-accommodation-best-option-preventing-war-taiwan-strait/>, accessed: 10-26-2024] OA

The status quo in the **Taiwan** Strait will be **unsustainable** as China continues to improve its **military capabilities** and adopt more aggressive military strategies. If the U.S. wants to avert a war with China in the Taiwan Strait, it must start looking for an **alternative** to the status quo. Taiwan’s strategy of economic accommodation with China under the Ma Ying-jeou administration has brought about benefits. The U.S. should encourage Taiwan to deepen its military and political accommodation with China. This would be a difficult pill for Taiwan to swallow, but it could offer the most sustainable deterrent to armed conflict in the Taiwan Strait. For years, Taiwan’s de facto independence from China has relied on a qualitatively superior, defense-focused military that could prevent the landing of a large Chinese force on the island. The growing power of the Chinese military, especially its naval and missile forces, has begun eroding this **qualitative advantage**. Indeed, some observers have already concluded that “the days when [Taiwan] forces had a quantitative and qualitative advantage over [China] are over.” Taiwan still possesses a formidable military and could inflict high costs on an attacking Chinese force, but ultimately American intervention would likely be necessary to save Taiwan from a determined Chinese attack. Military intervention by the U.S. on the behalf of Taiwan would be met with formidable Chinese resistance. China’s anti-access/area denial strategy complicates the U.S.’s ability to project power in the Taiwan Strait. China’s latest maritime strategy document, released in May of this year, states that China’s navy will start shifting its focus further offshore to include open seas protection missions. Such a shift implies an **aspirational capability** to keep intervening American forces **away from Taiwan**. American political leaders have not given up on Taiwan, and the 2015 U.S. National Military Strategy places a premium on reassuring allies of America’s commitments. However, the fact that China’s improving military capabilities will make an American military intervention on behalf of Taiwan more and more costly must not be ignored. The **best option** for preventing a war in the Taiwan Strait is deepening the **strategy of accommodation** that Beijing and Taipei have already started. According to Baohui Zhang, accommodation “relies on expanding common interests, **institutionalizing dialogues**, promoting security **confidence-building** and offering assurances to establish **mutual** **trust**.” The Ma Ying-jeou administration in Taiwan has tried to use accommodation as a way to lock in the status quo and avoid conflict, but their efforts have been met with more and more popular backlash in Taiwan. China’s military strategy document does acknowledge that “cross-Taiwan Straits relations have sustained a sound momentum of peaceful development, but the root cause of instability has not yet been removed.” If Taiwan is serious about **accommodation** as a means of deterring military conflict, then it should **cease purchasing military** **equipment** from the U.S. Stopping the arms purchases would send a **clear message** to Beijing that Taiwan is interested in **deeper accommodation**. A halt in arms sales would also benefit **U.S.-Chinese** relations by removing a “**major stumbling block** for developing **bilateral military**-to-military **ties**.” This is certainly a very controversial proposal, and would likely be very difficult to sell to the Taiwanese people, but as I’ve already explained the status quo is becoming more and more **untenable**. There are two important things to keep in mind about this proposal which mitigate fears that this is some kind of appeasement to China. First, halting U.S. arms sales does not mean that Taiwan’s self-defense forces would **cease to exist**. China may be gaining ground on Taiwan militarily, but the pain that Taiwan could inflict on an attacking force is still high. China may be able to defeat Taiwan in a conflict, but the losses its military would take to seize the island would significantly hamper its ability to use its military while it recovers from attacking Taiwan. Second, there is an easily identifiable off-ramp that can be used by Taiwan if the policy is not successful. Stopping arms purchases is meant to be a way of testing the water. If the Chinese respond positively to the decision by offering greater military cooperation with Taiwan or some form of political concessions then Beijing signals its commitment to the accommodation process. On the other hand, if the Chinese refuse to follow through and meet Taiwan halfway then Beijing signals that it is not actually committed to accommodation. Taiwan would then resume purchasing American weapons with the knowledge that it must find some other way to prevent conflict. Accommodation by giving up American arms sales is a tough pill for Taiwan to swallow, but it simply does not have many other viable alternatives to preventing conflict. Taiwan could pursue acquiring nuclear weapons, but this would be met by American opposition and would likely trigger a pre-emptive attack by China if the weapons program were discovered. Taiwan could try to avert conflict by increasing military spending to forestall, but this would be difficult to sustain so long as China’s economy and military spending is also growing. Analysts at CSBA have argued for deterrence through protraction, which advocates employing asymmetric guerrilla-style tactics to prevent China from achieving air and sea dominance. This has the highest likelihood of success of the three alternatives mentioned in this paragraph, but it still relies on intervention by outside powers to ultimately save the day. Taiwan’s military deterrent will not be able to prevent a Chinese attempt to change the status quo by force for much longer. Any conflict in the Taiwan Strait would likely involve a commitment of U.S. forces and could lead to a major war between the U.S. and China. Accommodation could be the best worst **option** that Taiwan, and the U.S., has for preventing a war with China. Announcing an end to American weapons purchases could bring Taiwan **progress on negotiations** with China if successful while still providing **off-ramps** that Taiwan could take if unsuccessful. I admit, the idea of accommodation does have its flaws, and more work needs to be done to flesh out this idea. I hope that this idea of deep accommodation will add to the discussion about the management of the Taiwan Strait issue. The status quo won’t last forever, and a vigorous debate will be needed to arrive at the best possible solution.

**Taiwan is the biggest thorn in the relationship. Empirically,**

**Zhuang found in July** [Silvie Zhuang, 07-17-2024, "China calls off arms control talks with US over weapon sales to Taiwan", South China Morning Post, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3270835/china-calls-arms-control-talks-us-over-weapon-sales-taiwan>] leon + OA

China has cut off **arms control** and **non-proliferation** **talks** with the United States because of Washington’s **arms sales** to Taiwan, the Chinese foreign ministry said on Wednesday. “China has decided to suspend talks with the US on holding a new round of arms control and non-proliferation consultations,” ministry spokesman Lin Jian said. “The responsibility for this situation lies **entirely** with the US.” He said the US’ continued sales of weapons to the island in the face of Beijing’s opposition had “**severely damaged** the **political atmosphere** necessary for continued arms control consultations between the two sides”. China was **willing** to maintain communication with the US on the issue but only on the condition that “the US must respect China’s **core interests** and create the necessary conditions for **dialogue** and **exchange** between the two sides”, the ministry said. The two countries held their first meeting in four years in November in Washington, where both agreed on the **importance** of maintaining such communication under the conditions of respect and trust, the ministry said. But Taiwan has increasingly become a **sore point** – in addition to tensions over trade, the South China Sea, and technology. Beijing sees Taiwan as part of China, to be reunited by force if necessary. The United States, like most countries, does not recognise self-governed Taiwan as independent, but is opposed to any attempt to take the island by force. The US, legally bound by its 1979 Taiwan Relations Act to help the island protect itself, has been its **top weapons supplier**. In April, it passed a US$95 billion foreign aid package that included arms support for Taiwan. And in December, it approved a US$300 million tactical systems upgrade for the island. China and the US resumed their talks on arms control and nuclear non-proliferation **less than a year ago** following the end of Covid restrictions.

**Cooperation is essential. When great powers, like the US and China, can overcome differences, ground breaking developments are possible.**

**Davis wrote in 2023** [Steve Davis, Lecturer and Global Health Faculty Fellow, Stanford University Graduate School of Business; Member, Council on Foreign Relations, 8-23-2023, "Finding Safe Harbors for Development Impact: Navigating U.S.-China Stormy Waters for the Global Public Good" CSIS, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/finding-safe-harbors-development-impact-navigating-us-china-stormy-waters-global-public>, accessed: 10-26-2024] OA

In West Africa, a new breed of rice that can withstand **flooding** and **drought** has allowed farmers to **triple their productivity**, improving local economies and feeding thousands of people. In regions from South America to Scotland, new **green tech**nologies are generating an **abundance of clean energy**. And in Southeast Asia, hundreds of millions of children have been **protected** from deadly Japanese encephalitis through **life-saving vaccines**. Each of these projects is contributing significantly to the **collective future** of **humans** and the **planet**. And all of them hinge on partnerships in **health**, **technology**, and **business** between the **U**nited **S**tates and its greatest strategic rival: **China**. Take the Green Super Rice feeding thousands in West Africa, for example. It leverages 40 years of Chinese research on rice seeds accelerated with the financial muscle of **U.S. philanthropy**. Meanwhile, China’s ability to develop and produce **low-cost vaccines**—for safeguarding the health of its own enormous population as well as supporting millions in the Global South—has been bolstered by **know-how** and **support** from the West, particularly through global health research collaborations, assistance with regulatory reforms, and the navigation of global qualification and distribution channels. These examples, but a tiny sample of social impact collaborations underway around the world, remind us that endeavors advancing human health and development often fall beyond the purview of any single country; multinational and multisectoral partnerships are increasingly required. Specifically, they underscore the importance of **continued engagement** by two of the world’s greatest economic and technological powers, as well as the need to find ways to continue such collaborations in smart, informed, geopolitically sensitive, and mutually beneficial models. Truly **game-changing innovations** and **opportunities** with great social impact are within reach; and yet, many will depend on **initiating**, **continuing**, or **expanding collaborations** between partners in the United States and China to augment the **global public good**. However, this reality sits alongside stark and uncontestable truths: that the relationship between the **U**nited **S**tates and **China** over the past 10 years has worsened to one of its **lowest historical ebbs**, that policy and national sentiment have negatively reshaped the countries’ perceptions of—and working exchanges with—each other, and that we are in an era of aggressive competition that threatens progress in some of this work. As the trajectory of this new great power competition continues to play out, what will happen to the substantial historical legacy of partnership between these two nations on issues of critical social impact? Will it be possible for would-be collaborators on either side of the Pacific to navigate these rocky waters without being immobilized by political risk, thwarted by sanctions, or hamstrung by the potential for reputational damage? The stakes are high. Between **global climate change**, **food insecurity**, and the very real threat of **future pandemics**, humanity is facing **truly existential challenges**. Against that backdrop, it is imperative to examine these opportunities and constraints, then reimagine new mechanisms and narratives—safe harbors—where **China** and the **U**nited **S**tates can continue to leverage their **collective expertise** for the **global public good**. This essay explores the reasons such a **dialogue is needed**, the risks at play, and some options for moving forward. Its aim is not to wish away deeply competitive features of the U.S.-China relationship, but rather to accept that these dynamics will persist and then generate understanding of and support for actively reimagining U.S.-China transnational collaborations in key areas of development. It seeks to advance thinking around ways to identify and pursue opportunities that support U.S. interests for multilateral social impact projects with China.[1] It is imperative to examine these opportunities and constraints, then reimagine new mechanisms and narratives—safe harbors—where China and the United States can continue to leverage their collective expertise for the global public good. It does not take an expert to appreciate that the relationship between China and the United States is among the most complex, fraught, and critical on earth. Nor does this paper suggest that U.S. policies toward China—or vice versa—are misguided. Quite the contrary. Albeit without access to much of the intelligence behind the current stances, this is written with full awareness of the many potential threats that each nation perceives in the other. Acknowledging the realities—and the fact that aggressive competition between these two powers is only likely to increase—this essay proposes that we need a new set of principles and mechanisms to guide continued collaboration among scientists and activists in health, climate, food security, and humanitarian relief. The **well-being** of the **world** depends on it. China’s Journey toward Global Development Impact Among confrontational policies, rhetoric, and media coverage, it is easy to lose sight of or underappreciate China’s historical and current role in global development. In part, China’s work in countries across much of the Global South, with deep roots in the “South-South” brotherhood of developing economies starting back in the 1950s, is hard to track or understand. China’s historical role in global aid and development has often been opaque—deeply tied to its political interests in specific countries, often delivered as part of infrastructure or other economic packages, and generally done through bilateral (state-to-state) mechanisms or as part of larger investment deals. Without delving into a discourse on China’s philosophy and approach to global development, of which there are many, suffice it to say that China has taken a very different route from the West.[2] Most notably, China has been slow to embrace multilateral initiatives (through large multicountry organizations) or to actively participate in large globally coordinated development or humanitarian initiatives. And yet, the many strands of China’s international collaboration have knitted together a clear commitment and broad narrative that are increasingly notable in terms of their scale and political importance. A range of bilateral scientific projects in **health**, **agriculture**, **water** and sanitation, and **climate** **greatly expanded** in the 1990s through the 2010s.[3] Looking at global health as an example, **U.S.-China collaboration** quickly expanded after the two countries’ relations were normalized in 1979, particularly through exchanges and knowledge sharing with experts from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), who worked with partner organizations to lay the health infrastructure groundwork that led to the establishment of China’s own CDC in 2001.[4] With support from U.S.-based nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and coordination from regulatory authorities like the World Health Organization (WHO), China has become an essential linchpin in helping to **eradicate polio** through vaccine production and monitoring systems.[5] China has also played a major role in combating tuberculosis (**TB**) and **malaria**—two of the world’s top infectious killers—by working with the World Bank, the British Department for International Development, Japan, the Netherlands, the WHO, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and other international NGOs to dramatically cut infection rates through improved detection, technology, and treatment. Altogether, China’s work on TB has benefited some **668 million people**, prompting the World Bank’s lead economist studying health in East Asia to call it “one of the most successful TB projects ever seen.”[6] China also brought lessons learned in the fight against malaria to Africa. Its research program to find new treatments for malaria led to the discovery of artemisinin, now the basis of the world’s most effective antimalarial drugs. Overall, in the words of Pedro Alonso, director of the WHO Global Malaria Programme, China’s healthcare advancements have had a global “ripple effect.”[7] This success was not solely the result of international aid. China’s spending on research and development in 2017—at $200 billion—was nearly seven times its investment just a decade earlier, much of it in healthcare.[8] However, these collaborations have taken on a different tone and approach in the past decade. President Xi Jinping has embarked on an aggressive campaign to build China’s geopolitical influence, especially with the Global South, and has placed global health and development as a critical piece of that work.[9] Such initiatives include a broad set of mechanisms, and approaches include the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) for infrastructure development involving 70 countries across South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa; the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, a multilateral cooperative making social-improvement loans available to 91 member nations; and, more recently, a Global Development Initiative to aid nations’ continued recovery from the economic devastations of Covid-19.[10] In his 2021 speech at the United Nations General Assembly, Xi explicitly stated that China would use its growing global influence to further the public good in science, food security, and other areas, calling on the world community to join in renewing a shared commitment to balanced, inclusive growth.[11] To date, the impact of these ambitious-sounding initiatives has been unclear and comparatively modest, depending on whether you are measuring political influence or actual social development impact. Some argue that these have been poorly executed approaches driven by China’s agenda to expand its economic and strategic interests across the world; others see them as glimmers of potential for the possibility of using the enormous resources, manpower, and research capacity of the world’s second-largest economy to focus on critical global issues. For the latter to be realized, China needs to dispel anxiety by clearly demonstrating that these initiatives work for their intended beneficiaries, not just China’s interests. Regardless, they certainly represent notable change in a country long criticized for failing to address global poverty. China and the United States Working Together Within this context, many of China’s international collaborations have focused on global social impact by partnering with various U.S. organizations. In some cases, these partnerships have lasted more than a century. The Rockefeller Foundation, for instance, has maintained significant programs in China since 1913, funding—and shaping—the education of generations of doctors at Peking Union Medical College, as well as supporting humanitarian causes during the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. Since opening its Beijing office in 2007, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has managed a portfolio of philanthropic grants and initiatives that includes programs to help China improve the quality of its medical products toward normative international standards, as well as contribute efforts to the fight against TB, HIV, and other diseases in China. The Gates Foundation has also provided technical assistance and support to Chinese efforts directed at low resource needs elsewhere in the world, including safe Chinese vaccines, innovations in agriculture and sanitation, and improved scientific research opportunities between Chinese and global scientists. In conjunction with the Beijing Municipal Government, the foundation launched and co-funded the Global Health Drug Discovery Institute (GHDDI), based at Tsinghua University, to help orient and leverage research and innovation toward critical diseases across the globe for which cures and treatments are needed.[12] But the Gates Foundation is actually a latecomer. The Asia Foundation has been active in China since the late 1970s. The World Wildlife Fund has been working to promote conservation efforts in China—from forest management to wetlands conservation and species protection—since 1980. Johns Hopkins University and Nanjing University opened the Hopkins-Nanjing Center for Chinese and American Studies in 1986. The Ford Foundation began working on U.S.-China issues in the 1960s through funding China studies centers in the United States, before establishing a Beijing office in 1988.[13] Greenpeace has been working there since 1997. And the list goes on. On the U.S. side, this long association attests to the fact that for decades, the United States valued international exchanges as a form of “**soft diplomacy**.” The first Fulbright agreement signed by the United States was with China in 1947. And even during the U.S.-Soviet Cold War, U.S.-funded exchange programs supported some 20,000 **international students** for study in the United States each year. An increasingly large proportion of them have come from China. By 2019, 370,000 students from China were enrolled in U.S. schools, accounting for about 34 percent of foreign students in the United States.[14] Most Chinese students in the United States have indicated a strong desire to stay in the United States, which underscores the **importance of the programs** but increasingly raises concerns in both Beijing and Washington. China welcomed these partnerships as well for many years—in part as a recipient of aid as a developing country with health and development programs focused on China, and in part as a component of its expanding global footprint across Africa and other regions of the globe, where it also has a strategic interest in “soft power” politics. The technical assistance provided to Chinese government agencies, academic institutions, and even companies through these programs significantly elevated China’s **know-how** and **engagement** on **critical social issues**, and even today it continues to be welcomed by Chinese and U.S. authorities on specific issues such as **HIV/AIDS** prevention and **cancer** research. Changing Geopolitical Winds Many international observers hoped that mounting tensions between China and the United States would be a passing phase, provoked by Donald Trump’s anti-China rhetoric and vanishing with his exit from office. Others suggested that as Xi Jinping consolidated power with a third term as leader of the Chinese Communist Party, his antipathy toward the United States might ease. But the divide has only become more entrenched, with the Biden administration solidifying a framing of China as the primary U.S. strategic competitor with numerous policies, sanctions, and commitments, and the Xi administration expanding its anti-U.S. policies and rhetoric. With schisms playing out **militarily**, technologically, economically, and ideologically, more observers are speaking in cold war terms—and expressing concerns about the potential for some event, such as a confrontation over **Taiwan**, to trigger a “hot war.”

**And repairing the relationship also solves prolif---eliminates threats and fosters arms control meetings.**

**Nan wrote this yeara** [Hao Nan, 9-19-2024, research fellow with the Charhar Institute, and fellow with the Arms Control Negotiation Academy, "Opinion: US-China tensions risk igniting nuclear arms race in East Asia" South China Morning Post, <https://www.scmp.com/opinion/china-opinion/article/3278834/us-china-tensions-risk-igniting-nuclear-arms-race-east-asia?scrlybrkr=8f8fe11f>, accessed: 10-26-2024] OA

Amid a deterioration in US-China relations, the risks of a nuclear **arms race** in East Asia are **growing alarmingly**. The recent US-China diplomatic battles over **nuclear arms control** are a continuation of earlier **unsuccessful attempts** at dialogue. Both countries have attempted to resume the long-stalled nuclear arms control talks. On November 6, the first official nuclear arms control dialogue since 2018 was convened in the lead-up to Biden’s talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping on November 15, 2023, on the sidelines of the Apec summit. However, these talks produced no concrete results, and no specific date for follow-up discussions was announced. Semi-official channels were also explored, such as a track two nuclear arms dialogue in March – the first since 2019. The trajectory of nuclear developments in East Asia, driven by US-China rivalry, threatens to **destabilise** the region and spark a **chain reaction** of nuclear deterrence efforts. It is imperative for global security that the US and China resume **meaningful arms control dialogue** to prevent a cascading series of escalatory measures that could have **catastrophic consequences**. China is set to come close to matching the number of nuclear warheads held by Russia and the US by 2035, according to forecasts. Such an expansion would be a stark departure from China’s stated stance of maintaining a minimal deterrent. Beijing’s nuclear posture is probably a response to what it perceives as Washington’s provocations, including the months-long deployment of mid-range missiles in the Philippines, the formation of the Aukus grouping and continued arms sales to Taiwan. Meanwhile, the US has justified its actions as a counter to China’s growing regional influence. However, this mutual escalation only **deepens mistrust** and narrows the space for **diplomatic resolution**. Complicating the situation further is Russia’s increasing involvement in East Asia. Moscow, while threatening to use nuclear weapons in response to Nato members’ support for Ukraine, has recently strengthened its **military alignment** with China, conducting joint patrols near Alaska. Russia also forged an alliance with North Korea in June. These developments signal a **growing Russia-China alignment** that directly challenges the US’ influence in East Asia. North Korea, emboldened by its alliance with Russia, has intensified its **nuclear ambitions**, possibly viewing the current geopolitical environment as a prime opportunity to reassert its nuclear brinkmanship. Meanwhile, Russia’s manoeuvres not only exacerbate the US-China strategic competition but also add a volatile new element to the region’s **nuclear calculus.** The evolving nuclear dynamics in East Asia is reminiscent of deterrence chain reactions witnessed in South Asia. India, perceiving a nuclear threat from China, has ramped up its own **nuclear capabilities**. Pakistan has also enhanced its **nuclear deterrent** with regards to India. A similar but more complicated misalignment of perceptions is now unfolding in East Asia, where **Japan**, **So**uth **Ko**rea and **No**rth **Ko**rea are all adjusting their **nuclear postures** in response to the strategic rivalry between US and the partnership of **China** and **Russia**, creating a dangerous **feedback loop of escalation**. Japan, traditionally upholding its three non-nuclear principles, is being driven to **reconsider its stance** in light of the alignment between China and Russia. The Fumio Kishida administration has engaged in discussions with the US about enhancing its extended deterrence. This reflects Japan’s growing anxiety over **regional security**, particularly as **Chinese** and **Russian military activities** intensify near its shores. Similarly, Seoul has strengthened its **nuclear ties** with Washington since South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol’s visit to the US in April 2023, culminating in extended cooperation on integrating nuclear strategies. These developments highlight the pervasive sense of **insecurity** in the region and the lengths to which nations are willing to go to **ensure their defence**. It is evident that the focus on nuclear deterrence by countries in the region risks exacerbating tensions and triggering an **arms** **race**. Instead, all regional stakeholders should prioritise **diplomatic engagement** and **confidence-building** measures, particularly between China, the US and Russia.

**Reducing our military support for Taiwan isn’t about abandoning an ally---it’s about choosing diplomacy over destruction, stability over chaos, and progress over peril. Let’s prioritize peace, cooperation, and the security of all, rather than fanning the flames of conflict. Put the people first and side with the affirmative.**