



Biden Again Says the US Would Defend Taiwan If China Attacks

Description

USA: In an interview with [60 Minutes that aired Sunday](#), President Biden said the US would defend Taiwan in the event of a Chinese attack, marking the fourth time of his presidency that he's made the pledge despite the long-standing US policy of strategic ambiguity.

When asked by host Scott Pelley if US forces would defend Taiwan, President Biden said, "Yes, if in fact there was an unprecedented attack."

Pelley followed up by asking, "So unlike Ukraine, to be clear, sir, US forces, US men and women would defend Taiwan in the event of a Chinese invasion?"

The president replied, "Yes."

President Biden tells 60 Minutes that U.S. men and women would defend Taiwan in the event of a Chinese invasion. However, after our interview, a White House official told us that U.S. policy on Taiwan has not changed. <https://t.co/ANg54LifSH>
[pic.twitter.com/V5qjoqF36T](https://t.co/ANg54LifSH)

— 60 Minutes (@60Minutes) [September 19, 2022](#)

When asked for comment, the White House insisted that US policy hasn't changed, as it did the three previous times Biden made the pledge to defend Taiwan. "The President has said this before, including in Tokyo earlier this year. He also made clear then that our Taiwan policy hasn't changed. That remains true," a White House spokesperson said, according to *Reuters*.

Under the policy of strategic ambiguity, the US is not supposed to say one way or the other if it would intervene to defend Taiwan if China attacks.

Back in 2001, then-Senator Joe Biden criticized President George W. Bush for suggesting that the US would defend Taiwan, then later walking it back. In an op-ed for *The Washington Post*, Biden wrote that "words matter" and said Bush hurt the credibility of the US by making such comments due to an

“inattention to detail.”

Biden rightly pointed out in the 2001 op-ed that the US hasn’t been obligated to defend Taiwan since “we abrogated the 1954 Mutual Defense Treaty signed by President Eisenhower and ratified by the Senate.” The treaty was terminated after the US formalized relations with Beijing in 1979. Since then, the US hasn’t had diplomatic ties with Taipei but has continued to sell arms to the island.

Biden also claimed in the 60 Minutes interview, which was conducted last Thursday, that the US is still committed to the one-China policy. “We agree with what we signed onto a long time ago. And that there’s one-China policy, and Taiwan makes their own judgments about their independence. We are not moving– we’re not encouraging their being independent. We’re not– that– that’s their decision,” he said.

From Beijing’s perspective, the frequent US delegations to Taiwan and other US support for the island are a sign that Washington is moving away from the one-China policy. Congress is also working on a piece of legislation that would radically change US policy toward Taiwan.

The Taiwan Policy Act would give Taiwan \$6.5 billion in military aid, give the island the benefits of being a “major non-NATO ally,” expedite arms sales to Taipei, and require sanctions in the event of Chinese aggression. The legislation was approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in a vote of 17-5. The next step is a vote on the Senate floor, but it’s not clear when that might happen.

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