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## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 25, 2017  
Arlington, Virginia, USA

### ***U.S. Senators Urge President Trump to Support Taiwan's Self Defense Capabilities***

In a June 23, 2017 letter to President Donald Trump, Senators Benjamin Cardin, John Cornyn, James Inhofe, Edward Markey, John McCain, Robert Menendez, Marco Rubio, and Ron Wyden urge President Trump to adopt a policy of regular, robust, and consistent support for Taiwan's self-defense efforts in the face of ongoing military aggression by China and the growing cross-Strait military imbalance.

The letter enumerated three areas that require attention from the White House. The release of pending Taiwan arms sales programs currently awaiting Congressional notification; ending the practice of bundling Taiwan arms sales, instead establishing a regular and routine process whereby notifications would be sent to Congress when ready; and quickly and robustly addressing Taiwan's significant and legitimate future requirements for new defense capabilities.

The Senators noted that the U.S. should not allow concerns about China to take precedence over support for Taiwan. They also commented that *"China has intensified its economic coercion and military intimidation tactics, thereby stoking cross-Strait tensions and threatening peace and security in the Taiwan Strait. Given these circumstances, our support for Taiwan is more important than ever."*

Rupert Hammond-Chambers, President of the US-Taiwan Business Council, said *"This letter is a welcome and positive development. The recent cross-Strait dynamics have been increasingly unstable due to coercive Chinese behavior and waning U.S. support. U.S. policy toward Taiwan requires sustained, focused, and determined engagement on Taiwan's military modernization. The Council is pleased to see the Senate maintain its ongoing leadership on matters impacting U.S. relations with Taiwan, a core U.S. friend and ally in Northeast Asia. Such U.S. support for Taiwan serves to protect peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, which is a core strategic interest of the United States."*

A copy of the letter is attached, and can also be downloaded from the Council's website at [www.us-taiwan.org](http://www.us-taiwan.org).

#### **About the US-Taiwan Business Council:**

The US-Taiwan Business Council ([www.us-taiwan.org](http://www.us-taiwan.org)) is a membership-based non-profit association, founded in 1976 to foster trade and business relations between the United States and Taiwan. The Council provides its members with business intelligence, offers access to an extensive network of relationships, and serves as a vital and effective representative in dealing with business, trade, and investment matters.

#### **Press Contact:**

Lotta Danielsson  
LottaDM@us-taiwan.org

Tel: (703) 465-2930  
Fax: (703) 465-2937

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 23, 2017

The Honorable Mr. Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Since 1979, when Congress passed the Taiwan Relations Act, the United States has maintained a policy of robust support for Taiwan's self-defense capabilities. Our One China policy, based on the Act, the Three Joint Communiques, and the Six Assurances originally expressed by President Reagan, provides the basis for our enduring relationship with Taiwan. Congress has on numerous occasions reaffirmed the Taiwan Relations Act, which remains in force, and there is bipartisan commitment that we must not waiver in providing necessary support for Taiwan to defend itself in the face of China's ongoing military aggression and the cross-Strait military imbalance.

Historically, the United States provided Taiwan with needed defensive capabilities based solely on our assessment of the cross-Strait military imbalance and on Taiwan's legitimate defensive needs. Other considerations, including those related to other regional concerns or diplomatic engagement with Beijing, did not factor into consideration. For almost four decades, this policy has been bold and effective in promoting our interests in the region. We urge you to adopt a policy of regular and consistent support for Taiwan's self-defense efforts and not allow concerns about China to take precedence over Taiwan.

Following the election of Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen in 2016, China has intensified its economic coercion and military intimidation tactics, thereby stoking cross-Strait tensions and threatening peace and security in the Taiwan Strait. Given these circumstances, our support for Taiwan is more important than ever.

There are three areas that require your attention. First, we understand that there are presently a number of small Taiwan arms sales programs awaiting Congressional notification. We urge your Administration to send these notifications to Congress immediately. While modest in scope, they represent an important marker in maintaining consistent U.S. support for Taiwan.

Second, since 2008 the U.S. has attempted to reduce tensions with China by bundling Taiwan arms sales notifications and sending them to Congress as a group, submitting them at a time viewed to be "least problematic" for broader diplomatic interests. We do not believe that in practice such an approach has served either U.S. or Taiwan interests. The result has been a process of supplying arms to Taiwan that has become overly politicized, driven by considerations beyond the scope of the requirements of the Taiwan Relations Act. We therefore also urge you, as a matter of policy, to end this bundling of arms sales and instead establish a regular and routine process for arms sales to Taiwan, sending notifications to Congress when they are ready.

Finally, Taiwan has significant and legitimate future defense requirements, including replacement fighters, new submarines, new missile defense and electronic warfare capabilities, as well as support for its cybersecurity efforts. We urge your Administration to address Taiwan's evolving defense requirements quickly and with robust engagement between Taiwan and the United States, so that Taiwan's civilian and military leadership can develop a holistic approach to procurement, deployment, and doctrine for new and necessary capabilities in a timely manner.

Taiwan has its share of responsibilities as well – namely increasing its defense budget and taking steps to professionalize and modernize its armed forces. The United States should not overlook these requirements. Instead, the United States should fulfill its own responsibility, including, arms sales, military technology development, and symbolic gestures such as port calls and exercises. Our relationship with Taiwan—a vibrant democracy, an important economic partner, and a loyal friend—is of vital importance to the United States, now and in the future.

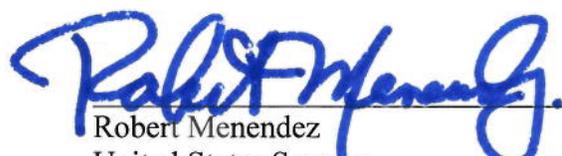
In closing, we note that the Taiwan Relations Act calls for regular consultations between the executive and legislative branches on Taiwan arms sales issues. We look forward to the opportunity to discuss with your Administration how best to support Taiwan's self-defense needs.

Sincerely,

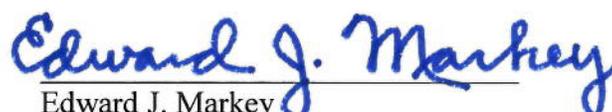
  
Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator

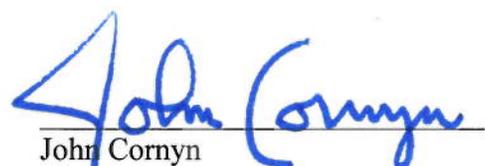
  
John McCain  
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Ron Wyden  
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