# China's Defence Minister Criticises Taiwan's Defence Efforts at Shangri-La Dialogue



China’s Defence Minister, Dong Jun, criticized Taiwan's President Lai Ching-te and his administration's defense efforts during the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, Asia's largest security conference. Dong accused Taiwan of using military means against unification and warned this would lead to its destruction. He attributed increased military tensions to Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party since its leadership began in 2016, which prompted enhancements in Taiwan's defense capabilities.

Dong emphasized China’s preference for peaceful unification but noted Taiwan’s independence pursuits and foreign support, particularly from the US, as major obstacles. He condemned US arms sales to Taiwan, suggesting they embolden Taiwan’s independence forces.

In Beijing's Anti-Secession Law of 2005, China reserves the right to use “non-peaceful means” if Taiwan secedes or peaceful unification prospects are nullified. Taiwan maintains its sovereignty as the Republic of China, a position supported by the majority of Taiwanese citizens.

Following Lai’s May 20 inauguration, China conducted military exercises around Taiwan, which they called punitive actions. Taiwan’s Mainland Affairs Council labeled Dong’s comments as provocative and harmful to regional security.

Despite Dong’s harsh rhetoric towards Taiwan, his meeting with US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin was described as positive. Dong outlined China's stance against the "law of the jungle" and reaffirmed commitment to regional peace. He denied providing weapons in the Ukraine conflict and emphasized China’s limited role.

At the conference, Dong also rebuffed accusations regarding Chinese Coast Guard actions against Philippine vessels in the South China Sea, claiming the Philippines was the provocateur under external (US) influence. This claim was rejected by US officials, describing China’s narrative as inconsistent with its aggressive regional actions.