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Latvian parliamentary delegation visited Taiwan in August



A delegation of eight Latvian members of parliament, led by Ingrida Circene, head of the Latvia-Taiwan Parliamentary Friendship Group, visited Taiwan from August 9th to 14th. The group met Vice President Hsiao, Foreign Minister Lin, National Security Council Secretary General Joseph Wu, and other senior officials.





A key focus is touring the Asia UAV-AI Innovation Application R&D Center in Chiayi County to explore Taiwan's drone industry. Taiwan and Latvia signed an MOU in late 2024 to cooperate on drone development and manufacturing. The delegation also visited Hsinchu Science Park and the Industrial Technology Research Institute. Chiayi County plans to

invest NT\$6.9 billion (US\$230 million) in the Minxiong Aerospace Industrial Park and NT\$3.2 billion to enhance the Asia UAV center, aiming to strengthen defense technology and industrial innovation cooperation between the two countries.

2	<p>US senate Armed Service Committee chair visits Taiwan for the 1st time in 9 years</p> <p>From August 29th to 30th , <u>Roger Wicker</u>, one of Taiwan’s staunchest allies in Congress and chair of the US Senate Armed Services Committee, <u>and ranking member Deb Fischer visited Taiwan</u> – the first such visit in nine years, since John McCain’s trip in 2016.</p> <p>In his remarks upon arrival, <u>Wicker</u> said his delegation has come to "<u>reemphasize the partnership and the security friendship agreement that the United States has had with Taiwan for some decades</u>". Wicker noted that <u>Congress has stressed the importance of US’s relationship with Taiwan in the past two defense authorization acts</u>. During their visit, the senators met with President Lai, Vice President Hsiao, senior officials of the National Security Council, and the Ministry of National Defense to discuss Taiwan’s security-related issues.</p> <div> </div> <div> </div>
3	<p>President Lai reaffirms commitment to supporting Ukraine's reconstruction efforts</p> <div> </div> <p>President Lai Ching-te on reiterated Taiwan’s commitment to aiding Ukraine’s reconstruction efforts during a meeting with Ukrainian lawmaker Mykola Kniazhytskyi on August 7. President Lai emphasized, <u>Taiwan has stood with Ukraine, providing humanitarian aid through government funding and private donations.</u></p> <p><u>Taiwan has also partnered with like-minded countries such as, Estonia, Latvia, the Czech Republic and Poland to provide Ukraine with assistance.</u> Kniazhytskyi described his meeting with Lai as a historic moment, affirming Taiwan’s commitment to relations with Ukraine. The two countries are defending democracy against authoritarianism to ensure national identity, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.</p>

4	<p>Taiwan’s defense spending is to rise to 3.32% of GDP in 2026, and reach 5% by 2030</p> <p>During President Lai’s meeting with the delegation of US Senate on August 29th , President Lai reiterated that, Taiwan will continue to bolster its national defense capabilities and deepen collaboration with democratic partners to enhance deterrence. <u>The defense spending, as defined by NATO, will reach 3.32 percent of GDP in 2026. And the goal is to increase that number to five percent of GDP by 2030.</u> This will help Taiwan enhance its self-defense capabilities and further contribute to the maintenance of regional peace and stability.</p>
5	<p>EU leaders expressed concerns over increased tension in the Taiwan Strait at the EU-China Summit</p> <p>On July 24, European Council President António Costa, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, and High Representative of the EU for Foreign and Security Policy Kaja Kallas attended the 25th EU-China summit in Beijing. When they met with Chinese leader Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang, <u>the three EU leaders once again expressed concerns about increased tensions across the Taiwan Strait, and pointed out that heightened instability in the East and South China Seas threatened regional and global prosperity and security.</u></p> <p>In recent years, the European Union has consistently paid attention to and showed support for peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. On three occasions since May last year, the EEAS expressed concern over China’s large-scale military drills targeting Taiwan and stated that the EU had a direct interest in the preservation of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. In addition, the White Paper for European Defence—Readiness 2030, released this March, expressed concern over China’s expanded coercion of Taiwan and emphasized that cross-strait peace and stability were of profound importance to Europe.</p>
6	<p>UK, France and Australia conveying concern over peace and stability across Taiwan Strait</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>1 UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer and French President Emmanuel Macron met in London on July 10 for the 37th UK-France summit. The two leaders jointly reaffirmed their commitment to peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula, in the South and East China Seas, and in the Taiwan Strait, calling for the peaceful resolution of cross-strait issues.</u> 2 On July 14, the French government released its “<i>National Strategic Review 2025.</i>” The report noted that China has continued to strengthen its military capabilities, increase the intensity of military exercises around Taiwan, exert pressure on Taiwan

	<p>through military force and other means, and fuel tensions and instability in the region.</p> <p>3 <u>UK and Australia condemned Chinese aggression in the South China Sea</u>, particularly “sideswiping, water cannoning, and close maneuvers” by Chinese military and coast guard vessels. These actions have “resulted in injuries, endangered lives, and created risks of miscalculation and escalation.” <u>British Secretary of State for Defence John Healey in comments to The Telegraph on July 27, suggested that the UK is ready to fight a war in the Asia-Pacific region over Taiwan.</u> Healey stated that “if we have to fight, as we have done in the past, Australia and the UK are nations that will fight together. We exercise together and by exercising together and being more ready to fight, we deter better together.” Healey also said both nations would rather see conflicts resolved “peacefully” and “diplomatically.”</p> 
7	<p>Japan and EU stressing importance of peace and stability across Taiwan Strait</p> <p>On July 23, Prime Minister of Japan Shigeru Ishiba, President of the European Council António Costa, and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen met in Tokyo for the 30th Japan-EU Summit. <u>In a joint statement released following the meeting, the two sides underscored the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait as indispensable to security and prosperity in the international community and called for the peaceful resolution of cross-strait issues.</u> They also reiterated their opposition to any unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion.</p>
8	<p>China’s Pacific drill spending spiked 40% in 2024</p> <p>A report by Taiwan’s armed forces estimates that <u>China spent US\$21 billion on military exercises around Taiwan and the western Pacific in 2024, marking a nearly 40% increase from 2023.</u> The report, based on monitoring Chinese naval and air activities in the Taiwan Strait, East China Sea, South China Sea, Bohai Sea, and Western Pacific, calculated costs from fuel, maintenance, and personnel expenses.</p>  <p>Chinese military aircraft flew nearly 12,000 sorties, logging 37,000 flight hours—30% more than last year. The navy conducted over 86,000 missions, sailing more than 2 million hours, a 20% rise. About 34% of naval activity occurred in the South China Sea, 28% near Japan and South Korea, and 14% in the Taiwan Strait. Military exercises accounted for roughly 9% of China’s total defense budget, up from 7% in 2023.</p>

9	<p style="text-align: center;">President Lai met with the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China (IPAC) delegation</p> <p>On August 27, President Lai met with a delegation from the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China (IPAC). President Lai thanked IPAC for continuing to support Taiwan through concrete actions, and emphasized that Taiwan will continue to bolster its national defense capabilities and deepen collaboration with democratic partners to enhance deterrence. President Lai also expressed hope that IPAC, through its inter-parliamentary network, will be able to bring together even more like-minded partners to stand side by side in protecting democracy, peace, and prosperity in the region and around the world.</p> 
10	<p style="text-align: center;">Taiwan and Canada signed MoU on dark vessel detection system</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;">  <div style="width: 80%;"> <p>On August 11th, Taiwan and Canada jointly announced the signing of a memorandum of understanding on a dark vessel detection system, laying a solid foundation for bilateral cooperation in combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated maritime activities. In recent years, Taiwan and Canada have expanded cooperation in such domains as public health, technology, customs matters, trade, economics, and indigenous affairs. By signing the MOU, the two countries have pledged to work together to protect the marine environment and economy; combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing and other maritime activities conducted by dark vessels; and safeguard prosperity and stability in the region.</p> </div> </div>

- 1 Taiwan's drone exports reached US\$10.7 million in the first half of the year, a 7.49-fold increase from the same period last year. Poland was the leading destination for the exports, accounting for approximately 54.5% of the total. The US followed with 13%, Germany with 12.2%, and the Czech Republic with 8.7%. The growth has been supported by initiatives like the Taiwan Excellence Drone International Business Opportunities Alliance (TEDIBOA), which brings together more than 200 Taiwanese companies to help secure international orders.
- 2 Taiwanese company, Aerospace Industrial Development Corp. (AIDC) will collaborate with Japanese firms to build a China-free drone supply chain, aiming to expand their global market share. The company noted that Japanese manufacturers have strengths in engines, heat-resistant coatings, and solid-state batteries. Taiwan offers high cost-performance advantages in motors, small batteries, and cameras, making the two sides highly complementary.
- 3 An AI robotics alliance was established on July 22 in Taiwan that hopes to capitalize on the current AI boom and generate more than US\$34.01 billion in production value by 2030. The alliance was organized by six major business groups in Taiwan, including the Taiwan Automation Intelligence and Robotics Association. With the group setting its sights on creating more than NT\$1 trillion in output value by 2030, the TAIROA said it would create five Taiwan-made robotics models under four platforms - automated mobile vehicles, foot-shaped robotics, humanoid robots and specialty design.
- 4 Taiwan's Thunder Tiger announced plans to expand drone production in the US, unveiling its latest models at Taiwan Expo USA in Dallas. The company's board approved investments in US facilities for key drone components and motors to enhance global competitiveness and foster US collaboration. At the expo, Thunder Tiger showcased its Taiwan-made first-person view drone series, independent of "red" supply chains, including an AI-precision suicide attack drone developed with the National Chung-Shan Institute of Science and Technology. They also demonstrated the SeaShark 800 unmanned vessel and the TB-1 tactical ground station, featuring proprietary software for real-time drone monitoring and mission control.



12	Taiwan machinery exports set to rise on robotics and chip demand
	<div> </div> <p>Rising demand for artificial intelligence is boosting Taiwan's machinery exports, particularly in robotics and semiconductor sectors. While traditional metalworking machine tool exports have declined due to competition and export restrictions, semiconductor-related machinery exports have surged, increasing their share of total machinery exports from 6.4% in 2019 to 20.5% in 2023. Taiwan's exports to China have dropped to under 30% in 2023, with Southeast Asia, led by Singapore, becoming the second-largest market at 20%. The US market grew to 24.2%, surpassing China for the first time. Taiwan remains a top supplier of machine tools, bearings, and semiconductor equipment to key markets including Germany, Japan, and the US.</p>
13	Taiwan Defense Industry Development
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense has added drone training to this year's eight-week joint basic training program for students at Taiwan's nine military academies. The program is divided into three phases: pre- and post-flight safety checks, simulator operation, and a dynamic flight test. The training is conducted in accordance with Civil Aviation Administration regulations and ensures cadets acquire essential drone operation skills. <li>2 Defense Minister Wellington Koo confirmed on Aug. 6 that Taiwan has received the first batch of Altius-600M attack drones from US defense firm Anduril Industries, with delivery to the Army completed the same day. The collaboration with Anduril marks a key step in strengthening Taiwan's defense posture and contributes to maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. <div> </div>