

Debate Pack

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International status of Taiwan

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1 Background

1.1 Overview of Taiwan and its international status

Taiwan's constitution and relationship with People's Republic of China

Taiwan is an island in the South China Sea, around 100 miles off the coast of China, on which [nearly 24 million people live](#). The Communist-controlled People's Republic of China, based on mainland China, considers Taiwan a breakaway province that must return to the mainland's control.

According to [Taiwan's constitution](#) its official name is the Republic of China. This is a remnant of a political entity formed on the Chinese mainland more than 100 years ago. The Republic of China (Taiwan) does not officially recognise the People's Republic, and its constitution still asserts sovereignty over mainland China.

The People's Republic of China's 'One China' principle asserts that Taiwan is an integral part of China, and as part of this, that other countries must only maintain official diplomatic relations with itself. It also opposes Taiwan's participation in international organisations.

For more on China-Taiwan relations see Library briefing [Taiwan: Relations with China](#).

International recognition of Taiwan

Currently [only 12 countries have formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan](#).¹ That number has shrunk in recent years, in part because of pressure from China.

Since Taiwan's DPP party, which asserts a distinct Taiwanese identity and autonomy for Taiwan, returned to power in 2016, [China appeared to increase](#)

¹ These are: Eswatini, the Holy See, the Marshall Islands, Palau, Tuvalu, Belize, Guatemala, Haiti, Paraguay, Honduras, the Federation of Saint Christopher and Nevis, St Lucia, and St Vincent and the Grenadines. [Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China \(Taiwan\)-Diplomatic Allies \(mofa.gov.tw\)](#), accessed 3 August 2023.

[pressure](#) on the remaining countries that recognise Taiwan.² Between 2016 and 2024, 10 countries broke ties with the island:³

- 2016: Sao Tome and Principe
- 2017: Panama
- 2018: Burkina Faso, Dominican Republic and El Salvador
- 2019: Kiribati and the Solomon Islands
- 2021: Nicaragua
- 2023: Honduras⁴
- 2024: Nauru⁵

Over the same period, China has also increased its efforts to block Taiwan from participating in international organisations.

Taiwan's development into a democracy in the 1990s and fraying relations between many Western countries and China over the last several years, seems to [have increased support in some of those countries for deepening ties with Taiwan](#), and supporting its participation in international fora.⁶ None, however, have expressed support for establishing formal diplomatic ties or recognising Taiwan as an independent country.

Countries and international organisations will often refer to Taiwan officially by the name of its capital, Taipei, or sometimes Chinese Taipei.

1.2 Taiwan's membership of the United Nations

United Nations

After losing the Chinese Civil War in 1949, Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang's government, which fled to Taiwan, continued to represent China as the Republic of China at the UN.

Disagreement grew over who was the legitimate representative of China. Initially the US managed to block efforts to recognise the People's Republic of

² [“The Economist Explains: Why Taiwan is not recognised on the international stage”](#), The Economist, 17 May 2020.

³ World Population Review, [Countries that Recognize Taiwan 2023](#), accessed 27 March 2024, this list has not been updated since 2022.

⁴ [“Honduras to switch ties from Taiwan to China, says president”](#), The Guardian, 15 March 2023.

⁵ [“Nauru cuts diplomatic ties with Taiwan in favour of China”](#), BBC News, 15 January 2024.

⁶ [“Taiwan's engagement with the world: Evaluating past hurdles, present complications, and future prospects”](#), Atlantic Council, 20 December 2022.

China. However, during the 1950s and 1960s decolonisation changed the composition of the UN General Assembly, with a large number of newly independent nations from South America, Asia and Africa, supporting the People's Republic's bid to be recognised as the sole legitimate representative of China.

In December 1961, the General Assembly passed [resolution 1668 \(XVI\)](#), noting the “serious divergence of views” that existed over the representation of China, and resolved that the issue be designated as an “important question” under [Article 18](#) of the UN Charter, meaning that any resolution to settle the question would require a two-thirds majority vote in the UN's General Assembly.

In October 1971, the General Assembly passed [resolution 2758](#) by the required two-thirds majority, which recognised the People's Republic of China as the only lawful representative of China at the United Nations, and expelled the Republic of China's delegation.⁷ The resolution did not mention the territorial status of Taiwan.

At the same session the United States attempted to submit its own resolution proposing dual representation from the People's Republic of China and Republic of China at the UN. However, the resolution above was voted on first and accepted. A US motion to amend the resolution, removing the “expulsion of Chiang” part was also rejected.

From 1993, Taiwan submitted annual applications to the UN for membership, under the name of the Republic of China. In 2009 it submitted an application under the name Taiwan instead. All these applications were rejected.⁸

For more on Taiwan's membership of other international organisations see section 2.2 of Library briefing [Taiwan: History, politics and UK relations](#).

1.3

UK policy on recognition of Taiwan

The UK, like most other countries, does not recognise Taiwan as a state, nor does it maintain formal diplomatic relations with the island.

The UK was the first Western power to recognise the People's Republic of China, doing so in January 1950, and sending a [chargé d'affaires](#) to Beijing. The UK broke off its recognition of the Republic of China at the same time.⁹

⁷ [“The Distortion of UN Resolution 2758 and Limits on Taiwan's Access to the United Nations”](#), German Marshall Fund US, Jessica Drun & Bonnie S. Glaser, 24 March 2022.

⁸ [“Taiwan Tries New Name in Application for UN Membership”](#), VOA, 1 November 2009.

⁹ “Britain recognises Chinese communists”, The Times, 7 January 1950.

The People's Republic did not reciprocate diplomatic relations with the UK, demanding the UK support its bid to take up the UN seat occupied by the Republic of China at that time.

The UK and the People's Republic of China finally exchanged ambassadors in 1972, and the UK closed its consulate in Taiwan that same year. As part of establishing formal diplomatic relations, the UK and the People's Republic of China (PRC) signed an agreement that "acknowledged the position of the government of the PRC that Taiwan was a province of China and recognised the PRC Government as the sole legal government of China".¹⁰

In response to a [2016 petition](#) calling for the UK Government to recognise Taiwan as a country, the Conservative Government responded that the dispute between Taiwan and the People's Republic of China should be resolved "through dialogue, in line with the views of the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait".¹¹

The "long-standing" UK policy was [confirmed in a House of Lords debate](#) on 14 July 2020, with Lord Ahmad saying on behalf of the Conservative Government:

The United Kingdom's long-standing policy on Taiwan has not changed. We have no diplomatic relations with Taiwan, but a strong unofficial relationship based on dynamic commercial, educational and cultural ties. We regularly lobby in favour of Taiwan's participation in international organisations where statehood is not a prerequisite, and we make clear our concerns about any activity that risks destabilising the cross-strait status quo. We have no plans to recognise Taiwan as a state.¹²

1.4

Developments under the Labour government

Reports that former Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen blocked from visiting the UK

The Guardian newspaper [reported in November 2024](#) that the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) asked to postpone a visit to the UK by the former president of Taiwan, Tsai Ing-wen.

Taiwanese officials had asked if Tsai could visit the UK parliament and address MPs and Peers according to the Guardian, which reported that her

¹⁰ Foreign Affairs Select Committee 'East Asia', 2006 (HC 860-I, para 174-5).

¹¹ UK Parliament Petitions: [Recognise Taiwan as a country](#), Government responded on 4 February 2016 closed 18 July 2016. Accessed 3 August 2023.

¹² [HL Deb 14 July 2020 \[Taiwan\]](#).

trip would have coincided with the visit to China of the Foreign Secretary, David Lammy, something it said the FCDO was seeking to avoid.¹³

An FCDO spokesperson [said in response to the report](#): “We do not recognise this characterisation of events. Parliamentarians are independent of government and are free to invite whoever they wish”.¹⁴

Iain Duncan Smith asked a parliamentary question of the Foreign Secretary as to “whether his Department advised postponement of the visit to London of former Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen?”. The Minister of State for the Indo-Pacific, Catherine West, [responded](#):

The UK's longstanding position on Taiwan has not changed. The UK does not have diplomatic relations with Taiwan but a strong unofficial relationship based on deep and growing ties in a wide range of areas and underpinned by shared democratic values.

There is a long history of visits between the UK and Taiwan, including many conducted independently of HMG.¹⁵

Following his visit to China, Mr Lammy was asked during an urgent question on China and human rights and sanctions by Danny Kruger MP, [if he had discussed Taiwan with his Chinese counterpart](#), and if he could “specify a little more clearly what he said, and was he clearer about the UK’s red lines on Taiwan?”.¹⁶

[The Foreign Secretary responded](#) “I specifically discussed the aggression that we are seeing in the Taiwan straits, and I maintained our long-standing position on Taiwan. We are very concerned about an escalatory pattern of behaviour, and of course I raised those concerns in a robust manner”.¹⁷

Asked by Calum Miller MP if he could “assure the House that his Department played no part in preventing Parliament from hosting former President Tsai?”. [Mr Lammy responded](#): “I do not recognise what was suggested in relation to Taiwan”.¹⁸

¹³ [“Foreign Office ‘asked for UK visit by Taiwan ex-president to be deferred’ to not anger China”](#), The Guardian, 12 October 2024.

¹⁴ [“Former Taiwan leader was due to visit UK for two days in October, leak shows”](#), The Guardian, 24 November 2024.

¹⁵ [PQ9394 \[Tsai Ing-wen\]](#), 24 October 2024.

¹⁶ [HC Deb \[China: Human Rights and Sanctions\]](#), Vol 755, C540, 28 October 2024.

¹⁷ [HC Deb \[China: Human Rights and Sanctions\]](#), Vol 755, C540, 28 October 2024.

¹⁸ [HC Deb \[China: Human Rights and Sanctions\]](#), Vol 755, C536, 28 October 2024.

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Press and media articles

The following is a selection of press and media articles relevant to this debate.

Please note: the Library is not responsible for either the views or accuracy of external content.

[What is 'Taiwan independence' and is Taiwan already independent?](#)

Reuters
Ben Blanchard and Yimou Lee
29 October 2024

[Former Taiwan leader was due to visit UK for two days in October, leak shows](#)

The Guardian
Eleni Courea
24 October 2024

[European Parliament passes resolution in support of Taiwan](#)

Focus Taiwan
24 October 2024

[UN Resolution 2758 debate: A growing global effort to challenge China's claims on Taiwan?](#)

Think China
Hao Nan
14 October 2024

[Foreign Office 'asked for UK visit by Taiwan ex-president to be deferred' to not anger China](#)

The Guardian
Eleni Courea
12 October 2024

[Why countries abandon Taiwan: Indicators for a diplomatic switch](#)

Global Taiwan Institute
Jonah Bock and Haley Parilla
21 August 2024

[Tiger in a cat's Body: Taiwan's strategies for diplomatic recognition](#)

University of Nottingham Taiwan Research Hub
Jeremiah Reyes
14 August 2024

Support Threefold: Taiwan's Pacific Island Allies

Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)

Alayna Parlevliet

17 July 2024

Taiwan's exclusion from Interpol is the world's loss

Australian Strategic Policy Institute

John Coyne

27 June 2024

Lai Ching-te's dangerous game: 'Taiwan independence' ambition risking cross-Straits peace

Global Times

Bei Pingfeng

21 May 2024

Tuvalu reaffirms Taiwan ties, plans to revise Australia security pact

Al Jazeera

29 February 2024

Who is changing the status quo across the Taiwan Straits?

Global Times

Xin Ping

29 January 2024

Nauru to sever diplomatic ties with Taiwan in favour of China

The Guardian

Helen Davidson and Amy Hawkins

15 January 2024

Guatemala nears a pivotal moment on Taiwan

Americas Quarterly

Leland Lazarus and Ryan Berg

10 January 2024

Time for the UN to recognize Taiwan's voice

Politico

Jonas Parello-Plesner

28 September 2023

Honduras to switch ties from Taiwan to China, says president

The Guardian

Rhoda Kwan and Amy Hawkins

16 March 2023

The many “One Chinas”: Multiple approaches to Taiwan and China

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Chong Ja Ian

9 February 2023

Taiwan’s engagement with the world: Evaluating past hurdles, present complications, and future prospects

Atlantic Council

Jessica Drun

20 December 2022

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Press releases

[China military exercises, 14 October: FCDO statement](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

14 October 2024

FCDO statement in response to Chinese military exercises around Taiwan.

An FCDO spokesperson said:

We are concerned by China's military exercises around Taiwan, which increase tensions and risk dangerous escalation in the Taiwan Strait.

The UK reaffirms our clear interest in peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, which is of critical importance to global prosperity. We consider the Taiwan issue one to be settled by people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait through constructive dialogue, without the threat or use of force or coercion. We do not support any unilateral attempts to change the status quo.

We call for restraint and the avoidance of any further actions that may undermine peace and stability.

[Support for Taiwan's meaningful engagement with the WHO in 2024](#)

British Office Taipei

24 May 2024

Joint press release: Support for Taiwan's meaningful engagement with the World Health Organization (WHO) and participation as an observer in the World Health Assembly.

We, the British Office Taipei; the American Institute in Taiwan; the Australian Office Taipei; the Canadian Trade Office in Taipei; the Czech Economic and Cultural Office; the German Institute Taipei; the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association; and the Lithuanian Trade Representative Office wish to reaffirm our support for Taiwan's meaningful participation in the work of the World Health Organization and Taiwan's participation as an observer in the World Health Assembly.

As this year's 77th session of the World Health Assembly commences in Geneva, Taiwan remains largely excluded from the world's international health system. Inviting Taiwan as an observer would best exemplify the WHO's commitment to an inclusive, "health for all" approach to international health cooperation. Taiwan is a highly capable, engaged, and responsible member of the global health community and was invited to participate as an observer in WHA meetings from 2009 to 2016. Taiwan's distinct capabilities and methods – including its significant public health expertise, democratic governance, and advanced technology – bring considerable value that would inform the WHA's deliberations. Taiwan's isolation from the WHA, the preeminent global health forum, is unjustified and undermines inclusive global public health cooperation and security, which the world demands.

As COVID-19 made plain, viruses do not respect borders and it takes global cooperation to keep the whole world safe. Taiwan's meaningful participation in the forums and technical committees of the World Health Organization would benefit both the people on Taiwan and the world.

Embassy Spokesperson on British parliamentarians' attendance in the so-called "inauguration ceremony" in Taiwan on 20 May

**Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the UK
21 May 2024**

Question: According to media reports, several British parliamentarians including Lord Rogan, co-chair of the British-Taiwanese All-Party Parliamentary Group, recently went to Taiwan for the so-called "inauguration ceremony" on 20 May. What is your comment?

Embassy Spokesperson: The above-mentioned behaviour by British politicians seriously violated the one-China principle, grossly interfered in China's internal affairs, and sent a wrong signal to "Taiwan independence" separatist forces. We are strongly dissatisfied with and firmly opposed to this, and have made stern representations to the UK government.

The Taiwan question is purely China's internal affair and brooks no interference from external forces. No matter who becomes the leader of the Taiwan region, it will in no way change the basic fact that Taiwan is part of China and that there is only one China in the world. It will not change the prevailing consensus of the international community on adhering to the one-China principle. And it will not change the historical trend that China will eventually be reunified.

The one-China principle is the political foundation and important prerequisite for China to establish and develop diplomatic relations with other countries. The UK government has the responsibility to abide by its commitment to China, handle Taiwan-related issues in accordance with the one-China principle, and not have any form of official contact with Taiwan.

We urge British politicians to stop violating the one-China principle and stop interfering in China's internal affairs. Any move that undermines China's interests will be met with China's resolute response.

Embassy Spokesperson on the Taiwan question and Taiwan's legal status (2)

**Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the UK
17 May 2024**

Question: When establishing diplomatic ties, how did the UK and China handle the Taiwan question?

Embassy Spokesperson: The UK recognised the New China on 6 January 1950 and was the first major country in the West to do so. Subsequently, the two countries established diplomatic relations at the chargé d'affaires level on 17 June 1954, and then upgraded the relationship to the ambassadorial level on 13 March 1972. In the joint communiqué between the two sides on the exchange of Ambassadors, the UK government clearly recognised the Chinese government's position that Taiwan is a province of China, and decided to revoke its official representative office in Taiwan with immediate effect, and recognised the government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of China.

And not just the UK. The one-China principle is the fundamental prerequisite and political foundation for China to establish and develop relations with all countries. From the very first country that established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, to the 183rd, namely Nauru, they have all made political commitment to adhering to the one-China principle, and included this commitment in political documents such as communiqués and joint statements on the establishment of diplomatic relations with China. And they have all severed the so-called "diplomatic" relations with Taiwan. This shows that the one-China principle has the extensive support of the international community. It is where global opinion trends and where the arc of history bends.

[Embassy Spokesperson on the UK side congratulating the winner of the election in the Taiwan region](#)

Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the UK
13 January 2024

Question: It is reported that the UK's Foreign Secretary issued a statement on 13 January, in which he offered his congratulations to Lai Ching-te and his party and expressed the hope that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait will renew efforts to resolve differences peacefully. What is the Embassy's comment on that?

Embassy spokesperson: We firmly oppose this wrong act of the UK side.

It must be pointed out that the Taiwan question is purely China's internal affair. Whatever changes take place in Taiwan, the basic fact that there is only one China in the world and Taiwan is part of China will not change; the Chinese government's position of upholding the one-China principle and opposing "Taiwan independence" separatism, "two Chinas" and "one China, one Taiwan" will not change; and the international community's prevailing consensus on upholding the one-China principle and long-standing and overwhelming adherence to this principle will not change.

We urge the UK side to act according to its position of acknowledging that Taiwan is a province of the People's Republic of China, deal with Taiwan-related issues prudently in accordance with the one-China principle, and refrain from any words or actions that interfere in China's internal affairs.

Taiwan elections, January 2024: Foreign Secretary's statement
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
13 January 2024

Foreign Secretary David Cameron said:

The elections today are testament to Taiwan's vibrant democracy. I offer warm congratulations to the people of Taiwan on the smooth conduct of those elections and to Dr Lai Ching-te and his party on his election. I hope that the 2 sides of the Taiwan Strait will renew efforts to resolve differences peacefully through constructive dialogue, without the threat or use of force or coercion.

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PQs

Taiwan: Foreign Relations

31 Oct 2024 | HL1714

Asked by: Lord Dodds of Duncairn

To ask His Majesty's Government what is their current policy on access to senior UK ministers for ministers of the government of Taiwan.

Answering member: Baroness Chapman of Darlington | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK's position on Taiwan has not changed. There is a longstanding and historic pattern of ministerial engagement between the UK and Taiwan, which underpins our cooperation in a range of areas, and support our strong and growing relations with a likeminded democratic partner.

China: Foreign Relations

24 Oct 2024 | 9395

Asked by: Sir Iain Duncan Smith

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the potential implications for his policies of statements on the UK's role in the century of humiliation made by Chinese officials at celebrations at the Chinese Embassy of the 75th anniversary of the foundation of the People's Republic of China.

Answering member: Catherine West | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

This Government will take a consistent, long term and strategic approach to managing the UK's relations with China, rooted in UK and global interests.

We will carry out an audit of the UK's relationship with China as a bilateral and global actor, to improve our ability to understand and respond to the challenges and opportunities China poses.

Tsai Ing-wen

24 Oct 2024 | 9394

Asked by: Sir Iain Duncan Smith

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his Department advised postponement of the visit to London of former Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen.

Answering member: Catherine West | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK's longstanding position on Taiwan has not changed. The UK does not have diplomatic relations with Taiwan but a strong unofficial relationship based on deep and growing ties in a wide range of areas and underpinned by shared democratic values.

There is a long history of visits between the UK and Taiwan, including many conducted independently of HMG.

Taiwan

17 Oct 2024 | 840 cc255-8

Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask His Majesty's Government whether the Foreign Secretary plans to raise directly with the government of China the recent military activity against Taiwan during his visit.

Answered by: Lord Collins of Highbury | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My Lords, in our Statement of 14 October, we stated our concern about China's military exercises around Taiwan and reaffirmed our interest in peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. The United Kingdom considers the Taiwan issue one to be settled peacefully by people on both sides of the strait through constructive dialogue, without the threat or use of force or coercion. We will continue to raise issues of concern with China.

Taiwan

17 Oct 2024 | 840 c256

Asked by: Lord Rogan

My Lords, I declare an interest, having visited Taiwan recently as a guest of the World League for Freedom and Democracy. The Chinese President's decision to authorise military drills around Taiwan in the week that our Foreign Secretary is due to arrive in China underlines his contempt not only for the Taiwanese population but for the British people. The Prime Minister visited Taiwan as an Opposition Front Bench spokesman in 2016 and 2018 and will certainly have a deep understanding of the issues challenging Taiwan. I ask the Minister whether and when the Prime Minister or indeed the Foreign Secretary intend to visit Taiwan in their new roles to have dialogue.

Answered by: Lord Collins of Highbury | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

As the noble Lord knows, I have also visited Taiwan. The United Kingdom has no diplomatic relations with Taiwan but a strong unofficial relationship based

on deep and growing ties in a wide range of areas, underpinned, as the noble Lord said, by democratic values. We will continue to engage with Taiwan on economic, trade, educational and cultural ties. This relationship delivers significant benefits to both the United Kingdom and Taiwan and has featured a wide range of exchanges and visits; for example, on environmental, judicial and educational issues. We will continue to establish our relationship on that basis.

[Taiwan](#)

17 Oct 2024 | 840 c255

Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool

During the Foreign Secretary's visit to Beijing this week, will he be raising the escalation in the military intimidation of Taiwan and its 23 million people directly with the Chinese authorities? With Bloomberg estimating that a blockade of the Taiwan Strait could cost the world economy around \$10 trillion—equal to 10% of global GDP—can the Minister explain why the Foreign Secretary has confusingly decided to no longer describe the PRC as a threat, and spell out exactly what is the Government's policy on Taiwan, which has never been a part of the People's Republic of China?

Answered by: Lord Collins of Highbury | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

There are two questions there. The first is: what is our relationship with the People's Republic of China? It is one of co-operation, particularly when we need to address those global issues, but we will confront China, when we need to, particularly on human rights issues, which the noble Lord has raised on repeated occasions. On Taiwan, we are quite clear about the need for peaceful dialogue to resolve these issues. The Taiwan Strait is of interest globally, but particularly to the United Kingdom

in terms of our trade routes. Dialogue is what we will try to seek to ensure that we have a peaceful approach to these issues.

[China: Taiwan](#)

07 May 2024 | 24403

Asked by: Gregory Campbell

To ask the Deputy Foreign Secretary, if he will make an assessment of the potential impact of trends in the level of gold purchased by the Chinese government on the risk of a conflict in Taiwan.

Answering member: David Rutley | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

We do not comment on speculation. More generally, our position on the Taiwan Strait has not changed - the UK has a clear interest in peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. We consider the Taiwan issue one to be settled peacefully by the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait through constructive dialogue, without the threat or use of force or coercion. We do not support any unilateral attempts to change the status quo.

Taiwan: Foreign Relations

08 Feb 2024 | HL1926

Asked by: The Marquess of Lothian

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they intend to take to strengthen bilateral relations with Taiwan, including UK ministerial meetings with the President-elect, William Lai Ching-te.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK's longstanding position on Taiwan has not changed. The UK has no diplomatic relations with Taiwan but a strong, unofficial relationship based on deep and growing ties in a wide range of areas, and underpinned by shared democratic values. This relationship delivers significant benefits to both the UK and Taiwan and has featured a wide range of exchanges and visits, for example on trade, health and educational issues.

China: Taiwan

29 Jan 2024 | HL1583

Asked by: The Marquess of Lothian

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the levels of tension between the governments of Taiwan and China following the presidential elections that took place in Taiwan on 13 January.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The elections that took place on 13 January are testament to Taiwan's vibrant democracy. The UK has a clear interest in peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. We consider the Taiwan issue one to be settled peacefully by the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait through constructive dialogue, without the threat or use of force or coercion. We have restated the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait alongside our G7 partners.

Taiwan: Elections

18 Jan 2024 | 835 c479

Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool

But of course, my Lords, the People's Republic of China has never been able to claim that Taiwan has ever been part of the PRC, so talk of reunification is completely wrong. Great emphasis has been placed on the congratulatory messages sent to President-elect William Lai, and rightly so. However, what about the bellicose and intemperate remarks from Beijing and the People's Republic of China denouncing those statesmen and women who have sent those congratulatory messages? What does that say about China's own aggressive intentions towards Taiwan in the future? Are we making proper preparations and risk assessments on everything from the economy to defence arrangements in the light of the potential invasion of Taiwan? In particular, will the Minister return to the questions about our own reliance on things such as advanced semiconductors, 90% of which come out of Taiwan, and the failure to provide observer status for 24 million people at the World Health Organization, in light of our experiences during the pandemic?

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My Lords, on the noble Lord's second point, I have already said that we have led on that and will continue to campaign for Taiwan's direct engagement as an observer at the World Health Assembly. On the issue he raises regarding China, we will of course emphasise this in the continuing bilateral representations that we make in our relationship with China. However, like many others, including the noble Lord, we are concerned about the consequences should peace and stability fail in the Taiwan Strait. As I have said before, this is not just about China and Taiwan; there are also global implications, and of course we recognise that and are planning accordingly.

Taiwan: Elections

18 Jan 2024 | 835 c479

Asked by: Baroness Hoey

My Lords, does the Minister share my disappointment that the Taoiseach of Ireland, a so-called neutral country, made a very strong statement yesterday in Davos that Taiwan was part of China?

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My Lords, although we recognise Taiwan's place and its relationship with China, we have always been very clear, while recognising issues of sovereignty, that the vibrancy of Taiwan's democracy and its autonomy—we have seen it again in the vibrancy of its election—are important principles to protect. Therefore, in the important engagements we have with China on a

whole raft of issues, we ensure that those points are raised directly with it. I cannot speak for the Taoiseach or indeed a Prime Minister or president of another country.

Taiwan: Elections

18 Jan 2024 | 835 c477

Asked by: Lord Faulkner of Worcester

My Lords, I declare an interest as the Prime Minister's trade envoy to Taiwan. I would like the Minister to convey to his noble friend the Foreign Secretary how great the sense of appreciation in Taiwan was on receipt of the message of congratulations on the elections at the weekend. He is right to say that it is a vibrant democracy. In fact, it is democracy, more than anything else, that won the election. A turnout of over 70%, with 14 million people voting in a completely peaceful environment, is a huge testament to democracy in Taiwan. I echo what the noble Baroness, Lady D'Souza, says about help with further initiatives in which we do not go as far as formal recognition, but which involve Taiwan in world bodies to which they are placed to contribute, such as the World Health Organization. I hope that the Minister was able to give some encouragement on that too.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

I thank the noble Lord for his work in this area and I will of course convey his thanks to my noble friend the Foreign Secretary. I assure him, and the noble Baroness, Lady D'Souza, that there are occasions—for example, at meetings of the World Health Assembly—when we have been very much at the forefront of campaigning for Taiwan's engagement and involvement. On Taiwan as a state, this is not just about Taiwan and China; it is important for the whole world, and ensuring security and stability in the Taiwan Strait is reflective of that priority for His Majesty's Government.

Taiwan: Diplomatic Service

21 Nov 2023 | 2221

Asked by: Navendu Mishra

To ask the Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, how many British diplomatic staff are based in Taiwan as of 15 November 2023.

Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK has no diplomatic relations with Taiwan but a strong, unofficial relationship based on dynamic commercial, educational and cultural ties. The UK has no diplomatic staff in Taiwan. Approximately 50 staff work at the

British Office in Taipei. This is a combination of staff from the UK and staff employed locally.

Taiwan: World Health Assembly

21 Nov 2023 | 2220

Asked by: Navendu Mishra

To ask the Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, whether he plans to take diplomatic steps to support Taiwan's application to join World Health Assembly.

Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK believes that the people of Taiwan have a valuable contribution to make on issues of global concern. We therefore support Taiwanese meaningful participation in international organisations, as a member where statehood is not a prerequisite, and as an observer or guest where it is.

Taiwan: Foreign Relations

11 Sep 2023 | 196276

Asked by: Elizabeth Truss

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 30 June 2023 to Question 190783 on Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Taiwan: Foreign Relations, if he will identify which minister represented his Department for each meeting it held with representatives of the Taiwan Government in (a) 2018, (b) 2019, (c) 2020, (d) 2021, (e) 2022 and (f) 2023; and if he will identify the (i) job title and (ii) grade of the most senior official who represented his Department when a minister was not present for each meeting it held with representatives of the Taiwan Government in (A) 2018, (B) 2019, (C) 2020, (D) 2021, (E) 2022 and (F) 2023.

Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

There have been no meetings between ministers from this Department and Taiwan in the years 2018 to 2023. The Department has had regular official level meetings with representatives of the Taiwanese administration during this period, both in the UK and through the British Office in Taipei, in line with our longstanding policy on Taiwan.

China: Taiwan

31 May 2023 | 186353

Asked by: Jim Shannon

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has had recent discussions with his Chinese counterpart on Taiwan.

Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The Foreign Secretary discussed Taiwan with his counterpart, Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang, in February this year.

Taiwan: Development Aid

23 May 2023 | 185238

Asked by: Daniel Kawczynski

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his department plans to provide (a) financial and (b) other support to Taiwan.

Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK's longstanding policy on Taiwan has not changed: The UK has no diplomatic relations with Taiwan but a strong, unofficial relationship, based on deep and growing ties in a wide range of areas, and underpinned by shared democratic values. The UK-Taiwan relationship delivers significant benefits to both sides and has featured a wide range of exchanges and visits, for example on environmental, judicial and educational issues. We also support Taiwanese meaningful participation in international organisations, as a member where statehood is not a prerequisite, and as an observer or guest where it is.

Taiwan: Foreign Relations

16 May 2023 | 184308

Asked by: Andrew Rosindell

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking to enhance the relationship between the UK and the Republic of China (Taiwan).

Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK has no diplomatic relations with Taiwan but does have a strong, unofficial relationship, based on deep and growing ties in a wide range of

areas, and underpinned by shared democratic values. We continue to engage with Taiwan on economic, trade, education and cultural ties. This relationship delivers significant benefits to both the UK and Taiwan and has featured a wide range of exchanges and visits, for example on judicial, health and educational issues.

Taiwan: Politics and Government

27 Apr 2023 | 181576

Asked by: Sir Iain Duncan Smith

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what his policy is on (a) the status of Taiwan as a state and (b) peace in Taiwan.

Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK's longstanding position on Taiwan has not changed. The UK acknowledges the position of the Chinese Government that Taiwan is a province of China. The UK has no diplomatic relations with Taiwan but a strong, unofficial relationship, based on deep and growing ties in a wide range of areas, and underpinned by shared democratic values. The UK has a clear interest in peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. We consider the Taiwan issue one to be settled peacefully by the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait through constructive dialogue, without the threat or use of force or coercion. We do not support any unilateral attempts to change the status quo.

Taiwan: Honduras

30 Mar 2023 | 174220

Asked by: Fabian Hamilton

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has had recent discussions with his Honduran counterpart on Taiwanese independence.

Answering member: David Rutley | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Honduran recognition policy is a matter for the Honduran Government. The UK's long-standing position remains that the Taiwan issue should be settled peacefully by people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait through dialogue, and not through any unilateral attempts to change the status quo.

Taiwan

05 Dec 2022 | 94735

Asked by: Jack Lopresti

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Secretary of State for Defence's oral evidence to the International Relations Committee on 1st November, whether it is his Department's policy to recognise China's claims of sovereignty over Taiwan.

Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Our longstanding position on Taiwan has not changed. The UK does not have diplomatic relations with Taiwan, but shares a vibrant unofficial relationship, based on dynamic commercial, educational and cultural ties. We consider the Taiwan issue one to be settled peacefully by the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait through constructive dialogue, without the threat or use of force or coercion.

Taiwan: INTERPOL

25 Nov 2021 | HL3920

Asked by: Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to call for Taiwan to be given observer status at Interpol.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Taiwan has a valuable contribution to make on issues of global concern, including efforts to combat international organised crime. We therefore support Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organisations, where there is no pre-requisite of statehood for participation. This includes observer status at INTERPOL. Taiwan's participation in this organisation would, in our view, reduce co-operation black spots, which pose a risk to the UK and our international partners.

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Debates

Taiwan Strait

25 Mar 2024 | House of Commons | 747 cc1362-1370

Motion lapsed. Motion made and question put that this House do now adjourn. Agreed to on question.

Long-Term Strategic Challenges Posed by China

19 Oct 2023 | House of Lords | 833 cc337-379

Lords motion to take note of His Majesty's Government's position on the long-term strategic challenges posed by China. Agreed to on question.

Relations with China: Xi Jinping Presidency

16 Mar 2023 | House of Commons | 729 cc410-399WH

Motion that this House has considered the matter of relations with China during the presidency of Xi Jinping. Agreed to on question.

Human Rights: China

17 Nov 2022 | House of Lords | 825 cc204-218GC

Lords question for short debate on what assessment they have made of allegations of human rights abuses in China.

China

14 Jul 2022 | House of Lords | 823 cc1622-1635

Lords question for short debate on what steps they will take to respond to the long-term security challenges posed by China.

Taiwan

03 Mar 2022 | House of Lords | 819 cc345-359GC

Lords question for short debate on what steps the Government are taking, if any, to support democracy in Taiwan.

UK-Taiwan Friendship and Co-operation

10 Feb 2022 | House of Commons | 708 cc1121-1153

Motion that this House notes the importance of the UK's relationship with Taiwan; calls on the Government to continue to work towards the strengthening of the UK-Taiwan trade relationship and deepening of security cooperation; and further calls on the Government to support Taiwan's recognition in the international community. Agreed to on question.

UK Relations with Taiwan

24 Oct 2017 | House of Commons | 630 cc27-48WH

Motion that this House has considered UK relations with Taiwan. Agreed to on question.

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