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By: Russell Hsiao

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In a significant escalation of military tensions in the Taiwan Strait, the Chinese military fired at least 11 *Dongfeng* (DF, 東風) ballistic [missiles and rockets](#) around and over Taiwan at designated closure areas that encircle the island. The barrage of lethal projectiles—all fired in a single afternoon on August 4—was accompanied by other significant military exercises and blistering rhetoric that Beijing authorities claimed were in response to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's Congressional delegation (CODEL) visit to Taiwan. The rockets and missiles struck five pre-designated closure areas that bracketed the main island of Taiwan. To cap off this display of aggression, the People's Liberation Army Rocket Force (PLARF, 中國人民解放軍火箭軍) fired four ballistic missiles that reportedly overflew the main island. These operations are a key part of a sophisticated combination of military exercises that still [continues](#) as of this writing. [1]

This level of Chinese aggression is unprecedented on multiple levels, even when compared to the [1995-1996 Third Taiwan Strait Crisis](#)—which lasted over a period of eight months—in which the PLA fired 10 missiles around the Taiwan Strait over several phases that included other military maneuvers. This preliminary analysis will specifically examine the knowns and unknowns of the 2022 missile tests, provide a quantitative and qualitative comparison to the 1995-1996 missile tests, and assess the signals that the current tests may be intended to convey, as well as their implications.

Unprecedented Overflight Numbers, Missile Types, and Designated Exclusion Zones

On the evening that Speaker Pelosi arrived in Taipei—following a slow-boiling controversy over her proposed visit—the Chinese government [immediately announced](#) that it would begin military exercises in six designated closure areas encircling Taiwan from August 4-7. Notably, two of these closure areas overlapped with Japan's exclusive economic zone (EEZ), while another overlapped with the Philippine's EEZ. Simultaneous [announcements](#) from official Chinese sources, however, indicated that the exercises would begin on August 2—while Speaker Pelosi was still on the ground in Taiwan—even though the closure ar-

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eas were [scheduled for August 4-7](#). This caused some confusion among China watchers about the signal of the announcements. While it is not clear whether the apparent confusion in these official announcements was deliberate, it is plausible that Beijing authorities were being purposefully ambiguous in order to create uncertainty over whether the exercise could affect Speaker Pelosi directly during her time in Taiwan. This uncertainty was amplified by People's Republic of China (PRC) propaganda outlets in the lead-up to her visit, with some Chinese commentators claiming that she could be prevented from flying into or landing in Taipei.

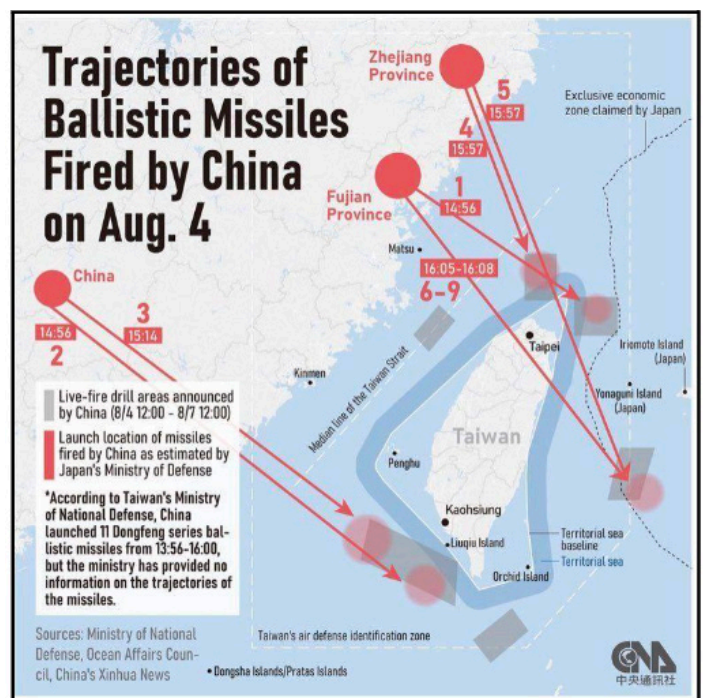
At least nine of 11 missiles appear to have been fired from [three launch sites](#) located in Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangxi Provinces along the southeastern coast of China. While multiple military experts have [speculated](#) that a variant of the DF-15 (which was also the type of missile used in 1995-1996) was used, the exact types were not disclosed by the Chinese military. Based on visible features from videos published on Chinese military websites, many experts believe that the main ballistic missile used was the DF 15B, though both this variant and the DF-16 could have been fired as well, in addition to several PHL-16 rockets fired from Pingtan Island. According to global intelligence firm [Jane's](#), the DF-16 has "Multiple Warhead Independently Targeted Reentry Vehicles" (MIRVs), which allow for the targeting of multiple locations. However, per the Jane's analysis the missile launched this time appears to have carried only one MIRV.

There are at least three features of the most recent missile and rocket tests that make them especially notable. First, according to [Japan's Ministry of Defense](#), four of the ballistic missiles reportedly flew over the main island of Taiwan and five landed in Japan's EEZ. According to Taiwan's Ministry of Defense (MOD, 國防部), the main flight path of the DF missiles that overflew Taiwan was outside the atmosphere and thus is not considered to be in the country's airspace. Had the missiles traversed Taiwan's airspace, this would have been an even more provocative act. According to [Su Tzu-yun](#) (蘇紫雲), an analyst with the Taiwanese Ministry of Defense-funded think tank Institute for National Defense and Security Research (國防安全研究院), since the missile did not technically intrude into Taiwan's airspace, it did not pose too much of a military threat. As such, Su believed that the missile overflights were forms of the PLA's "psychological warfare" (心理作戰).

The second feature is the synchronized sequence and intensity of the missile and rocket barrage. [The sequence](#) began with the PHL-16 rockets—a type of multiple launch rocket system (MLRS)—fired from Pingtan Island to a target across the median

line in the Taiwan Strait at around 1:56 PM on August 4. This was followed one hour later by a simultaneous firing of two DF ballistic missile fired from bases in Fujian and Jiangxi to targets located near the south and northeast coasts of Taiwan, followed by a third volley targeting the southwestern closure area. The fourth and fifth volleys, which were also fired simultaneously from the launch site in Zhejiang, targeted two closure areas to the northwest and east of Taiwan. The [barrage](#) was finished off by four missiles fired from the base in Fujian that overflew Taiwan to target the closure area on the island's east coast. The entire sequence concluded at 4:08 PM, lasting 72 minutes in total. The test sequence clearly simulated a bracketing of the main island of Taiwan—north, south, east, and west—which is a cueing technique used by artillery forces in preparation to strike a target. These exercises demonstrate a level of synchronization not seen before in any previous exercises conducted by the PLARF. While the sequencing of these drills may not be visible to the general public, the military signal is clear.

According to [Randy Schriver](#), "The coordinated bracketing of the island is the kind of exercise that will be more applicable to an actual strike." "This is several shots targeted at different closure areas timed in a particular way, so that more closely resembles if they were actually going to use missiles to strike Taiwan," Schriver added.



Graphic: Missiles launched by the PRC during the August 4 missile tests. (Graphic source: [CNA](#))

The third feature is the PLA's coordinated propaganda and information operations apparently aimed at amplifying the psycho-

logical effects of simulating an effective “blockade of Taiwan.” Propaganda outlets in China have repeatedly referred to the exercises as a [blockade of the island](#), even though the exercises themselves did not rise to the level of a blockade.

While there is clearly military value to the tests and exercises, the overall propaganda value may be far more important. This view was suggested even by Chinese officials themselves. According to the PRC’s [Ministry of Defense](#), the purpose of the operations was to test precision strike and area denial capabilities. Yet, as [Major General Meng Xiangqing](#) (孟祥青), a professor at the PLA National Defense University, noted, the scope, intensity, deterrent effect, and action elements of this military exercise are far greater than past exercises. In describing the locations of the six closure areas, [Meng emphasized](#): “Altogether, the six areas form something of a noose. When the knot tightens, it’s like containing separatist forces on the island.”

1995-1996 Redux?

The last time that Beijing authorities fired missiles at Taiwan was during the 1995-1996 Third Taiwan Strait Crisis. Over three consecutive days in July 1995, a total of six DF-15 missiles were launched from sites in Fujian Province at a rate of two launches per day. In March 1996, after an interlude of eight months and in the same month as the island’s first direct presidential election, the PRC began another round of missile tests targeting closure areas within 50 miles from Taiwan’s ports in the north and south of the island. Three DF-15 missiles were fired from bases in Fujian on March 8, then another DF-15 missile was launched five days later. The PLA was “[bracketing](#)” Taiwan by targeting the northern and southern tips of the island in a sequenced pattern that resembled a zeroing technique that could be used as a prelude to a direct attack. In total, the [1995-1996 Crisis](#) saw 10 missiles fired over the course of eight months, compared to 11 missiles fired in one day during the 2022 missile tests.

While the political signal of the 1995-1996 episode was focused primarily on Taiwan, the 2022 exercises appear to be more heavily focused on the United States. According to China military analyst [Dean Cheng](#), a senior fellow at the Heritage Foundation:

“It is striking that when we look at what the Chinese are doing right now off of Taiwan, there is an interesting parallel—announcement of closure spaces, firing of missiles—compared to 1996. And yet, today’s China is a very different entity from the China of 1996 [when] [...] [w]e sent two carrier battle groups to the region, and the second group in particular sent a distinct message to Beijing: “you are outmatched.” [...] [N]o one at this point [...]

is about to openly advocate sending two carrier battle groups directly into harm’s way. Why? Because frankly [...] the PLA of today is significantly different. I think that what this is saying from Beijing is “you are outmatched,” and that underlies the foundation for why China has been escalating, is that that balance of power—military, but also economic, and even to some extent political—is in Beijing’s view shifting and sliding in its favor.”

Conclusions

In the preliminary analysis, the 2022 missile tests and military exercises could mark a “new normal” in the Taiwan Strait—a semi-permanent state of higher levels of tensions. [Current reporting](#) indicates that Chinese military exercises are continuing even as of this writing, and the PLA has already [indicated](#) that it will continue to operate in areas east of the median line of the Taiwan Strait. While this does not mean that the PLA will now frequently fire missiles around and over Taiwan, it has laid down some new military markers for political redlines. Additionally, the targeting of five closure areas encircling Taiwan and the fact that four missiles overflew the main island reflect the PLARF’s enhanced capability and willingness to encroach upon Taiwan’s territorial space. Ultimately, the 2022 missile exercises were clearly intended to demonstrate a superior capability than that demonstrated during the 1995-1996 crisis, and reflect a more [able and confident PLARF](#).

While it is unlikely that the missile tests and military exercises are a prelude to an imminent military invasion, they do reflect aggressive military posturing by Chinese leaders that appears intended to set out a benchmark for political redlines on future actions. Overall, these actions contribute to a heightened state of military tension that will not be going away anytime soon. As seriously provocative as these missile tests were, however, they appear primarily intended to produce political and psychological effects. As such, it is important that Taipei and Washington not take the bait and come up with measured—yet firm—approaches to ensure that their responses are coordinated and proportional.

While the exercises in 95-96 may have been primarily directed at Taiwan, the current exercise seems to be intended to send a message to the United States. On August 8, PRC Defense Ministry Spokesman Wu Qian (吴谦) [defended the cancellation](#) of military talks in retaliation for Pelosi’s visit, calling Beijing’s actions a “necessary warning” to Washington “not to go down the wrong path [...] We urge the US side to respect China’s core interests and concern and abandon this illusion of using the Tai-

wan question to contain China.”

Since the exercises were not simply a show of military force, what are Beijing’s political objectives? As then-Secretary of State Warren Christopher [later wrote](#) about the 1995-1996 crisis, “The administration was concerned that a simple miscalculation or misstep could [have lead] to unintended war.” Such concerns led the Clinton Administration to form a “[strategic partnership](#)” with Beijing to manage tensions, which eventually led to Clinton’s “[three-noes](#).” If past is prologue, it may now be the case that Beijing is similarly attempting to manufacture a crisis to improve its negotiating position *vis-à-vis* the United States. Just as the 95-96 incident was seen as a successful case of coercive diplomacy, Beijing may be using the Pelosi visit as the justification to beat back what it sees as the advances of US-Taiwan relations that have occurred in recent years, as well as what Beijing considers American and Taiwanese salami-slicing and a so-called “hollowing out” of the “One-China Policy.”

Whereas the Chinese were militarily incapable of keeping the United States from intervening in the 1995-1996 standoff, the PLA is now more than capable of keeping US military assets at risk and at bay, a fact that it is clearly demonstrating. As Beijing ratchets up military tensions to affect the political-military calculus in Washington and Taipei, the two security partners may need to seriously consider being more willing to remove some of the existing constraints on Taiwan’s self-defense capabilities to ensure that it can effectively defend itself against the spectrum of Beijing’s coercive actions. While this phase of the missile tests has likely concluded, this is likely only a pause as the PRC stakes out a more favorable position to demand political concessions from Taipei and Washington. There is a distinct possibility that there could be another set of missile exercises within the next 16 months in the run-up to the 2024 presidential election in Taiwan and after Xi Jinping (習近平) secures his unprecedented third term in office after the 20th Chinese Communist Party (中國共產黨) Congress.

The main point: In terms of missile numbers, flight paths, and sequencing, the 2022 missile tests demonstrate a level of intensity and synchronization not seen before in any previous missile tests conducted by the PLARF. While it does not appear to indicate a prelude to an imminent military invasion, it does reflect Beijing’s aggressive military posture, which is likely aimed at political negotiations.

(The author would like to thank Adrienne Wu for her research assistance.)

[1] On August 4, Taiwan’s MOTC also [announced](#) another clo-

sure area in the vicinity of the eastern coast of Taiwan, raising the total to seven.

Update: The PLA Eastern Theater Command [announced](#) the end of the military exercises on August 10, 2022.

Correction: An earlier version of this article incorrectly stated that the entire sequence of rocket and missile launches lasted 72 minutes, which is in fact the time for the synchronized ballistic missiles. The entire sequence including the PHL-16 rockets took 132 minutes.

The Future of Taiwan-Japan Defense Cooperation

By: Eric Chan and Lt. Gen. (ret.) Wallace “Chip” Gregson

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The assassination of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (安倍 晋三) on July 8, 2022 was a heavy blow for supporters of democratic cooperation against authoritarian coercion. Abe had a long history of promoting greater regional networks to counterbalance the increasing threat from the People’s Republic of China (PRC). For instance, his [2007 speech](#) to the Indian Parliament on the importance of joining the Pacific and Indian Oceans as part of a “broader Asia” was the genesis of the term “Indo-Pacific,” which moved the contextual framework of strategic thought from an Asia centered on China to one including India and Southeast Asia. Such was the power of the term that the [CCP directed PRC diplomats to warn countries](#) against the use of the phrase.

Abe’s legacy was not built on terminology alone. As prime minister, he was a champion of the [formation of “The Quad,”](#) the loose strategic framework joining the United States, Japan, India, and Australia. In addition, he further transformed Japanese bilateral relationships with [India](#) and across Southeast Asia (particularly with [Vietnam](#) and the [Philippines](#)), deftly weaving values and national interest to counter PRC influence.

What could arguably be his most impressive foreign policy achievement, however, was his [transformation of Japan's relationship toward Taiwan](#). Given the nature of the PRC threat towards Taiwan, this represented a sea change in how Japan views the region, as well as its own uneasy relationship with the role of military power in national security. [Legal reforms during Abe's administration](#) mean that the Japanese military can now use force in the context of collective self-defense (for instance, a Taiwan contingency) rather than only as a response against direct attack. In the aftermath of Abe's death, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) coalition has now amassed a significant majority in Japan's upper house. While [popular commentary has focused on the potential for the LDP to revise Japan's pacifist constitution](#), the significant amount of political capital and attention that would be required to effect such a largely symbolic change might be more gainfully directed towards expanding Taiwan and Japan defense cooperation. The recent [PLA firing of Dongfeng ballistic missiles into Japan's exclusive economic zone \(EEZ\)](#) as part of its [larger encircling coercion operation against Taiwan](#) makes it clear that Taiwan and Japan's security is now inextricably linked. Thus, defense cooperation should be, as well. This cooperation would assist Taiwan and Japan in deterring PRC aggression, as well as imposing higher costs on the PRC for engaging in [gray zone warfare](#).

In this article, we explore three methods of expanded cooperation: advancing security cooperation via a new Japanese Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), establishing a professional military education exchange system, and coordinating against People's Liberation Army (PLA) gray zone warfare.

Advancing Security Cooperation via a Japanese TRA

The [latest Japanese defense white paper](#) identifies Taiwan as "important for Japan's security and the stability of the international community." Even after Abe's reforms, though, this identification is only useful in the context of policy deterrence related to a Taiwan crisis: the PRC must now consider the prospect of earlier and more proactive Japanese intervention in conjunction with the United States.

Yet, current legal authorities and established government-to-government channels do not effectively address how Japan can work with Taiwan, either bilaterally or with the United States, on a day-to-day basis. A Japanese TRA would provide the legal framework for holistic cooperation in *paceing competition*: diplomatically and informationally pushing back against the PRC's efforts to dominate the region; coordinating against [PRC economic coercion](#); and expanding military cooperation

and readiness against both gray zone and conventional warfare.

Moreover, a Japanese TRA with policy language modeled after that of the United States ("shall 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 capacity") would hold out the prospect of significantly increased military-industrial cooperation. The LDP's proposal to [double Japan's defense budget over the next five years](#) will mean that the Japanese military will enjoy vastly sped-up and increased defense orders for things like supersonic anti-ship missiles and air defense capability—exactly the same capabilities that Taiwan is interested in. As the proposal *also* looks to loosen Japanese arms exports restrictions, a Japanese TRA would allow Taiwan to jointly participate in arms orders, taking advantage of volume discounts. This would also allow Taiwan's defense industry to more openly collaborate with the Japanese defense industry on everything from supply chain construction to research and development. Solidifying the flow of foreign military equipment, as well as further developing Taiwan's indigenous defense industry, would be an enormous benefit to the development and sustainment of Taiwanese defense capabilities—particularly complex programs like the Indigenous Defense Submarine (IDS, 潛艦國造).

Establishing a Professional Military Education Relationship

When it comes to defense, equipment is important, but human capital is even more critical. Many people think of security cooperation as being primarily focused on foreign military sales, but a much more vital piece of a close defense relationship is composed of people-to-people relationships, education, and training. In a crisis, personal relationships play a critical role in speeding up aid across (and sometimes around) bureaucracies. In the Russia-Ukraine War, [the relationships formed between the Ukrainian Air Force and the California National Guard](#) as part of the State Partnership Program were instrumental in three areas: first, the military training itself; second, both sides gained a better understanding of the capabilities that each might be able to offer during a crisis; and third, the personal contacts made during training formed the basis for immediate crisis communications prior to the establishment of more formal cooperation organizations and structures.

Thus, the establishment of a professional military education (PME) relationship across the entire spectrum of a military member's career would have significant effects for the Taiwan-Japan relationship. Regular engagement—from cadet level, to junior/mid-level officer and non-commissioned officer (NCO) exchange

courses and training, and finally to the war college level—would create a diversified pool of contacts familiar with the technical and operational details of one another’s respective militaries. It would improve strategic-level assessments of defense capability and intent, allowing for better interoperability if and when the time comes that formal coordination becomes possible. In the long run, it would also create a natural constituency for increased partnership. For instance, [the Japan-America Air Force Goodwill Association](#) (JAAGA), comprised of retired Japan Air Self-Defense Forces general officers and colonels—many with experience in the US PME system—represents a powerful constituency for a close US-Japan defense relationship.

Finally, the development of PME relationships would allow both Taiwan and Japan to easily scale up further engagement, from strategic-level discussions between senior officers to operational-level coordination between war planners. This lack of coordination, or even a common operating picture, has allowed the PRC to separately and effectively wage gray zone warfare.

Coordinating Against Gray Zone Warfare

The PLA method for gray zone warfare revolves around the old dictum of *divide and conquer*. Both [Taiwan](#) and [Japan](#) suffer from constant incursions by the PLAAF and China Coast Guard, which have dramatically escalated over the last few years.

With a Japanese TRA and a firm training relationship, the next step would be intelligence sharing, which could provide a common operating picture. Such a picture would allow the two militaries to establish priorities for intercepts in the air and on the sea. Against “day-to-day” incursions, this would allow for some level of tandem, unmanned aircraft response to put countervailing pressure on the PLA to divide its attention and preserve combat power.

Against surges of PLA activity, as demonstrated by the aforementioned PLA firing of five ballistic missiles into Japan’s EEZ, but also the [missile overflight of Taiwan](#), [multiple unmanned aerial vehicles \(UAVs\)](#) flying around Kinmen (金門), as well as [large-scale fighter/naval incursions across the Taiwan Strait median line](#), even more robust coordination would be required. This would mean liaison officers embedded in respective air operations centers for real-time intelligence sharing, analysis, and air response/missile defense deconfliction; the establishment of encrypted communications would allow for crisis management between operational headquarters. This would form the basis for a coherent information network/sensor “kill web,” vastly increasing partner situational awareness and combat capability.

An effective partnership in the gray-zone fight would free up resources and provide an excellent basis for further cooperation in training for the high-end fight. A kill web sensitive to gray zone incursions would also provide improved indications and warning against PLA mobilization for an invasion. Quiet, quadrilateral coordination between the United States, Japan, Taiwan, and Australia could provide multiple venues for operational-level observation or training: in areas such as practicing aircraft deployment under simulated attack, marine corps training for coordinating long-range fires and counter-attacks in littoral areas, or ground force training in beachhead containment given a highly-contested air environment.

In short, Taiwan-Japan coordination to impose costs on the PRC for using gray zone warfare would also strengthen both nations’ ability to win against an all-out invasion.

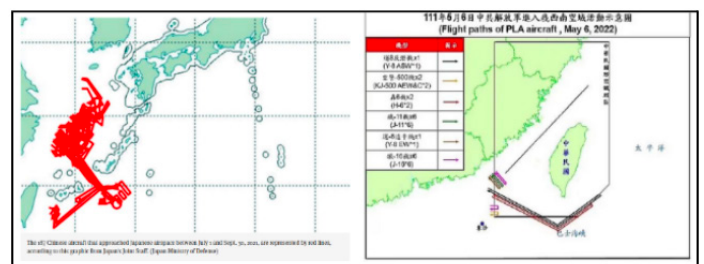


Image: Both Taiwan and Japan face similar constant, aggressive PLAAF incursions into their respective air defense identification zones, but there is no coordination between Taiwanese and Japanese responses. (Image sources: Japan [Ministry of Defense](#), Taiwan [Ministry of Defense](#))

Conclusions

The PRC has long used bilateral coercion and pressure against both Taiwan and Japan. By exploiting Japan’s pacifist constitution and holding out carrots to the Taiwanese and Japanese business communities, the PRC has consistently been able to paralyze the establishment of a common response to coercion.

Shinzo Abe’s legacy of taking steps to “normalize” Japan while championing outward-looking, values-based engagement, has set the stage for Taiwan and Japan to explore multiple venues for defense cooperation. Full-spectrum cooperation—that is, engagement that addresses both gray zone warfare and the prospect of an all-out invasion—will be critical for maximizing deterrence during this [decade of maximum danger](#) from an aggressive, revanchist PRC.

The main point: Shinzo Abe’s transformation of Japanese defense and foreign policy has set the stage for further expansion of Taiwan-Japan defense cooperation. This cooperation will be

critical to deterrence against PRC aggression in all its forms.

The Highlights of Taiwan's 2022 *Han Kuang* Military Exercise

By: John Dotson

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From July 25-29, the Republic of China (ROC) armed forces conducted the live-maneuver portion of the 38th iteration of *Han Kuang* (漢光38號實兵演習), a joint military exercise that represents the single largest training event in the Ministry of National Defense's (MND, 國防部) yearly calendar. Conducted annually since 1984, *Han Kuang* is intended to simulate Taiwan's response to an invasion by forces of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA). The exercise is traditionally conducted in two parts: a closed-door tabletop/computer simulation phase in the spring, which was [conducted earlier this year](#) from May 16-20; and a live-maneuver phase that usually follows later in the summer or early autumn. [1] While the simulation phase is kept secret, the live-maneuver phase is much more visible to the public, and offers limited opportunities to assess the state of training for war in the ROC military—or at a minimum, to judge what the MND deems most important in terms of the military's image and public preparations to resist an invasion.

Major Component Events Conducted During *Han Kuang*-38

July 25: Dispersals and Civil Defense Drills

The exercise opened on July 25 with multiple evolutions, including a series of aircraft flights to dispersal airfields in the expectation of missile attacks on ROC Air Force (ROCAF) airbases on the western side of the island. The ROCAF 1st Tactical Fighter Wing located in Tainan relocated six of its F-CK-1 *Ching-kuo* fighters (經國號戰機)—also commonly known as the Indigenous Defense Fighter (IDF)—to an airfield near Taitung (southeastern Taiwan) as part of a dispersal exercise, in response to notional attacks on primary airbases in western Taiwan. In this, they were joined by a single F-16V fighter (likely assigned to the 4th Tactical Fighter Wing, 21st Tactical Fighter Group) flying from Chiayi. (See [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).) The destination of these aircraft was not publicly reported, but was likely the ROCAF's Chihhang Base (志航基地) in Taitung, the reported location of an extensive series of [underground aircraft shelters](#).

Additional fighter aircraft were also reportedly [flown from bas-](#)

[es in western Taiwan to Hualien](#), along with maintenance and support personnel. Such dispersal evolutions [paralleled activity](#) on the [opening day of *Han Kuang* in 2021](#), when ROCAF fighters similarly conducted dispersal flights from western Taiwan to an air base in Hualien. Also in keeping with last year's exercise, the fighter landings served as a public relations event, with [civilian onlookers photographing the low-flying aircraft](#).

July 25 also saw the first phase of the annual *Wan-an* air raid drill (萬安演習), a regular component of *Han Kuang*, in which members of the general public have been required to take shelter from a notional missile attack. [This year's iteration of *Wan-an*](#) began on the afternoon of July 25, with air raid sirens sounding throughout the counties of northern Taiwan, and citizens receiving direction from the police to clear the streets between 1:30 and 2 PM. Many citizens also received text messages notifying them of notional aerial attacks. Additionally, the Taipei City Fire Department [conducted drills](#) to fight fires at the scenes of simulated missile strikes in two locations (Xinyi District and Banqiao Station). In a change from previous years, this year's drill was conducted in phases: in northern Taiwan on the 25th, central Taiwan on the 26th, southern Taiwan on the 27th, and in eastern Taiwan and outlying islands on the 28th.

July 26: Naval and Air Maneuvers

The second day of *Han Kuang* was highlighted by [air and naval training drills](#) centered around simulated attacks against—and defense of—naval assets near the Suao ROC Navy (ROCN) base in Yilan County, on Taiwan's eastern coast. The participating units performed a series of maneuvers designated as “[naval joint interception operation live-fire drills](#)” (海軍聯合截擊作戰實彈操演), which included “[counter\[ing\] mines, fleet air defense, joint antisubmarine warfare, and counter-air operation\[s\]](#).” Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) [observed these drills](#) in person, embarking on the ROCN guided missile destroyer *Kee Lung* (基隆, DDG-1801) (a former US Navy *Kidd*-class destroyer, one of four sold to Taiwan in the early 2000s).

Per [Taiwan state media reporting](#), the drills involved 20 vessels, including many of the key ships of the Taiwanese Navy: *Kee Lung* (基隆)-class destroyers, *Kang Ding* (康定)-class frigates, *Cheng Kung* (成功)-class frigates, *Yung Feng* (永豐)-class minesweepers, *Tuo Chiang* (沱江)-class missile corvettes, *Chin Chiang* (錦江)-class corvettes, and at least one of the ROCN's *Hai Lung* (海龍)-class submarines. The drills also involved 15 aircraft of various types, including IDF fighters, F-16Vs, F-2000 Mirage, and F-5 fighters, as well as at least one ROCN anti-submarine helicopter.



Image: Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen observing naval drills conducted near the Suao naval base in eastern Taiwan on July 26, as a component of the 2022 Han Kuang exercise. (Image source: President Tsai Ing-wen (@iingwen) via [Twitter](#))

July 27: Counter-Amphibious Invasion Drills

The exercise's third day shifted to a greater focus on ground-oriented scenarios, including the "[joint interception of invading enemy forces](#)" at multiple locations throughout the island. One component of this was an early morning parachute drop in Pingtung County (southeast Taiwan) by 76 paratroopers jumping from C-130 transport planes. These soldiers, from the ROC Army's Airborne Special Forces Command, reportedly conducted the jump as part of a drill to simulate dropping troops behind enemy lines.

Drills were also held in the greater Taipei area to simulate [resistance to an amphibious invasion](#). In New Taipei City's Bali District, a scenario was held in which mock PLA forces conducted aerial attacks and attempted an amphibious landing at port facilities near the mouth of the Tamsui River, with intent to then advance south into Taipei. In response, naval mines and counter-landing obstacles were set up by the defending forces, ROC Army tanks and armored vehicles were deployed to simulate repelling the invading ground forces, and IDF fighters and AH-64E "Apache" attack helicopters flew simulated close air support missions. On the same day, early morning anti-landing drills were also reportedly conducted by Taiwan Army infantry and armor forces on the island of Kinmen.

In tandem with these drills, a small-scale deployment exercise was conducted in central Taipei, which involved [setting up a mobile military command post](#) in the Da-chia Riverside Park area. A surface-to-air [Patriot missile battery was also deployed](#) to protect the command post, with drills conducted to simulate shifting the position of the launcher in response to combat conditions.

July 28: Continued Counter-Amphibious Invasion Drills

The fourth day of *Han Kuang* focused on the theme of "[joint homeland defense](#)," with [further counter-amphibious landing drills](#) conducted at locations further south and east along Taiwan's eastern coastline. A landing exercise was conducted on the coast near Pingtung, in which special forces personnel in rubber rafts, and troops from the ROC Marine Corps 99th Brigade in amphibious assault vehicles, made simulated assaults on the beach in order to recover ground from an occupying force. ROC Army forces also engaged in similar drills at a beach in the vicinity of Taitung, with a reported seven M60A3 tanks and 12 armored personnel carriers conducting mock assaults against the aggressor force.

Further to the north on Taiwan's eastern coastline, a scenario was conducted involving the [defense of Chiashan Air Force Base](#) (佳山空軍基地) in Hualien County—the [reported site](#) of a large number of underground hangars and logistics facilities—against enemy warships and landing forces seeking to seize the base. A reported twelve armored personnel carriers, associated infantry, and artillery support were employed in a mock assault to "annihilate" the enemy landing forces.

On July 28, [drills were conducted in Miaoli County](#) (northwestern Taiwan) by reservists attached to the ROC Army 302nd infantry brigade, as well as soldiers of the 586th armored brigade, involving infantry and armored vehicles simulating resistance to a beach landing.

In Taoyuan (northwestern Taiwan), [psychological warfare drills](#) were held involving personnel from the MND's Political Warfare Bureau (國防部政治作戰局), in which speaker trucks were used to simulate battle sounds and broadcast supportive messages for the ROC personnel, while a drone was used to drop leaflets and broadcast propaganda messages.

July 29: Simulated Airport Seizure

The final major evolution of this year's *Han Kuang* took place in the early morning hours on July 29, with a "[garrison command counter-airborne landing operation](#)" (衛戍區反機降作戰) conducted at Taipei's Songshan Airport. This exercise primarily involved ROC Army military police (憲兵) units—including personnel from the 202nd military police command post, the 239th military police battalion, and the 228th military police artillery battalion, as well as the 301st ROCAF counter-artillery battalion, the ROCAF Songshan base headquarters unit, and ROC Army special forces. In this scenario, the defending forces had to undertake a rapid response to repel a seizure of the airport by fifth

column agents and PLA airborne forces. A press release from the MND called this evolution a successful test of the garrison troops' ability to respond to threats, and asserted that it demonstrated intent to "more fully develop the military's warrior spirit to guard the country and protect the people."

Later that day, Taiwan Defense Minister Chiu Kuo-cheng (邱國正) issued a brief [statement](#) praising the positive results of the training, thanking the personnel who took part, and announcing that the exercise had concluded.



Image: ROC Army reservists on the opening day of Han Kuang (July 25), in a defensive trench constructed in New Taipei City's Bali District as part of a counter-amphibious landing drill. (Image source: [Central News Agency](#))

Major Takeaways from Han Kuang-38

The major evolutions of *Han Kuang-38*—civil defense drills, aircraft dispersal flights, naval maneuvers, and simulated resistance to amphibious landings—offered no surprises, and were largely consistent with those conducted in last year's exercise. Also consistent with previous iterations of *Han Kuang* was the use of the exercise as a public relations effort to showcase major military platforms and capabilities, and to present the Taiwanese public with a positive image of Taiwan's armed forces.

One major theme that was noteworthy in *Han Kuang-38* was the increased profile for military reservists in the exercise. The Taiwan military's reserve system has long been a subject of [criticism](#) on the grounds of poor training, morale, and logistical upkeep. Yet, the Tsai Administration and the MND have undertaken initial efforts over the past year to [reform the reserve system](#), including a limited trial program to increase reservist training periods (in recent years, just five to seven days on alternate years) to two weeks of refresher training. For this year's *Han Kuang*, [official media](#) played up the role of reserv-

ists in constructing a defensive trench in New Taipei City's Bali District, emphasizing their importance as a component of the counter-amphibious landing drills conducted in that area. For this effort, reservists attached to the ROC Army's 109th infantry brigade, in tandem with civilian construction contractors, reportedly built a 100-meter long trench stocked with 30 days' worth of supplies, and defended by artillery and machine gun emplacements.

While the training evolutions conducted during the annual *Han Kuang* exercise no doubt remain valuable for improving certain capabilities and facets of interoperability among Taiwan's armed forces, there remain genuine concerns regarding the limited numbers of units involved, the short duration, and the heavily scripted nature of the exercise—and the ways in which *Han Kuang* therefore places only limited stress on the command structure, combat capabilities, logistical sustainment capacity, unit cohesion, and personnel proficiencies of the ROC military. An actual Chinese invasion would be a chaotic and bloody affair involving high casualties, materiel attrition, mass infrastructure damage, and surprise developments of the sort that cannot be captured in highly scripted exercise scenarios. As the capabilities of the PLA continue to grow year-upon-year, it will imperative for Taiwan's MND to introduce more realistic and demanding training scenarios in order to maintain a credible defense.

The main point: The ROC armed forces conducted the live-maneuver portion of *Han Kuang*, Taiwan's largest annual military exercise, from July 25-29. The exercise practiced many of the scenarios—such as civil defense, unit dispersal, and resistance to beach landings—that could be expected in the event of a Chinese invasion. However, the heavily scripted nature of the exercise limits its value in preparing Taiwan's military personnel for an actual invasion.

[1] The [2021 Han Kuang exercise](#) saw its live portion delayed from July until September due to continuing complications related to the COVID-19 pandemic, but this year's exercise returned to a timetable more consistent with recent years.

Speaker Pelosi's Historic Visit to Taiwan: A Moment of Dangerous Clarity

By: Michael Mazza

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House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan and its aftermath is a clarifying moment. It clarifies China's utter hostility to Taiwan's democracy, and it clarifies the Biden administration's thus far incoherent approach to the Taiwan Strait. This is undoubtedly a dangerous moment, but it may presage far more dangerous moments to come.

Start with China. Even if one were to concede that Speaker Pelosi's visit was unwise and that it dangerously eroded Washington's "One-China Policy" (both points are debatable), it is difficult to see Beijing's response as anything other than needlessly aggressive—and potentially reckless. It is fortunate that missiles fired over Taiwan did not fail or veer off course midflight. It is fortunate that civilian ships and aircraft steered clear of China's declared exclusion zones around Taiwan. And it is fortunate that Taiwan has acted with restraint, keeping its powder dry for another day, rather than forcefully defending its sovereignty now.

While China was angrily pounding the seas with missiles and rocket artillery and sending ships and aircraft across the Taiwan Strait median line, it was also banning the export of key industrial imports to Taiwan, banning imports of numerous food items from dozens of Taiwanese companies, launching cyberattacks on government websites, and engaging in intensified political warfare operations. Troublingly, this new phase of China's years-long coercive campaign—which began in 2016—may just be getting underway.

To date, of course, Beijing has directed all meaningful punishment at Taiwan, rather than at the presumably guilty party, the United States of America. Beijing's cancellation of various US-China dialogues, and sanctions on Pelosi and her immediate family, are notable—but not nearly as consequential as the costs it is imposing on Taiwan. Time and again, China picks on the small and relatively weak. Yang Jiechi's (楊潔篪) apparent diplomatic slip of the tongue back in 2010 at an ASEAN meeting in Hanoi—when he [told](#) the Singaporean foreign minister that "China is a big country and other countries are small countries, and that's just a fact"—has proven to be a reliable guide for understanding China's worldview in the 12 years since.

Taiwan is no closer to "declaring independence"—lazy shorthand for all manner of ways Taiwan might formalize its separateness from China—after Pelosi's visit than it was before. Nor is Washington any closer to altering the position on Taiwan's sovereignty that it has maintained since the aftermath of World War II: that Taiwan's status is undetermined. (Note: that position informed the American position in the "Three Communiqués," rather than vice versa). When the second-in-line to the

American presidency lands in Taipei for official meetings, that is undoubtedly a big deal. But it is a big deal that is consistent with America's "One-China Policy" and with past precedent. Yet, Beijing has erupted in a fit of pique designed to coerce and intimidate Taiwan and its partners.

This should be clarifying. This edition of China's festival of furor comes following an American act. Next time, it might come because Taiwan's people elect a leader of which Beijing does not approve. If it was not clear before, it is clear now: Taiwan faces an existential threat. Free countries should not draw back, but instead redouble efforts to ensure that threat never manifests in violent aggression. Otherwise, Beijing will continue to treat regional peace and stability as a plaything it can toy with at will.

American Incoherence

In December 2021, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs Ely Ratner [described](#) a number of "strategic reasons" that "Taiwan's security is so important to the United States," including its location "at a critical node...that is critical to the region's security and critical to the defense of vital US interests in the Indo-Pacific." This language raised hackles in Beijing, but it was consistent with decades of American thinking on Taiwan's geostrategic value. General Douglas MacArthur, of course, famously [described](#) the island as "an unsinkable aircraft carrier and submarine tender"—one which, should it ever fall into communist hands, was "ideally located to accomplish Soviet offensive strategy and at the same time checkmate counter-offensive operations by United States Forces based on Okinawa and the Philippines." That the United States has an interest in Taiwan's continuing *de facto* independence is nothing new.

That interest may be at greater risk now than it has ever been, with threats to the "critical node" growing by leaps and bounds. Testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee in March 2021, now-retired Admiral Phil Davidson, who then led Indo-Pacific Command, [assessed](#) that the threat to Taiwan "is manifest during this decade, in fact in the next six years." More recently, unnamed officials have told reporters that the Biden administration has some concerns China may attack Taiwan in the [next 18 months](#). Whether 18 months or seven years, either window should create pressure for the Biden administration to act with urgency at a time when the cross-Strait and trans-Pacific balances of military power are rapidly tilting in China's favor.

Yet a sense of urgency has been lacking. Under the Biden Administration, there has been only [one](#) announced sale of arms that will appreciably upgrade Taiwan's defense capabilities (most sales provide [spare parts](#) and [other support](#) for Taiwan's

existing [inventory](#)). What's more, [deliveries](#) of that one system—M109A6 Paladin self-propelled howitzers—have been delayed due to the justifiable needs of the Ukraine war, with little apparent American effort to address Taiwanese gaps in the meantime. And while the Biden administration last fall surprisingly [admitted](#) to the presence in Taiwan of a small contingent of US special forces and Marines on a training mission, that mission began during the Trump Administration. Although Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) [revealed](#) in May that the US Department of Defense is “proactively planning cooperation between the US National Guard and Taiwan’s defense forces,” there has been no known move to significantly enhance active duty joint training during Biden’s time in office.

Beyond the defense realm, the Biden Administration has also failed to act in other ways that could, over time, contribute to Taiwan’s security. The White House continues to refuse to launch free trade agreement negotiations with Taiwan. The White House has excluded Taiwan from the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (perhaps to ensure the participation of other partners). The White House is entirely ignoring the [Taiwan Travel Act](#), which encourages, but does not mandate, “officials at all levels of the United States Government [...] to travel to Taiwan to meet their Taiwanese counterparts.” And the White House has made no serious effort to secure Taiwan’s participation in a variety of international organizations.

The incoherence of the administration’s approach to Taiwan starts at the top. On three occasions, President Biden has made public statements suggesting a shift in America’s Taiwan policy. Most recently, when asked in May if he is “willing to get involved militarily to defend Taiwan,” the president answered, “[yes](#).” He went on to explain, “that’s the commitment we made.” Yet in all three of these instances, the administration walked back the president’s comments, insisting that there had been no change to US policy. How this president and his administration think about Taiwan is anybody’s guess.

The pre-Pelosi visit imbroglio demonstrates this administration’s inability to responsibly manage things in the Taiwan Strait. In fairness, the Biden administration is grappling with a serious crisis in Europe and understandably has little appetite for a second on the opposite side of the world. This is, perhaps, why President Biden began pitching Xi Jinping (习近平) on [establishing “commonsense guardrails”](#) for the US-China competition last November as warning signs of an impending calamity in Europe grew starker. Unfortunately, that desire to avoid a contretemps may have led to actions that, ironically, brought one about.

On July 9, Secretary of State Antony Blinken [reportedly](#) told Chinese State Councilor Wang Yi (王毅) that Nancy Pelosi might visit Taipei, that it was up to her, and that she had every right to do so. Wang, who in April had described a potential visit as a “[malicious provocation](#),” may not have reacted well. Ten days later, the *Financial Times* ran with a [scoop](#) that a visit was in the works.

The sources in the report are anonymous, but this certainly looked like an attempt to create public pressure on Pelosi to cancel her planned trip. If so, it was a miscalculation. It forced China to go public with its opposition, and suddenly the United States was in the sort of contest of wills that the White House presumably hoped to avoid. But the White House would not recognize that reality—indeed, it would not take any public position at all. President Biden hid behind the uniform—claiming that “the military thinks it’s not a good idea [for her to go] right now”—while unnamed officials made unconvincing arguments against the visit in the press, and the White House relied on the Washington, DC, commentariat to do the rest.

This effort failed. Pelosi went despite the White House’s apparent objections. What that means for the Biden Administration’s Taiwan approach is unclear. Did President Biden make a principled assessment of what would actually be in the national interest, or was he simply deferring to “the military”? Should Taipei be reassured by the congressional commitment to Taiwan embodied in Pelosi’s visit, or worried by the president’s lack of commitment to anything at all? Where does Taiwan policy fit within the “guardrails” the White House has been so eager to establish for the US-China relationship? The answer to all of these questions is, troublingly, “we don’t know.” That is no way to go about managing America’s approach to one of the world’s most dangerous flashpoints, and to a vibrant democracy home to 23 million people that want little more than to live free.

The main point: Nancy Pelosi’s visit to Taiwan and its aftermath is a clarifying moment. It clarifies China’s utter hostility to Taiwan’s democracy, and it clarifies the Biden Administration’s incoherent approach to the Taiwan Strait.

Solving Taiwan's Military Recruitment Challenges: Look to the Women

By: Meghan Shoop

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From [marriage lotteries](#) to [assisted reproductive technology subsidies](#), the Taiwanese government has employed numerous measures in an attempt to remedy Taiwan's demographic challenges, with scant meaningful results. Taiwan continues to lose an average of [829.8 residents](#) per day as deaths begin to outweigh births. As a result, the government has become increasingly concerned about the effects of a smaller population on the military. In the [2017 Quadrennial Defense Review](#), the Ministry of National Defense (MND, 中華民國國防部) stated that, "the impact of our social and economic environment, along with a low birth rate, has been to reduce manpower, negatively impacting our troop replenishment and operational strength."

Taiwan's military has been moving from a conscription-based force to an all-volunteer force (AVF) since the latter half of the 2000s in large part by incrementally reducing the period of compulsory service of conscripts. The government's objective was to enhance defense readiness using a smaller group of elite personnel better trained to conduct modern operations. Since beginning this transition, government officials and military experts in Taiwan have worried about the armed forces' ability to reach recruiting goals now and in the future, with the goalposts of achieving an AVF pushed back several times. Against the odds, the military reached [90 percent](#) of its recruiting goal in 2021; however, significant demographic changes will make achieving this target increasingly unattainable in the years ahead. By 2025, demographic experts estimate that Taiwan will only have around [75,000 draft-aged men](#), a 39 percent decrease from 123,000 in 2010. The number of draft-aged men will only continue to drop, creating challenges for Taiwan to field a conscription-based force, let alone an AVF. To help resolve this future recruiting issue, Taiwan's military should focus on recruiting more women through the implementation of [gender-mainstreaming](#) policies. Gender-mainstreaming policies, or policies focused on gender equality, will attract more potential female servicemembers, allowing the military to achieve its recruiting goals despite Taiwan's demographic changes.

Changing Demographics

Taiwan's [fertility rate](#) (births per woman) was 1.07 in 2021, well below the replacement rate of 2.1 and ranking among the lowest in the world. Unless Taiwan increases its fertility rate, Taiwan's population growth will continue to decline. Several [issues](#) contribute to Taiwan's low fertility rate including rising disinterest in marriage among young people, low wages, skyrocketing housing prices, and difficulties balancing work and home life. Women also face discrimination in the workforce if they decide to have children. After taking [maternity leave](#) or announcing their pregnancies, mothers may face demotions, pay cuts, and sometimes even dismissals. In 2020, for instance, a Taiwanese company laid off an employee after discovering her pregnancy; while the company stated that it [dismissed](#) her because of COVID-19 restructuring, she was the only employee let go.

Due to such cases, many Taiwanese women fear facing consequences from their employers for becoming pregnant or taking maternity leave. As a result, only about [33 percent](#) of women with children apply for parental leave in Taiwan, even though Taiwanese law guarantees maternity leave. Without the promise of economic or job security, many women have decided that having children is too expensive and risky to their careers. Although some of these women may wish to have children someday, they do not believe that the private sector will afford them this opportunity.



Image: Ho Wen-qian (何玟禧) (second from left), an ROC Army officer then commanding a tank platoon in the Penghu Islands, poses with a tank crew at the time of the Han Kuang exercise in June 2018. (Image source: [Taiwan News](#))

Due to demographic challenges arising from fewer women deciding to have children, the military will need to recruit women more heavily to reach its recruiting goals. Yet, women remain an unleveraged resource for the military. Like most militaries, Taiwan's has traditionally been male dominated because of the need for brute physical strength, but the current trend of tech-

nology-based warfare requires more brain than brawn. Taiwan switched to an AVF with the goal of freeing up more resources to recruit soldiers with higher education levels to operate its growing arsenal of modern equipment. A large portion of women fit this requirement, as women make up over 50 percent of higher education graduates in Taiwan. [1] Not putting resources into recruiting these highly educated women will only be to the military's detriment, especially with the looming shortage of young men.

While the rate of female servicemembers has gradually increased over the years, they still only comprise [13.6 percent](#) of personnel in the Taiwanese military. Currently, the military does not prioritize female recruitment, as evidenced by the [2021 Quadrennial Defense Review](#) using the words “female,” “woman,” or “women” zero times. Improving female recruitment will require the military to adopt gender-mainstreaming policies that provide benefits to women that they do not receive in the private sector.

The South Korea Model

Taiwan should observe how other militaries, namely South Korea, recruit women into their forces through enforcing gender-mainstreaming policies. South Korea faces many of the same problems as Taiwan, such as changing demographics and economic and job insecurity for women. While women only comprise about [five percent](#) of servicemembers in the South Korean military, the Korean government has nevertheless invested substantial resources into expanding female recruitment and improving working conditions. Unlike Taiwan, South Korea's [2018 Defense White Paper](#) even has a section entitled, “Raising the Proportion of Female Servicemembers and Providing Favorable Working Conditions,” which outlines the steps that South Korea has undertaken to improve the livelihoods of female servicemembers—especially female servicemembers with children.

As part of these efforts, the South Korean [military](#) has expanded daycare centers, nighttime child-care teachers, and gender sensitivity education for all servicemembers. The military built around 39 new daycare centers for military personnel from 2019 to 2022, raising the total number of daycare centers to 164. The South Korean military has also expanded the pool of [substitute personnel](#) for absences caused by childbirth or maternity leave, ensuring that female servicemembers can take their maternity leave without worrying about their work responsibilities. Additionally, pregnant servicemembers are exempted from [night duties](#) for up to one year after childbirth, and servicemembers

can have up to three years of childcare leave included in their service period starting with their first child. All of these benefits provide female servicemembers with economic stability, job security, and a better work-life balance after childbirth than they would receive in the private sector.

The South Korean military's gender-mainstreaming policies have borne some successes. Korean [military academies](#) have experienced an uptick in female student enrollment because of the attractive military benefits, especially for women who plan to have children, such as rarely facing career derailment after childbirth. These protections and benefits for female servicemembers have also contributed to an increase in the fertility rate among South Korean women in the military. The 2010 South Korea [census](#) showed that women in the military had a fertility rate of 1.61 children compared with the then-national rate of 1.15. While women still only make up a small percentage of South Korea's military, Korea's initiatives towards gender equality will allow the country to readily recruit more women when it experiences a shortage in draft-aged men.

Recommendations

Taiwan's MND should adopt some of the practices that South Korea's military employs to recruit more women into its ranks, while also creating its own unique policies. These policies should provide economic and other benefits to women that they do not receive in the private sector. To enlist more women, expanded gender sensitivity training will be needed for all servicemembers to reassure potential and current female servicemembers that women will be treated fairly and equally in the military. Gender sensitivity training should include mandatory workshops and discussion panels hosted by both experts in the field and current servicemembers to share their experience with gender equality in the military. Continuing to build military housing for servicemembers and their families will also represent an appealing economic benefit as housing prices continue to soar in Taiwan.

Furthermore, the MND should enact policies that protect female servicemembers who plan to have children from career derailment. These can include specific policies, such as counting a year of childcare leave as part of a servicemember's service period when considering promotion and building additional daycare and preschool centers for servicemembers near military stations. The daycares should be free, and not merely subsidized; and should have nighttime staff to ensure flexible drop-off and pick-up times for servicemembers performing night duties. Currently, the MND has only opened one preschool, the

[Dazhi Non-Profit Preschool](#), for servicemembers as of 2022. Lastly, these policies must be explained and expanded upon in Taiwan's Quadrennial Defense Review and its biennial Defense Report. Enacting these measures will cause the military to become a more popular career choice among women due to its economic benefits and family-friendly policies.

Conclusion

Although these measures might receive pushback from the military and the government, changes must be made to contend with Taiwan's future demographic challenges. The military cannot keep ignoring the large pool of underutilized talent that it can recruit from: educated women. According to one survey, [56 percent](#) of Taiwanese people already support women having to enroll in conscription. The majority of Taiwanese people are ready and interested in women playing an expanded role in the military, especially with increasing cross-Strait tensions. They know that Taiwan will need to take advantage of all its resources to protect itself against a potential Chinese invasion. Therefore, the military needs to immediately begin developing and implementing similar gender-mainstreaming policies as South Korea to enhance the economic and job security benefits that will encourage women to enlist.

The main point: Taiwan's demographic challenges will make it more difficult to recruit soldiers into the military. To help solve this issue, the military should adopt gender mainstreaming policies, like the ones implemented in South Korea, to attract more female recruits.

[1] Executive Yuan, Department of Gender Equality, *2022 Gender at a Glance in R.O.C. (Taiwan)* (Taipei City, 2022), 20.