

## China bristles at Taiwan-US security officials' meeting

Written by Taipei Times

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China yesterday responded angrily as Taiwan confirmed the first meeting in more than four decades between senior Taiwanese and US security officials.

National Security Council Secretary-General David Lee (李顯赫) met White House National Security Adviser John Bolton earlier this month, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) said on Saturday.

The Central News Agency said the meeting was the first since Taipei and Washington ended formal diplomatic relations in 1979.

"China is extremely dissatisfied and resolutely opposed to this," Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman Lu Kang (陸慷) told a daily news briefing, adding that Beijing was against any form of official exchanges between the US and Taiwan.

The diplomatic ties between Beijing and Washington have become increasingly strained in recent weeks due to an escalating trade dispute, US support for Taiwan and China's military posture in the South China Sea, where the US also conducts freedom-of-navigation patrols.

The rare meeting is viewed in Taiwan as a sign of support from US President Donald Trump's administration.

The meeting took place during Lee's visit to the US from May 13 to Tuesday last week.

"During the trip, together with US government officials, Secretary-General Lee met with representatives from our diplomatic allies, reiterating support and commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific region," the statement said.

The ministry and the American Institute in Taiwan yesterday declined to comment.

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Beijing regularly calls Taiwan the most sensitive and important issue in ties with the US, which has no formal ties with Taiwan, but is its main source of arms.

The US has in recent months increased the frequency of patrols through the strategic Taiwan Strait despite opposition from China.

China has been ramping up military and diplomatic pressure to assert its sovereignty, conducting drills near Taiwan and snatching its few remaining diplomatic allies.

Earlier this month, the US House of Representatives backed legislation supporting Taiwan as members of the US Congress pushed for a sharper approach to relations with Beijing.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2019/05/28](#)