



Taiwan Signs \$555 Million Contract to Purchase US-Made Drones

Description

TAIWAN: Taiwan has signed a contract to purchase four MQ-9B SeaGuardian drones from the US worth \$555 million, Taiwanese officials said on Wednesday.

The MQ-9B SeaGuardian drone is made by General Atomics and is a naval variant of the MQ-9 Reaper drone with more focus on maritime surveillance. Under the contract, the first drone will be delivered by 2025.

The deal comes as Taiwan's government is pledging to spend more on its military in the wake of the largest-ever Chinese military drills around the island, which were a response to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visiting Taipei.

The Chinese drills have spurred more calls in the US to sell more arms to Taiwan, and the Biden administration is reportedly preparing to ask Congress to approve a new \$1.1 billion arms sale for Taipei.

But there are some issues with the delivery of US arms to Taiwan. The island is currently facing a \$14 billion backlog in foreign military sales from the US, which the Pentagon has said is [due to](#) pandemic-related acquisition issues. The backlogged equipment includes Taiwan's \$8 billion purchase of 66 F-16 fighter jets.

by David DeCamp

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