



# **Challenges Facing Taiwan in the South China Sea**

**Ian Easton**

**October 17, 2016**

PROJECT  
**2049**  
INSTITUTE

## **About the Project 2049 Institute**

**The Project 2049 Institute** seeks to guide decision makers toward a more secure Asia by the century's mid-point. Located in Arlington, Virginia, the organization fills a gap in the public policy realm through forward-looking, region-specific research on alternative security and policy solutions. Its interdisciplinary approach draws on rigorous analysis of socioeconomic, governance, military, environmental, technological and political trends, and input from key players in the region, with an eye toward educating the public and informing policy debate.

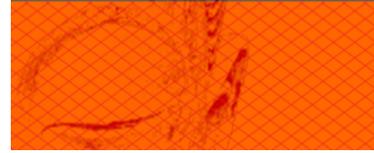
## **About the Author**

**Ian Easton** is a research fellow at the Project 2049 Institute, where he studies defense and security issues in Asia. During the summer of 2013, he was a visiting fellow at the Japan Institute for International Affairs (JIIA) in Tokyo. Previously, Ian worked as a China analyst at the Center for Naval Analyses (CNA) for two years. He lived in Taipei from 2005 to 2010. Ian holds an M.A. in China Studies from National Chengchi University in Taipei and a B.A. in International Studies from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. He studied Chinese at Fudan University in Shanghai, and National Taiwan Normal University in Taipei.

## **Acknowledgments**

An earlier draft of this paper was presented on September 6, 2016, in Taipei at the "2016 Defense Forum on Regional Security." The author would like to acknowledge and thank the Taiwan (ROC) Ministry of National Defense, and especially the Department of Integrated Assessment and the National Defense University, for hosting the forum. Alan Yang, Rachael Burton, Charles Emmett, and Sebra Yen deserve special mention for reviewing paper drafts and making corrections. The following represents the author's own personal views only.

Cover Image: Taiwanese Coast Guard personnel on Itu Aba operate an antiquated air defense gun (Source: CNN)



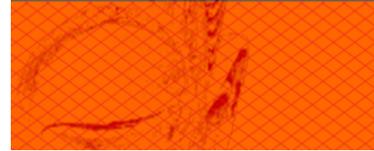
## Introduction

The People's Republic of China (PRC) has embarked upon an aggressive campaign of expansionism in the South China Sea that threatens the national interests of the United States, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and many other countries in the Asia-Pacific. In the past two years, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has invested extraordinary resources into the construction of artificial island bases which span across disputed territory. When complete, these bases will be used for military operations.<sup>1</sup> The People's Liberation Army (PLA) is the armed wing of the CCP and an instrument of the communist government. It is modernizing and deploying additional forces to the area to ensure that it can project power from new bases as they come online.<sup>2</sup> PRC behavior is increasingly provocative, and regional tensions have risen to the highest levels seen in decades.<sup>3</sup>

Since 1947, Taiwan's Republic of China (ROC) government has claimed sovereignty over the South China Sea. Today it maintains control over two of the Sea's most strategically positioned, naturally formed island atolls: Pratas Island (*Dongsha Dao*) and Itu Aba Island (*Tai ping Dao*). Both locations have long airstrips, docks, radars, and other civil-military facilities. These island outposts add legitimacy to Taiwan's sovereignty claims and help ensure the security of vital sea lines of communication connecting Taiwan's ports to the Middle East and Europe. Like all island nations, Taiwan is dependent upon free access to the sea for its survival.

In principle, Taiwan's sovereignty claims and territorial holdings in the South China Sea should be viewed by the U.S. as an asset. Of the seven claimants, Taiwan is the only stable democracy and the only American ally that has advanced military capabilities and facilities that could be used to support freedom of navigation operations.<sup>4</sup> In practice, however, the PRC has been able to exploit the fundamentally flawed bilateral relationship between Washington and Taipei to convince many observers that Taiwan has no positive role to play in the dispute. As a result, a rift could grow between the U.S. and ROC governments at the very time they need each other the most.<sup>5</sup>

This paper will examine the many challenges facing Taiwan in the South China Sea. It will first lay out some of the reasons why the South China Sea matters to Taiwan's interests. Next, it will assess the PRC threat to Taiwanese interests at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of analysis. Finally, the paper will conclude with an outline of areas where the U.S. and Taiwan could cooperate to impose costs on PRC expansionism and better ensure regional peace and stability.



## Why the South China Sea Matters

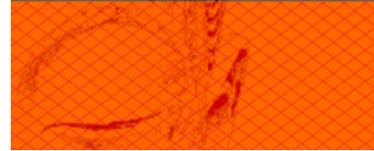
For Taiwan, the South China Sea is a peripheral theater that cannot compare to the Taiwan Strait in terms of its supreme strategic value. Nonetheless, the Sea is an important factor to consider when evaluating Taiwan's national interests. Sea lines of communication connecting Taiwan to its markets and suppliers in Europe and the Middle East pass through the South China Sea, making it a key chokepoint. Like all island nations, Taiwan is dependent upon free access to the sea for ensuring its existence, and survival is the paramount interest of any state. This section will briefly discuss the South China Sea from the perspective of why it matters for Taiwan's continuing struggle to survive as a free, sovereign, and independent state.

It is important to start with the most fundamental problem: Taiwan is a country that is not treated like a country. Recognizing this reality is essential because it colors every aspect of Taiwan's approach to international affairs, defense strategy, and security policy, often making what should be relatively simple issues impossibly complex. This problem is the direct result of the PRC's strenuous worldwide efforts to purge Taiwan's participation from the international community. Consequently, Taiwan does not have a seat at the United Nations and does not currently maintain diplomatic relations with the United States, Japan, or any of the world's other advanced economies. All felt compelled, or were forced, to cut their relations with the ROC when they established relations with the PRC.<sup>6</sup>

Taiwan is a peaceful, prosperous, and thriving democracy, but it is regularly treated like an international pariah state or an official nonentity. In view of its perilous position, Taiwan's foremost challenge is to remind the world that it is not part of the PRC and exists as a legitimate and sovereign state. It is therefore in Taiwan's interests to maintain its sovereignty claims in the South China Sea until it has the opportunity to negotiate. By contesting PRC (and other) claims and refusing to unilaterally concede sovereignty, the ROC government in Taipei sends the signal that Taiwan, while often ignored, continues to exist as a free country and is determined to be treated with the dignity and respect it deserves. Sovereignty disputes are to be negotiated as equals, not unilaterally conceded.

In addition to serious concerns that Taiwan might forever be left outside the family of nations, Taiwanese leaders must also worry about the possibility that their home island might be invaded and occupied by their much larger communist neighbor. The long-running standoff in the Taiwan Strait between the ROC and PRC governments began on December 8, 1949, and continues to this day. Throughout this 66 year period (and counting), the PRC has not had the combined political, military, and economic wherewithal to attempt an invasion. Yet a significant degree of fighting has taken place, the two governments remain hostile, and the potential for rapid crisis escalation is growing. The sweeping PLA reforms announced earlier this year appear to have been driven, at least in part, by the PRC's strategy to prepare for a future invasion of Taiwan.<sup>7</sup>

The South China Sea has a role to play in the defense of Taiwan. ROC military intelligence assets on Pratas and Itu Aba reportedly allow for the monitoring of PLA activities, providing



strategic indications and warning information to Taipei and Washington. These islands are frontline scouting bases, alerting Taiwan's president and cabinet if the PRC is preparing to attack. Weather stations, radars, listening posts, and patrol crafts on these islands all serve to provide valuable, life-saving information in peacetime, but their most important service is to meet the early warning and intelligence needs of the country.<sup>8</sup>

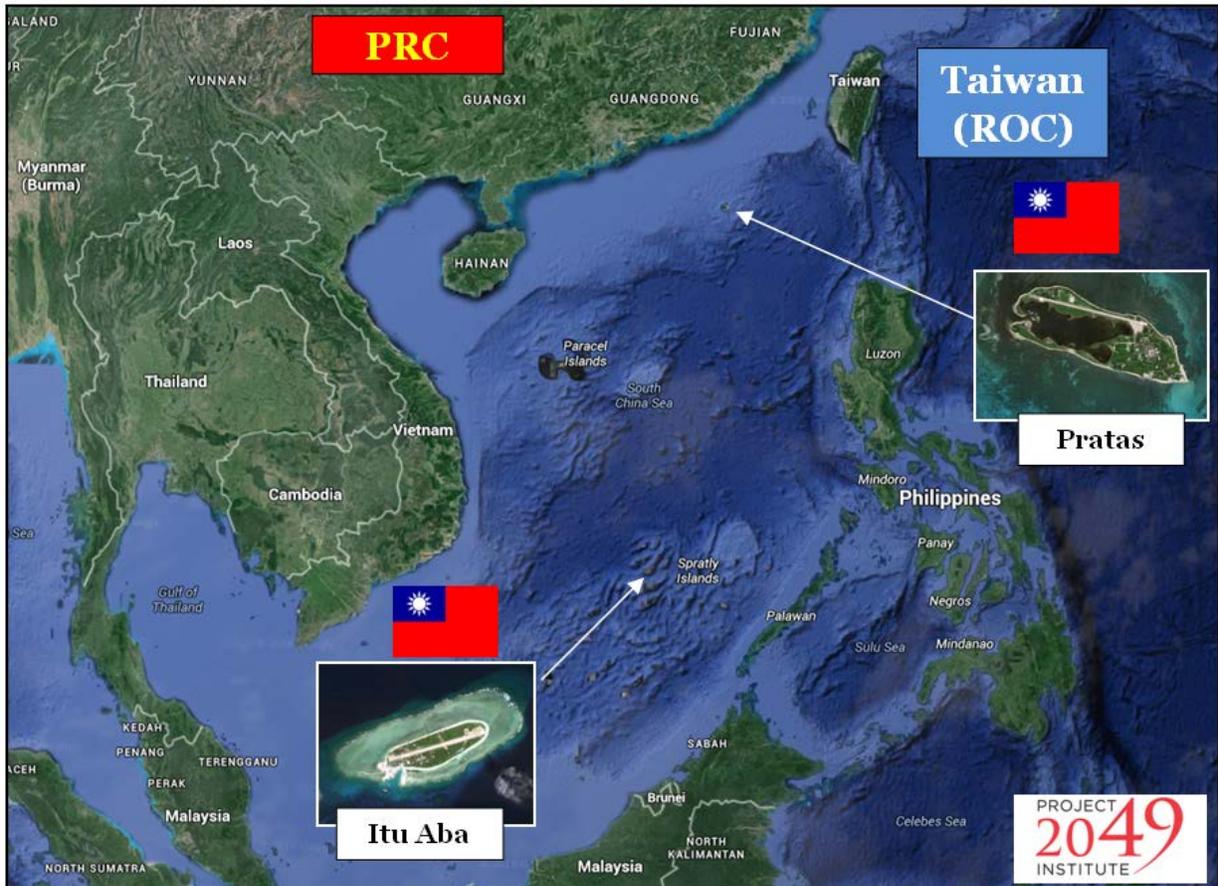
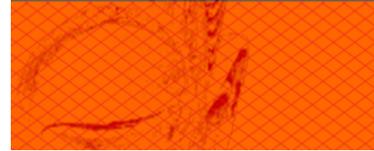


Figure 1: Map of Taiwan's Islands in the South China Sea (Project 2049 Institute)

Pratas Island, for example, is in an excellent location to monitor key PLA units which could threaten Taiwan's security. Significant among them are the PLA's 124th amphibious mechanized division in Boluo, the 6th Army Aviation Regiment in Foshan, the "South China Sharp Sword" Special Operations Brigade in Guangzhou, and the PLA Navy's 1st and 164th Marine brigades in Zhanjiang.<sup>9</sup> It is critical for the ROC military to continuously survey these units because they would likely be involved in any surprise attack on Taiwan (see Appendix I for the PLA order of battle in the South China Sea area). Moreover, suspected PLA amphibious training bases are located nearby. Prior to a major assault on Taiwan, it can be presumed that these bases would be used heavily to prepare Chinese units for the coming invasion. They must therefore be monitored for the purpose of providing strategic warning.<sup>10</sup> In addition to surveillance platforms directed toward the PRC mainland, it seems likely that Pratas has early warning sensors on the island that are capable of picking up air and naval movements through the Luzon Strait, a key chokepoint. PLA bombers, ships, and submarines passing through here could be a potential threat to Taiwan's east coast and the U.S. territory of Guam.<sup>11</sup>



Itu Aba is located far south of Pratas. This location is valuable because it offers Taiwan the ability to observe Chinese air and naval movements through the distant reaches of the South China Sea. Itu Aba is useful for monitoring regional developments in Southeast Asia that impact the interests of Taiwan, and it serves as a natural emergency diversion point for Taiwanese planes and ships on their way to Singapore or elsewhere in the region. It could also be used as a staging base for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions in Southeast Asia. While it is often noted that Itu Aba provides access to rich fishing grounds and potential oil deposits, this island, like Pratas, matters for Taiwan mainly because of its political and military significance.

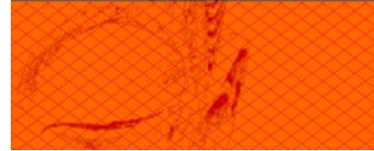
In the event of a cross-Strait war, the intelligence collected from Pratas and Itu Aba could help Taiwanese and American military commanders fight and win battles against the PLA. Knowledge of enemy aircraft, ship, and submarine characteristics, locations, speeds, headings, and missions is critical for planning efforts and for ensuring favorable combat outcomes. These islands are also militarily valuable in their own right. They can at any time be armed with anti-ship cruise missiles, garrisoned by marines, and used as springboards for raids against the PRC's nearby islands. In modern warfare, and especially in a Taiwan Strait contingency, even small scale engagements could have strategic effects—particularly during the critical days, weeks, or months in the run up to a PLA invasion attempt. In addition, the ability to launch combat search and rescue operations from these island bases no doubt has a positive psychological impact upon Taiwanese soldiers, sailors, submariners, airmen, and marines who operate in the South China Sea area. Having briefly overviewed the importance of the South China Sea to Taiwan's interests, the next section will assess the emerging threats to those interests.

## **Assessing the Threat**

It is important to recognize that not all dangers are equal, and lumping them all together can create a misleading impression. Taiwanese officials and pundits sometime portray the Philippines and Vietnam as threats to Taiwan because they share overlapping territorial claims and their patrol forces have a track record of unprofessional behavior.<sup>12</sup> In reality, these two countries on their worst days have neither the desire nor the strength to do any significant damage to Taiwan, and they often serve as valuable partners. The PRC, on the other hand, presents Taiwan with a clear threat in the South China Sea. This section will assess that threat at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of analysis.

### *Strategic*

In national security affairs it is unwise, and often fatal, to disentangle politics from military considerations. The nature of the CCP, and the PLA as a Leninist party army, means that all military activities are imbued with political and strategic significance. What the PLA leadership cares most about is ensuring the legitimacy of the communist party. To do this, the PLA advances Beijing's successor state theory, a false narrative which argues that the ROC government ceased to exist on October 1, 1949, and the PRC government inherited sovereignty over all the ROC's territory, including the South China Sea.<sup>13</sup>



The PRC has long sought to undermine Taiwanese sovereignty in the South China Sea (and everywhere else), but in recent years its activities in this regard have accelerated at a considerable pace. According to the Department of Defense, by late 2015 the PRC had added 3,200 acres of land to seven features it occupies in the Spratly islands, three of which will soon have large port facilities and airfields that are nearly 10,000 feet long.<sup>14</sup> These bases form a semicircle around Taiwan's Itu Aba Island, enveloping it from the northwest, south, and southeast. Previously Itu Aba was the largest island in the Spratlys. It is now dwarfed by PRC controlled bases (see Figure 2).

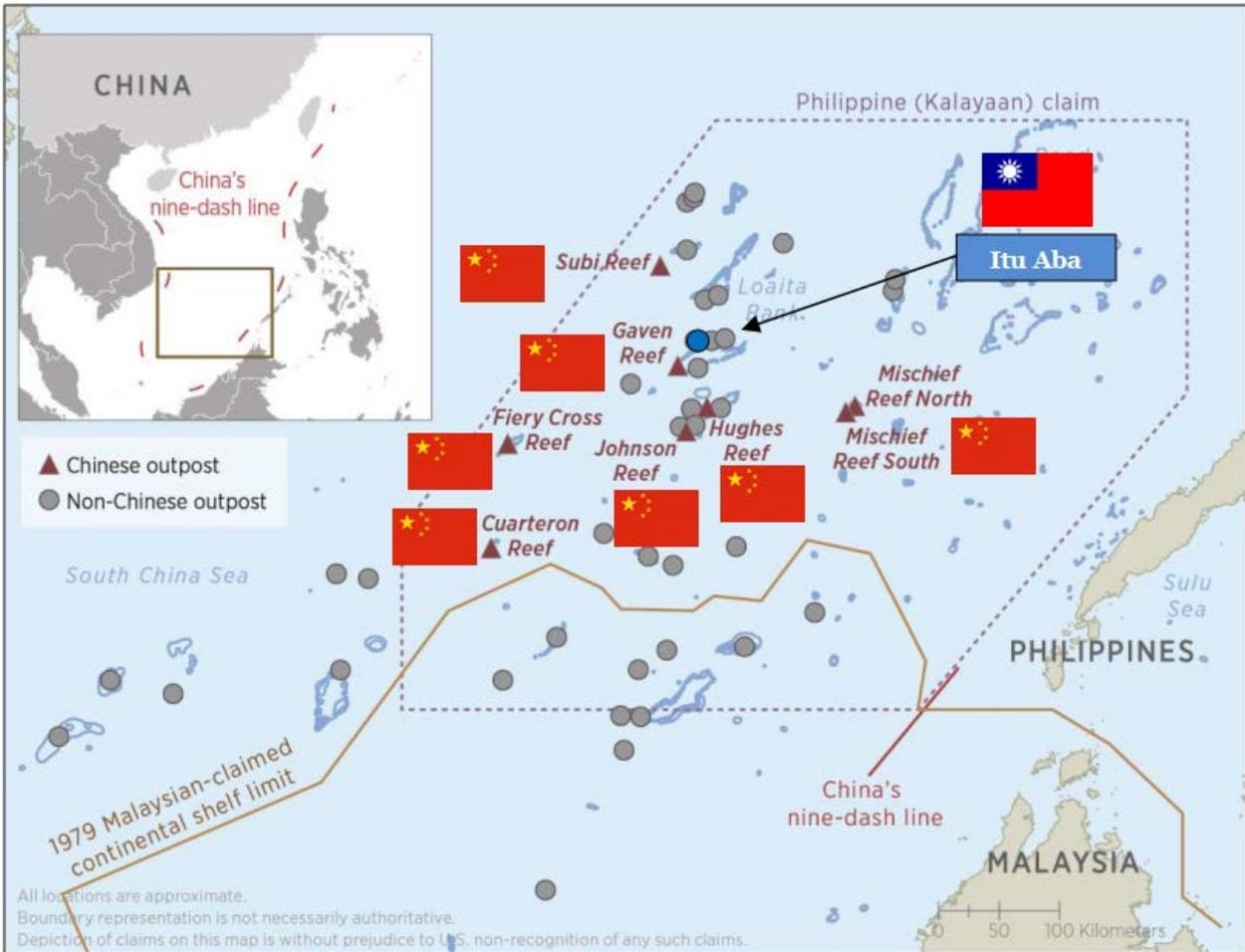
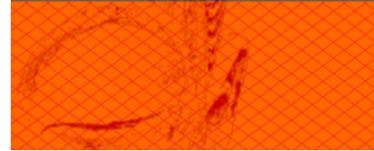


Figure 2: Map of PLA bases in the South China Sea (Department of Defense and Project 2049 Institute)

The political-military activities of the PRC have undermined Taiwan's strategic interests in a number of important respects. The biggest problem is that PRC behavior has complicated relations between Taiwan and its only ally, the United States. Some American observers have accused Taipei of supporting Beijing's nine-dash line claim and adding to regional tensions. From their perspective, Taiwan should consider renouncing its claims and unilaterally concede sovereignty, without the opportunity to negotiate as an equal party. Others have urged Taiwan to take a very different tack and stay out of the dispute altogether, arguing that if Taiwan challenged Beijing's claims in the South China Sea, cross-Strait stability would be affected, as



Taiwan would be moving away from the notion of "One China."<sup>15</sup> United front arguments made in Taipei and Washington have sought to constrain Taiwan's options, while driving a wedge between the U.S. and Taiwan.<sup>16</sup>

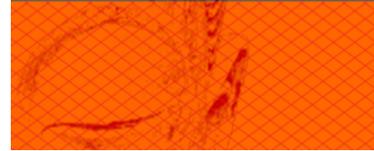
The Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague recently declared that Taiwan's Taiping Island is a "rock" and not an island. In addition, the court referred to Taiwan not as a country, but as "The Taiwan Authority of China," a title seen by Taiwan's government as insulting and highly distasteful.<sup>17</sup> It seems likely that this would not have happened if Taiwan were recognized as a legitimate member of the international community and allowed to present its case before the world as a sovereign equal. China's communist government was afforded the opportunity to make its case. Why should Taiwan's democratic government not have the same opportunity?

The Hague decision demonstrates how China continues to employ its coercive power and influence to make sure Taiwan stays segregated from the international community. In the months and years ahead, one of Taiwan's most pressing strategic challenges will be to figure out how to make clear to the watching world that it is not a PRC subsidiary and its island territory, sovereignty claims, and actions in the South China Sea all have merit in their own right. The key questions facing Taiwanese decision-makers include: How can Taipei use the South China Sea issue to bring itself in closer harmony with Washington and mitigate against the very real threat of divergence? How can Taiwan show that it does not support nor accept the PRC position, while at the same time avoiding actions which could elevate cross-Strait tensions?

### *Operational*

The PRC's rapid development of military bases in the South China Sea will have negative effects on Taiwan's defense and limit options during future military crises. During the 1995-1996 Taiwan Strait Missile Crisis the U.S. sailed the USS Nimitz (CVN 68) Battle Group through the South China Sea twice. The first time was in December 1995 when the battle group transited the Taiwan Strait, went down through the South China Sea, and passed into the Indian Ocean on its way to the Persian Gulf. The second time was in March 1996, when the USS Nimitz and her escorts were ordered out of the Persian Gulf and back to the Taiwan theater. This time they steamed through the South China Sea at flank speed. The PRC stopped firing ballistic missiles near Taiwan's major ports only when the carrier group approached its patrol station near Pratas Island.<sup>18</sup>

In the future, actions similar to those taken during the 1995-1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis could be required again. The U.S. Navy continues to have carrier groups ready to respond to PRC acts of aggression. However, as was the case in March 1996, at least one of them would probably have to pass through the South China Sea to arrive on-station in a timely manner. The other available routes to Taiwan from the Persian Gulf (through the Java, Celebes, and Sulu Seas, for example) are more circuitous and slow. Transiting the South China Sea in a crisis situation, however, will be a far more dangerous endeavor for the U.S. Navy. The PLA appears set to deploy early warning networks, anti-ship missiles, anti-aircraft missiles, bombers, fighters, drones, and electronic warfare assets on its reclaimed islands. As a result, the South China Sea will no longer be the operational bastion it once was for the United States.<sup>19</sup> These seascapes are fast



becoming the forward edge of the PLA's precision strike battle networks, a system whose cardinal mission is deterring or defeating U.S. intervention in a Taiwan invasion scenario.<sup>20</sup>

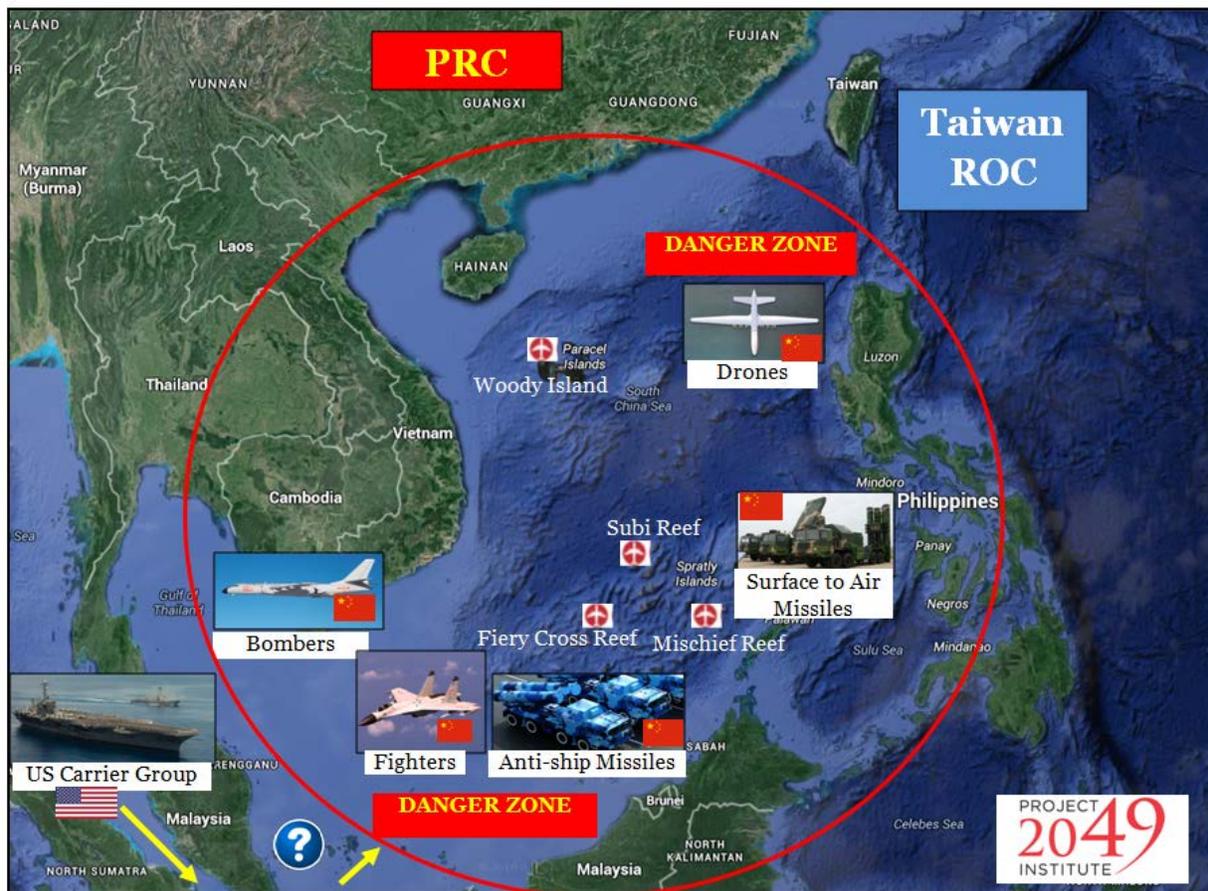
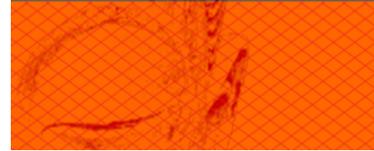


Figure 3: Map of Notional PLA Danger Zone (Project 2049 Institute)

One of Taiwan's most pressing operational challenges will be to figure out how to adapt its defense plans to the possibility that U.S. task forces might take significantly longer to arrive in the event of a crisis or war, and they might arrive not in two or three large and massed battle groups, but rather in many small and dispersed formations.<sup>21</sup> The stakes of a future American show of force will be far bigger than they were in 1996, which means that Taipei must have stronger deterrence plans and capabilities of its own.

The key questions facing Taiwanese decision-makers include: 1) How can Taipei more closely coordinate its operational plans with Washington while maintaining its independence of action? 2) What more can Taiwan do to deter or delay a future Chinese invasion in this more complex defense environment? 3) How can Taiwan bolster its islands in the South China Sea for the purpose of undercutting the PLA's strategy and plans?



### *Tactical*

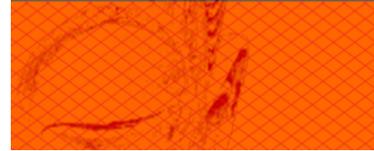
Taiwanese strategists and defense planners are currently asking themselves how defensible Itu Aba and, to a lesser extent, Pratas are in light of the extraordinary PRC buildup taking place around them.<sup>22</sup> They must also ask themselves what these two islands are worth in terms of defense trade-offs. Since defense resources are inherently limited, men and material that could be used to make one place stronger, will necessarily make another weaker. For example, Hsiung-Feng missiles and/or Marines deployed to Pratas or Itu Aba would have to be taken from Kaohsiung or somewhere else where they are greatly needed. Making matters worse, Taiwanese military deployments to the South China Sea could be perceived by Washington as adding fuel to an already highly combustible mix.

Tactical considerations regarding the defense of Itu Aba and Pratas can be informed by other experiences. Taiwan has already built-up many of its small islands in the Taiwan Strait into fortresses. As a result, Kinmen, Wu Chiu-yu, Matsu, Tung-yin, and the Penghu islands are now strongholds that would be exceedingly difficult for the PLA to storm. The objective of hardening these islands is not to create frontline outposts that can be held indefinitely. That would be an unrealistic goal and wasteful in terms of resource allocation. Rather, the aim is to make sure that frontline island garrisons cannot be overrun at low cost.<sup>23</sup> If Taiwan's outer islands were viewed as vulnerable and easily conquered, the PRC would have little incentive *not* to take them in a crisis to put pressure on Taipei's government and demoralize Taiwan's military establishment.<sup>24</sup>

Today the PLA is well aware it would have to pay a premium price to take Taiwan's islands in the Taiwan Strait. The costs would be high, the timelines might be protracted, and the operational effects on the PLA's vital staging bases around Xiamen and Fuzhou would be problematic and make any follow-on invasion campaign against Taiwan more difficult.<sup>25</sup> Put simply, these well-fortified islands increase uncertainty and complicate PLA plans. This in turn makes Beijing less prone to acts of aggression. The question is: what about Pratas and Itu Aba? Are they strong enough to make the PRC think twice, or are they tempting targets?

Satellite imagery indicates that Pratas is probably well-served in terms of defensive infrastructure. Itu Aba, while less heavily fortified, is adding new hard points.<sup>26</sup> However, both bases are merely protected by Taiwan's Coast Guard. It is difficult to see how coast guard garrisons, by themselves, would have any real deterrent effect in a crisis.<sup>27</sup> These islands require well-equipped military garrisons to raise the costs of aggression against them. If Taiwan does not make at least symbolic efforts to better defend them, they could become liabilities which may one day present Taipei, on balance, with more burdens than help. Small but tough garrisons on Itu Aba and Pratas could complicate PLA plans and raise costs without disadvantaging the defense of the homeland.

Going forward, it will be important to maintain a sense of proportion and perspective. The South China Sea is not the main strategic direction of the PLA, nor should it be allowed to become a priority issue which dominates Taiwan's national security thinking and defense strategy-making. The South China Sea is simply not that important. Defending Taiwan from cross-Strait invasion must always be the paramount issue.<sup>28</sup> In peacetime, reminding the world of Taiwan's



sovereignty over its own territory (especially Taiwan and the Penghus) ought to be accorded equal stature as a main mission of the country. To the extent that the South China Sea helps in this regard, it plays a positive role. But it should not be allowed to become a distraction.

Perhaps the greatest future risk facing Taiwan is that the PRC could use the South China Sea as a trap, employing an attack on Itu Aba as the bait. If it were to fall into the hands of PLA aggressors operating from bases nearby, Taiwan should resist the temptation to send the ROC fleet (and the 99th Marine Brigade) to waters where the PLA would have all the advantages. It would be a strategic mistake of the first order to throw away capital ships and elite units for the sake of relatively unimportant atolls at any time and in any circumstance, but especially now when the homeland is at growing risk of invasion. Instead, plans for reprisal attacks should be prepared in advance with proportional targets selected from various PLA bases in the Taiwan Strait. Mitigating the rising PRC threat in the South China Sea should take place on the basis of horizontal escalation, avoiding areas prepared by the enemy in advance.

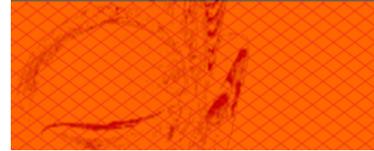
The key tactical questions facing Taiwanese decision-makers include: 1) How can Taiwan better deter PRC aggression against its islands in the South China Sea? 2) What more can the Ministry of National Defense (MND) do to raise the stakes for the PLA so that Itu Aba and Pratas are not held hostage in a crisis or quickly overrun in a conflict? 3) What can MND do to fortify Taiwan's islands while making sure not to take valuable defense resources away from counter-invasion/homeland defense programs? 4) What retaliatory options are available in the event that Itu Aba or Pratas should be seized by the PLA?

This section has laid out some tough questions which Taiwan must confront and grapple with. Ultimately, they can only be decided by Taiwan's President. In that sense, even tactical and operational challenges may have strategic implications. The next section will deal with Taipei's most important strategic challenge of all: improving U.S.-Taiwan relations.

## **Future U.S.-Taiwan Cooperation**

The U.S., Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and other democratic governments are failing to deter PRC expansionism in the South China Sea. Moreover, they all appear to have little appetite for imposing costs upon the PRC for its provocative and destabilizing behavior.<sup>29</sup> If the current trends continue, the ultimate consequences could be grave. No one should blind themselves to the reality that the PRC is determined to gain mastery over the Western Pacific and, in so doing, subvert the sovereignty and democracy of countries around its periphery.<sup>30</sup>

In principle, Taiwan's sovereignty claims and territorial holdings in the South China Sea should be viewed by the U.S. as an asset. Of the seven claimants, Taiwan is the only stable democracy and the only American ally that has advanced military capabilities and facilities that could be used to support freedom of navigation operations. Closer cooperation with Taiwan is worthwhile in its own right, and it could be used to impose costs on the PRC government. In practice, however, the PRC has been able to exploit the fundamentally flawed bilateral relationship between Washington and Taipei to convince many observers that Taiwan has no positive role to



play in the dispute. Part of the problem is that the U.S. President and top advisors frequently meet with their Chinese counterparts *and not* their Taiwanese counterparts, and U.S. Navy ships regularly visit PRC ports *and not* Taiwanese ports. The low level of contacts between Washington, D.C. and Taipei contribute to a situation whereby misunderstandings are endemic and Taiwan is in a disadvantaged position.<sup>31</sup> As a result, a rift could grow between the U.S. and Taiwan governments at the very time they need each other the most.

The policies and interactions of the U.S. and Taiwan in recent years leave much to be desired, but the existence of room for improvement, once recognized, can be a motivating force leading to great achievements. There is much more that can be done going forward. The following list offers a few ideas that are worthy of careful consideration.

### *Track 1.5 Diplomacy*

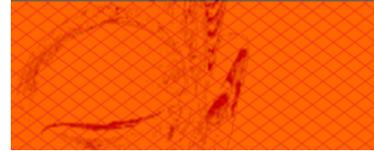
The U.S. and Taiwan should establish an annual bilateral dialogue on developments in the Western Pacific (including the South China Sea) in which official and non-official actors can exchange views and engage in activities aimed at building relationships and developing new ideas that can inform policymakers. This bilateral dialogue, once established, could be augmented with trilateral or multilateral dialogues in which nations such as Japan, South Korea, Australia, India, and selected ASEAN countries could be invited. To maintain the quality and integrity of the dialogues, all PRC nationals would have to be excluded from discussions.

### *Senior-Level Visits*

The U.S. should remove all its travel restrictions on senior-level Taiwan government leaders, allowing them to visit Washington to exchange views with their American counterparts. The White House should send senior representatives to Taiwan on routine visits, starting with the deputy assistant secretaries of State and Defense for East Asia. The Pacific Command should send two-star admirals and generals with significant joint experience to Taiwan on a regular basis. These visits could pave the way for higher-level visits over time.

### *Joint Exercises*

The U.S. should begin conducting joint military exercises with Taiwan's military to improve interoperability and combat capabilities in preparation for known contingencies. Exercises should have modest initial objectives and aim to expand in size and scope over time in an incremental fashion. The ideal place to conduct joint naval exercises is off of Taiwan's East Coast in the Philippine Sea. Ground force and air force exercises could be held on U.S. territory. The limited training space available to Taiwanese forces makes it advisable to provide them access to U.S. ranges in Hawaii, Alaska, California, Nevada, Washington, and elsewhere. It is in the U.S. interest to make sure Taiwanese forces are "ready to fight tonight." Even more important than tactical proficiency, however, would be the positive strategic signals that such exchanges will send.



### *Ship Visits*

The U.S. and Taiwan should begin sending naval ships to visit each other's ports as a gesture of goodwill and friendship. Ship visits have not been conducted since the break of diplomatic relations in 1979, but the world today is a very different place than it was at the height of Cold War Realpolitik. Taiwan is now a democracy and the PRC is now America's main strategic rival. The U.S. can no longer rely upon Hong Kong as a port of call that contributes to political, security, and military goals. Kaohsiung, Keelung, Su'ao, and Makung, on the other hand, all offer reliable, welcoming ports of call in Taiwan that will serve U.S. strategic interests in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>32</sup>

### *Arms Sales*

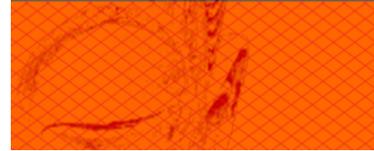
The U.S. should adhere to the spirit and the letter of the Taiwan Relations Act and the Six Assurances by providing Taiwan with the defense articles and services it needs to defend itself from Chinese aggression. In recent years it has become unthinkable to expect regular, predictable, and unbiased notifications of arms sales based upon informed judgments of Taiwan's strategic and operational requirements. Taiwan's future letters of request should be accepted and responded to in a timely fashion. New arms sales should be announced, at a minimum, once or twice a year—not "bundled together" and released after multiyear delays in order to appease the PRC. High-end weapon systems, technologies, and support services should be provided to meet the legitimate requirements of all Taiwan's services and branches.<sup>33</sup>

### *Intelligence Sharing*

The U.S. and Taiwan should do more to share intelligence on PLA activities in the Western Pacific and beyond. Each side brings unique analytical strengths and collection capabilities to the table which could help fill outstanding gaps the other has.<sup>34</sup> In addition to ongoing exchanges at the classified level, both sides should do much more publically. Sharing open source intelligence on shared threats would have a positive effect on public education and increase policy support. A better informed media, Congress/Legislative Yuan, academic and think tank community translates into a better informed public, which is likely to be more supportive (or at least more understanding) of their government's policies. Taxpaying citizens and volunteer military personnel in both the U.S. and Taiwan deserve to know more about the PRC threats facing their country and the region.

### *Military Deployments*

The U.S. should encourage Taiwan to consider the deployment of military personnel to its two main island bases in the South China Sea. If Itu Aba and Pratas are not properly garrisoned in peacetime, they will be tempting, low-hanging fruit for the PRC during the next crisis—something which could contribute to the rapid escalation of hostilities. If Taiwan does not respond to the PLA's deployments in the South China Sea, it will send the unhelpful (and untrue) signal that Taiwan is weak and not committed to defending its sovereign territory. The U.S., as



part of its pivot to Asia, should continue to increase its deployments of military forces to Okinawa, Guam, Saipan, Tinian, Singapore, and Australia.<sup>35</sup>

### *Defense Spending Increases*

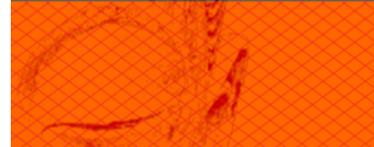
The U.S. and Taiwan should both increase their defense budgets in a small and incremental fashion to signal greater commitment to countering the PLA's buildup. Modest, but ever larger, increases would have significant strategic and cumulative effects over time, helping both partners stay ahead of emerging threats in a sustainable way. If the economic and legislative realities in Washington and Taipei do not allow for immediate defense budget increases, then each side should allocate resources within their budgets, moving money from non-critical programs to those which are specifically aimed at deterring and defeating PRC aggression. Public statements and defense policy documents released in the U.S. and Taiwan, such as their respective quadrennial defense reviews, should make it clear that the number one threat to peace in Asia is PRC expansionism, and the top priority is countering that threat.

## **Conclusion**

Taiwan has an important stake in the future of the South China Sea. It maintains a sovereignty claim dating back to 1947 and has control over two strategically positioned islands at the north and south ends of the Sea. The PRC is undermining Taiwan's sovereignty and destabilizing the South China Sea with its rapid buildup of artificial island bases. These massive facilities—and China's associated anti-Taiwan activities around the world—threaten Taiwan's strategic, operational, and tactical-level interests.

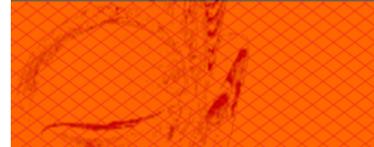
Going forward, Taiwan will have to grapple with a large number of interlocking questions relating to the South China Sea, while at the same time retaining a sense of proportion and perspective to ensure that these challenges do not distract time and attention away from even more important ones. Focusing on big problems is essential if limited resources are not to be frittered away on lesser threats which do not directly influence the survival of the nation and democracy. The most searching and rigorous analytical effort on the invasion threat facing Taiwan should be organized and executed, with nothing being neglected to make this the priority. The islands of Pratas and Itu Aba will have their roles in Taiwan's defense, but they are not the prime ones.

The policies adopted by the governments of the United States and Taiwan, respectively, have failed to prevent Chinese expansionism. Washington and Taipei will have to work in closer concert with each other in the future if they are to be more effective. This will not be easy given the lack of official diplomatic relations. However, opportunities do exist for the U.S. and Taiwan to impose costs on reckless Chinese behavior in the South and East China Seas and beyond. These opportunities include track 1.5 diplomacy, senior-level visits, joint exercises, ship visits, arms sales, intelligence sharing, military deployments, and defense spending increases. Individually, these will each have important and positive, but limited, effects. Taken collectively, they will help significantly reduce the rising risks and better ensure long-term peace, prosperity, and stability in the Western Pacific.

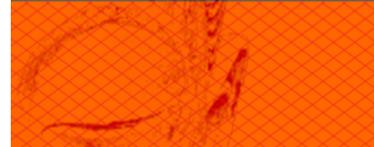


## Appendix I: Chinese Order of Battle in South China Sea

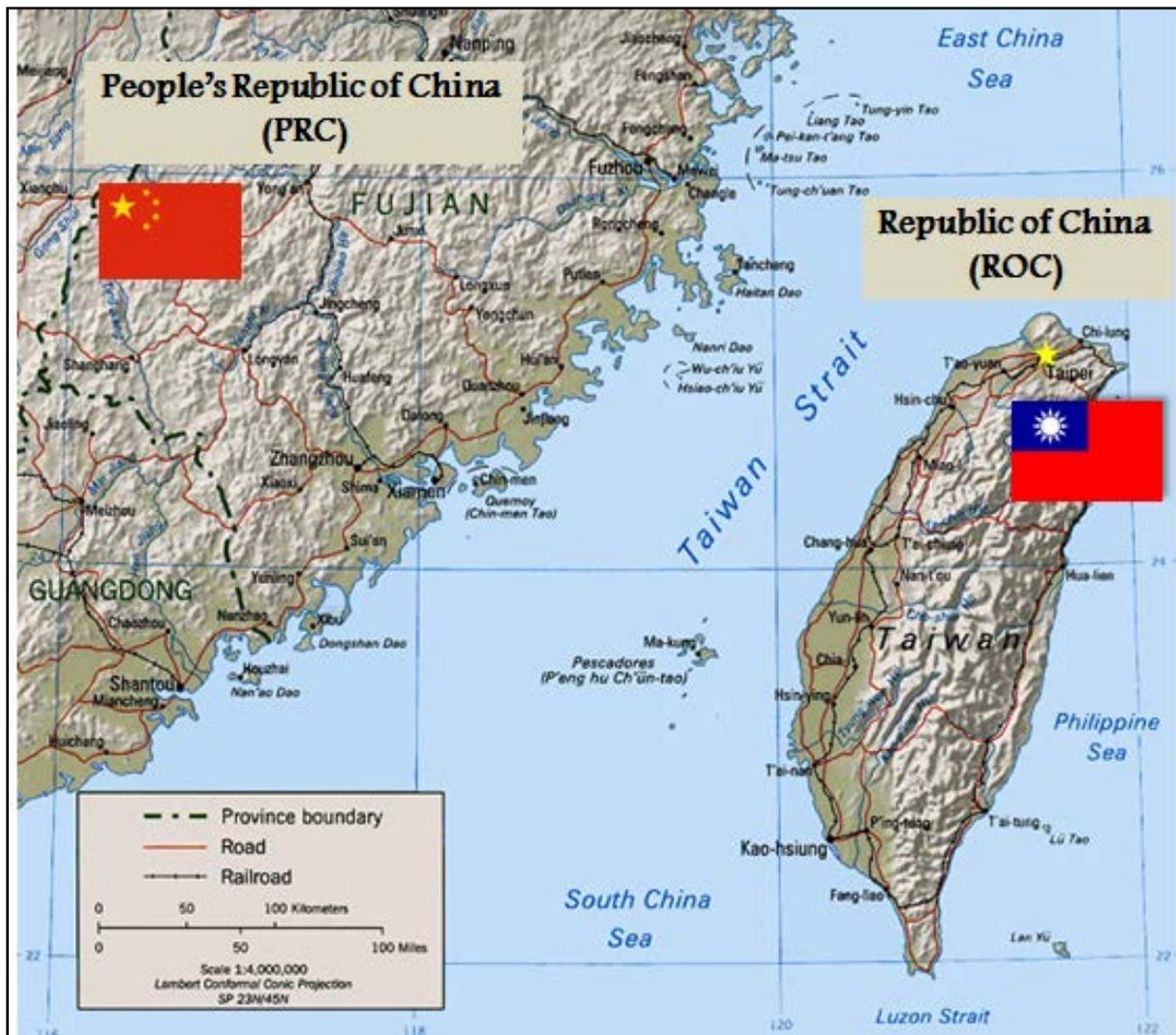
PLA ORDER OF BATTLE IN SOUTH CHINA SEA AREA (Major Units)		
Organization	Location	Details
<b>Southern Theater Command HQ</b>	<b>Guangzhou</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commander: General Wang Jiaocheng</li> <li>Political Commissar: General Wei Liang</li> </ul>
<b>PLA Ground Force HQ</b>	<b>Nanning, Guangxi</b>	<u>Current Army Composition</u>
<b>41st Group Army</b>	<b>Liuzhou, Guangxi</b>	2 Technical Reconnaissance Bureaus 1 Electronic Countermeasures Brigade 3 Group Armies 1 Helicopter Brigade 1 Helicopter Regiment 1 Special Operations Brigade 1 Reserve AAA division 1 Reserve AAA brigade 5 Army reserve divisions  <u>Totals (very rough estimate)</u>  10,000 Amphibious Infantry 90,000-150,000 Regular Infantry 2,000-3,000 Special Forces 1,000-3,000 Tanks 1,000-3,000 Artillery pieces 40-160 Helicopters
121st Mountain Infantry Brigade	Guilin, Guangxi	
122 Mechanized Infantry Brigade	Unknown	
Unidentified Armored Brigade	Guilin, Guangxi	
123rd Mechanized Infantry Division	Guigang, Guangxi	
Unidentified Artillery Brigade	Liuzhou, Guangxi	
19th Air Defense Brigade	Hengyang, Hunan	
Unidentified Army Aviation Regiment	Unknown	
<b>42nd Group Army</b>	<b>Huizhou, Guangdong</b>	
124th Amphibious Mech. Inf. Div.	Boluo, Guangdong	
163rd Infantry Division	Chaozhou, Guangdong	
Unidentified Air Defense Brigade	Chaozhou, Guangdong	
9th Armored Brigade	Guangzhou	
Unidentified Long-range Artillery Brigade	Dongguan, Guangdong	
Chemical Defense Regiment	Shenzhen, Guangdong	
6th Army Aviation Brigade	Foshan, Guangdong	
Special Operations Brigade	Guangzhou	
Pontoon Bridge Regiment	Hunan Province	
<b>14th Group Army</b>	<b>Kunming, Yunnan</b>	
40th Infantry Brigade	Kaiyuan, Yunnan	
Unidentified Infantry Brigade	Lincang, Yunnan	
Unidentified Mech. Inf. Brigade	Dali Bai, Yunnan	
42nd Motorized Infantry Brigade	Unknown	
Unidentified Artillery Brigade	Somewhere in Yunnan	
Unidentified Air Defense Brigade	Kunming	
Unidentified Armored Brigade	Kunming	
29th Chemical Defense Regiment	Kunming	
<b>Hong Kong Garrison</b>	<b>Hong Kong</b>	
<b>Macau Garrison</b>	<b>Macau</b>	
Army Reserve AAA Division	Guangzhou	
Reserve AAA Brigade	Zhanjiang	
Army Reserve Infantry Division	Nanning, Guangxi	
Army Reserve Division	Hainan	
Army Reserve Division	Yunnan	
Army Reserve Infantry Division	Hunnan	
Army Reserve infantry Division	Guizhou	



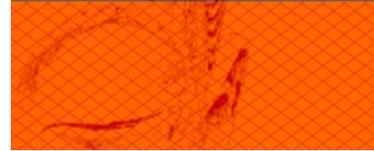
<b>PLA Navy South Sea Fleet HQ</b>	<b>Zhanjiang</b>	<u>Current Fleet Totals</u>
2nd Destroyer Zhidui	Zhanjiang	4 nuclear-powered ballistic missile subs, 2 nuclear-powered attack subs, 20 diesel-powered attack subs, 7 destroyers, 21 frigates, 8 corvettes, 3 amphibious transport docks, 11 tank landing ships, 7 medium landing ships, 38 missile patrol craft.  8,000-10,000 Marines (approx.) 1 Fighter-Bomber Division 1 Mixed Air Division
3rd Combat Support Ship Zhidui	Zhanjiang	
6th Landing Ship Zhidui	Zhanjiang	
1st Marine Brigade	Zhanjiang	
164th Marine Brigade	Zhanjiang	
8th Naval Air Division	Haikou	
3rd Radar Brigade	Haikou	
11th Fastboat Zhidui	Haikou	
2nd Frigate Dadui	Shantou	
9th Naval Air Division	Lingshui	
9th Destroyer Zhidui	Sanya	
2nd Submarine Base	Sanya	
Unidentified Units: Air Defense Brigade, Observation and Communications Brigade, Special Operations Regiment, Electronic Countermeasures Regiment, Shore-to-Ship Missile Regiment	Unknown	
<b>PLA Air Force HQ</b>	<b>Guangzhou</b>	
10th SAM Brigade	Guangzhou	5 Fighter Divisions 1 Bomber Division 1-2 Fighter Brigade(s) 1 Radar Brigade 2 Radar Regiments 1 SAM Brigade  <u>Air Force Totals (approx.)</u> 250-400 fighters 50 Bombers
2nd Fighter Division	Zhanjiang	
42nd Fighter Division	Nanning, Guangxi	
1st Radar Brigade	Nanning	
9th Fighter Division	Shantou, Guangdong	
19th Radar Regiment	Shantou	
20th Radar Regiment	Foshan	
44th Fighter Division	Mengzi, Yunnan	
18th Fighter Division	Changsha, Hunan	
8th Bomber Division	Leiyang, Hunan	
Unidentified Air Brigade	Guilin, Guangxi	
<b>PLA Rocket Force</b> (Under direct authority of CMC in Beijing, not the Southern Theater Command)		<u>Rocket Force Totals*</u>
<b>Base 52</b>	<b>Huangshan, Anhui</b>	1,000-1,200 SRBMs (250-300 launchers)  200-300 MRBMs (100-125 launchers)  200-300 GLCM (40-55 launchers)  *Note that SRBMs and GLCMs are primarily targeted at Taiwan, and MRBMs at Japan. With the possible exception of ASBM units, they are most likely not intended for South China Sea contingencies. However, some of the above units perhaps could be redeployed and retargeted if it was needed.
807 Brigade (Nuclear MRBM)	Chizhou, Anhui	
811 Brigade (Nuclear MRBM)	Jingdezhen, Jiangxi	
815 Brigade (Conventional SRBM)	Shangrao, Jiangxi	
817 Brigade (Conventional SRBM)	Yong'an, Fujian	
818 Brigade (Conventional SRBM)	Meizhou, Guangdong	
819 Brigade (Conventional SRBM)	Ganzhou, Jiangxi	
820 Brigade (Conventional SRBM)	Jinhua, Zhejiang	
Unidentified Launch Brigade (SRBM)	Shaoguan, Guangdong	
<b>Base 53</b>	<b>Kunming, Yunnan</b>	
802 Brigade (Nuclear MRBMs)	Jianshui, Yunnan	
808 Brigade (Unknown missile)	Chuxiong, Yunnan	
821 Brigade (Conventional GLCM)	Luizhou, Guangxi	
Puning Brigade (Conventional SRBM)	Puning, Guangdong	
Qingyuan Brigade (Possible ASBM)	Qingyuan, Guangdong	
Sources: <i>Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2016</i> (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 2016); Jamestown Foundation's <i>China Brief</i> ; <i>The Directory of PRC Military Personalities (2016 and 2014 editions)</i> ; DGI., <i>The PLA as an Organization, Volume 2.0.</i> , Ken Allen, Dennis Blasko, and Mark Stokes.		



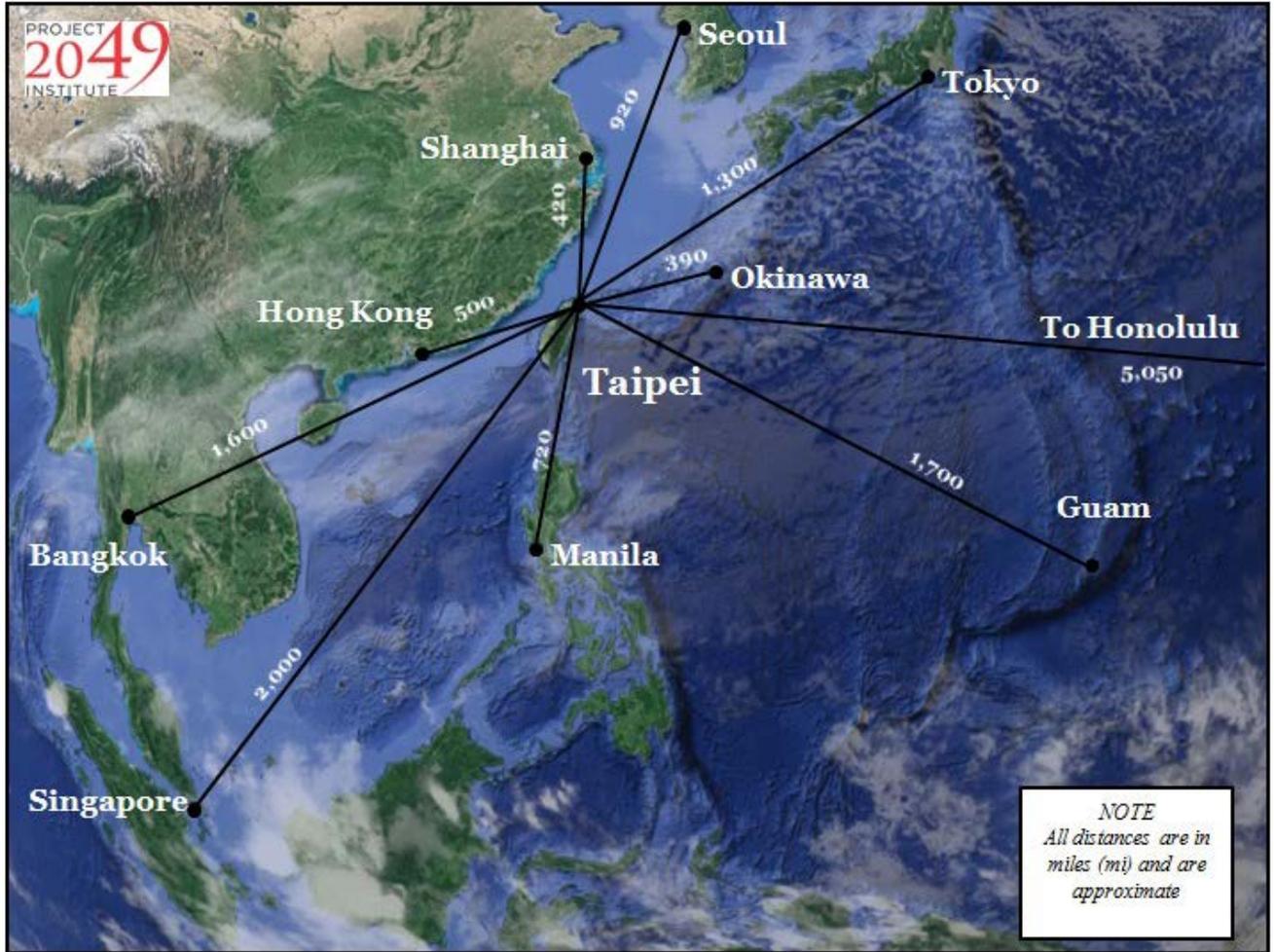
## Appendix II: Map of the Taiwan Strait Area



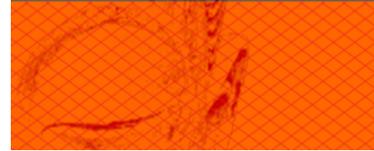
Source: Wikimedia and Project 2049 Institute.



### Appendix III: Taiwan's Location in Western Pacific



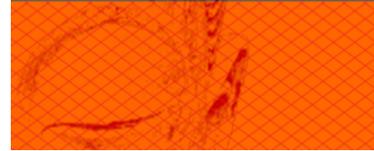
Source: The above map was prepared by the Project 2049 Institute using Google Maps.



## Appendix IV: Suspected PLA Amphibious Training Areas



**Source:** The above map was prepared by the Project 2049 Institute, based on Lin Zhe-Chun (林哲群), "Research on How ROC Military Can Respond to Communist Military's 'Multi-Directional, Double-Over' Taiwan Attack Strategy (國軍因應共軍'多維雙超'攻台戰略之研究)," *ROC Army Bimonthly Journal*, Vol. 48, No. 526 (December 2012), p. 90.



## Notes

<sup>1</sup> David Sanger and Rick Gladstone, "New Photos Cast Doubt on China's Vow Not to Militarize Disputed Islands," *New York Times*, August 8, 2016, at [http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/09/world/asia/china-spratly-islands-south-china-sea.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/09/world/asia/china-spratly-islands-south-china-sea.html?_r=0).

<sup>2</sup> Franz-Stephan Gady, "More Deadly Missiles: Upgraded Warship Rejoins China's South Sea Fleet," *The Diplomat*, August 10, 2016, at <http://thediplomat.com/2016/08/more-deadly-missiles-upgraded-warship-rejoins-chinas-south-sea-fleet/>.

<sup>3</sup> For example, see Jeremy Page, "Beijing's South China Sea Moves Vex U.S. Pacific Fleet Chief," *The Wall Street Journal*, August 9, 2016, at [http://www.wsj.com/articles/chinas-south-china-sea-moves-draw-ire-of-u-s-pacific-fleet-chief-1470762489?mod=itp&mod=djemITP\\_h](http://www.wsj.com/articles/chinas-south-china-sea-moves-draw-ire-of-u-s-pacific-fleet-chief-1470762489?mod=itp&mod=djemITP_h).

<sup>4</sup> The seven countries that claim territory in the South China Sea are Brunei, China (PRC), Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan (ROC), and Vietnam.

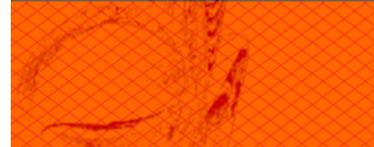
<sup>5</sup> For background on the dilemma facing Taiwan, see Lynn Kuok, "Tides of Change: Taiwan's evolving position in the South China Sea," *Brookings East Asia Policy Paper 5*, May 2015, at <http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2015/05/taiwan-south-china-sea-kuok/taiwan-south-china-sea-kuok-paper.pdf>; Lynn Kuok, "Taiwan Must Tread Carefully on South China Sea Ruling," *The Wall Street Journal*, July 25, 2016, at <http://www.wsj.com/articles/taiwan-must-tread-carefully-on-south-china-sea-ruling-1469465725>; Shannon Tiezzi, "Taiwan's South China Sea Headache," *The Diplomat*, November 4, 2015, at <http://thediplomat.com/2015/11/taiwans-south-china-sea-headache/>; and "Ending Taiwan's Broad South China Sea Claims," *STRATFOR*, October 2, 2015, at <https://www.stratfor.com/analysis/ending-taiwans-broad-south-china-sea-claims>.

<sup>6</sup> For an excellent study on how U.S. policy evolved over time, see Mark Stokes and Sabrina Tsai, *The United States and Future Policy Options in the Taiwan Strait: Driving Forces and Implications for U.S. Security Interests* (Arlington, VA: Project 2049 Institute, February 2016), pp. 6-32, at [http://www.project2049.net/documents/Future\\_US%20Policy%20Options%20in%20the%20Taiwan%20Strait\\_Project%202049.pdf](http://www.project2049.net/documents/Future_US%20Policy%20Options%20in%20the%20Taiwan%20Strait_Project%202049.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> Phillip C. Saunders and Joel Wuthnow, "What Do China's Military Reforms Mean for Taiwan?" *The National Bureau of Asian Research*, May 19, 2016, at <http://nbr.org/research/activity.aspx?id=692>; and Wendell Minnick, "Analysis: China Builds Amphibious Capabilities for Taiwan Scenario," *Defense News*, May 14, 2016, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/international/asia-pacific/2016/05/14/analysis-china-builds-amphibious-capabilities-taiwan-scenario/84372014/>.

<sup>8</sup> Of various sources, see Sun Lihua, "Looking at Taiwan Spy Reporting Capabilities from Case of Fallen Female Spy Net (从落网女谍看台湾谍报能力)," *Dangdai Haijun* (Modern Navy), October 2011, p. 55; Guo Nairi [郭乃日], *The Unseen War in the Taiwan Strait* [看不见的台海战争] (Xizhi, Taiwan: Gaoshou Publishing, 2005), p. 35; Ma Yuanshen, Chen Wenqing, and Zhang Wenjing, "Taiwan's Naval C3I System Equipment Status Quo and Its Developmental Characteristics (台湾海军 C3I 系统装备现状和发展特点)," *Huoli Yu Zhihui Kongzhi* (Fire Control and Command Control), February, 2004, p. 107; and Ian Easton and Randall Schriver, *Standing Watch: Taiwan and Maritime Domain Awareness in the Western Pacific*, Project 2049 Institute Occasional Paper, December 2014, p. 4.

<sup>9</sup> See Dennis J. Blasko, "The PLA Army/Ground Forces," in Kevin Pollpeter and Kenneth W. Allen (eds.), *The PLA as an Organization: Reference Volume v2.0* (Fairfax, VA: Defense Group Inc. 2015), p. 244; Dennis J. Blasko, *The Chinese Army Today* (New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 97-103; and Nan Li, "The People's Liberation Army Navy as an Evolving Organization," in Kevin Pollpeter and Kenneth W. Allen (eds.), *The PLA as an Organization: Reference Volume v2.0* (Fairfax, VA: Defense Group Inc. 2015), pp. 280-288.



<sup>10</sup> See Appendix IV for details.

<sup>11</sup> Wendell Minnick, "China Puts Guam Within Missile Range," *Defense News*, May 12, 2016, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/international/asia-pacific/2016/05/12/china-guam-us-missile-range/84279494/>; and Li Jing, "Chinese air force conducts first drill in western Pacific," *South China Morning Post*, March 31, 2015, at <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1751967/chinese-air-force-conducts-first-drill-western-pacific>. See also, PLA Air Force flies over Bashi Channel, Taipei Times, September 13, 2016, at <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2016/09/13/2003655044>.

<sup>12</sup> Prashanth Parameswaran, "Vietnam a Growing Threat to Taiwan's South China Sea Claims: Report," *The Diplomat*, December 31, 2014, at <http://thediplomat.com/2014/12/vietnam-a-growing-threat-to-taiwans-south-china-sea-claims-report/>; and "Press pick apart Taiwan-Filipino tensions," *BBC news*, May 15, 2013, at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-22540089>.

<sup>13</sup> See Richard Bush, "The Significance of the Republic of China for Cross-Strait Relations," *Brookings Institution*, May 20, 2011, at [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/0520\\_bush\\_remarks.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/0520_bush_remarks.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> *Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2016* (Washington, D.C., Department of Defense, 2016), p. 13.

<sup>15</sup> For an assessment of this problem, see Dean Cheng, "The Decades Long Dance Between China and Taiwan," *War on the Rocks*, August 4, 2016, at <http://warontherocks.com/2016/08/the-decades-long-dance-between-china-taiwan/>.

<sup>16</sup> For an example of various arguments in Taipei, see "Editorial abstracts: US treats Taiwan as pawn in the South China Sea," *Focus Taiwan*, July 14, 2016, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/afav/201607140021.aspx>. For an American perspective, see George Koo, "Taiwan, a bystander victim in the South China Sea dispute," *Asia Times*, July 27, 2016, at <http://atimes.com/2016/07/taiwan-a-bystander-victim-of-s-china-sea/>. See also Ji Yixin, "What Is In Store for Taiwan After the Arbitration?," *Chin-US Focus*, July 25, 2016, at <http://www.chinausfocus.com/peace-security/what-is-in-store-for-taiwan-after-the-arbitration/>. For excellent background on the PLA's role, see Mark Stokes and Russell Hsiao, *The People's Liberation Army General Political Department: Political Warfare with Chinese Characteristics* (Arlington, VA: Project 2049 Institute, October 2013), at [http://www.project2049.net/documents/PLA\\_General\\_Political\\_Department\\_Liaison\\_Stokes\\_Hsiao.pdf](http://www.project2049.net/documents/PLA_General_Political_Department_Liaison_Stokes_Hsiao.pdf).

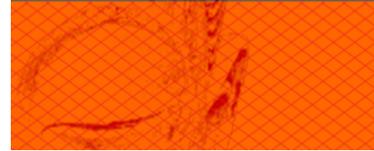
<sup>17</sup> Shannon Tiezzi, "Taiwan: South China Sea Ruling 'Completely Unacceptable,'" *The Diplomat*, July 13, 2016, at <http://thediplomat.com/2016/07/taiwan-south-china-sea-ruling-completely-unacceptable/>.

<sup>18</sup> Bruce A. Elleman, *High Seas Buffer: The Taiwan Patrol Force, 1950-1979* (Newport, Rhode Island: Naval War College Press, 2012), pp. 124-126.

<sup>19</sup> Thomas Shugart, "China's Artificial Islands Are Bigger (And A Bigger Deal) Than You Think," *War on the Rocks*, September 21, 2016, <http://warontherocks.com/2016/09/chinas-artificial-islands-are-bigger-and-a-bigger-deal-than-you-think/>.

<sup>20</sup> Wendell Minnick, "Analysts: Taiwan Goals Drive China's Spratly Grab," *Defense News*, June 29, 2015, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/policy-budget/warfare/2015/06/28/taiwan-china-reclamation-island-invasion-spratly-south-china-sea-pla/29260999/>.

<sup>21</sup> David Larter, "Navy deploys carrier strike group to the Pacific -- without the carrier," *Navy Times*, April 20, 2016, at <http://www.navytimes.com/story/military/2016/04/19/surface-action-group-deployment-thomas-rowden-momsen-decatur-spruance/83243334/>; and Sam LaGrone, "SNA: Navy Surface Leaders



Pitch More Lethal Ships, Surface Action Groups," *USNI News*, January 14, 2015, at <https://news.usni.org/2015/01/14/sna-navy-surface-leaders-pitch-lethal-ships-surface-action-groups>.

<sup>22</sup> Lo Tien-pin, "Official says Itu Aba at risk from nearby 'wolves,'" *Taipei Times*, July 11, 2016, at <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2016/07/11/2003650805>.

<sup>23</sup> See Jiang Yanyu (ed.). *A Military History of Fifty Years in the Taiwan Area 1949-2006* (台湾地区五十年军事史 1949-2006) [Beijing: Liberation Army Press, 2013], p. 115-116; and Wendell Minnick, "Taiwan Missile Base Identified Near China," *Defense News*, February 22, 2010, accessible online at <http://minnickarticles.blogspot.com/2010/02/taiwan-missile-base-identified-near.html>.

<sup>24</sup> For more on PRC efforts to demoralize Taiwan, see J. Michael Cole, "Taiwanese Military Reform and PLA Political Warfare," *Thinking Taiwan*, April 16, 2015, at <http://thinking-taiwan.com/taiwanese-military-reform-pla-political-warfare/>.

<sup>25</sup> For example, see Cai Jianhua, et al., "Research on Foreign (and Taiwan) Artillery Force Precision Guided Weapons Development [外(台)军炮兵精确制导武器发展研究]," *PLA 63961 Unit Intelligence Information Office*, January 2004.

<sup>26</sup> Aaron Tu, et al., "Ministry talking to Google about island 'secret' leaks," *Taipei Times*, September 21, 2016, at <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2016/09/21/2003655558>.

<sup>27</sup> J.R. Wu, "Taiwan to boost coast guard presence on island disputed with China," *Reuters*, October 14, 2015, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-southchinasea-taiwan-idUSKCNOS815T20151014>.

<sup>28</sup> See the author's "Why the South China Sea is Not Beijing's Next Battlefield," *The National Interest*, September 19, 2015, at <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-south-china-sea-not-beijings-next-battlefield-13881>.

<sup>29</sup> David Larter, "4-star admiral wants to confront China. White House says not so fast," *Navy Times*, April 6, 2016, at <http://www.navytimes.com/story/military/2016/04/06/4-star-admiral-wants-confront-china-white-house-says-not-so-fast/82472290/>.

<sup>30</sup> See the author's "Strategic Standoff: The U.S.-China Rivalry and Taiwan," *Project 2049 Institute Occasional Paper*, March 2016, at [http://www.project2049.net/documents/Strategic%20Standoff\\_US\\_China\\_Rivalry\\_Taiwan.pdf](http://www.project2049.net/documents/Strategic%20Standoff_US_China_Rivalry_Taiwan.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> For example, see J. Michael Cole, "Is Taiwan out of Vogue in Washington DC?" *The Diplomat*, March 19, 2015, at <http://thediplomat.com/2015/03/is-taiwan-out-of-vogue-in-washington-dc/>.

<sup>32</sup> For more on this, see Randall Schriver, "The Case for US Ship Visits to Taiwan," *The Diplomat*, May 9, 2016, at <http://thediplomat.com/2016/05/the-case-for-us-ship-visits-to-taiwan/>.

<sup>33</sup> Shirley Kan, "Time for the US to Get Clear on Taiwan Arms Sales," *The Diplomat*, July 10, 2015, at <http://thediplomat.com/2015/07/time-for-the-us-to-get-clear-on-taiwan-arms-sales/>.

<sup>34</sup> For example, see Wendell Minnick, "Spook Mountain: How US spies on China," *Asia Times*, March 6, 2003, at <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/EC06Ad03.html>.

<sup>35</sup> For more on this, see Michael Green, Kathleen Hicks, Mark Cancian, Zack Cooper, and John Schaus, *Asia-Pacific Rebalance 2025: Capabilities, Presence, and Partnerships* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, January 2016), at [https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy\\_files/files/publication/160119\\_Green\\_AsiaPacificRebalance2025\\_Web\\_0.pdf](https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy_files/files/publication/160119_Green_AsiaPacificRebalance2025_Web_0.pdf).