

US needs official ties with Taiwan

Written by Ted Yoho

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Chinese President Xi Jinping (习近平) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) have blatantly disregarded the agreement between the UK and China that allows autonomy for Hong Kong. The protests going on today in Hong Kong are a direct result of the CCP's lack of respect for self-determination and rule of law.

The mainland government's actions have demonstrated that the word and commitments of Xi and the Chinese ruling class cannot be trusted by the global community. This is yet another shameful situation for Xi and a self-inflicted wound by the CCP.

In 1997, the UK agreed to cede its claim to Hong Kong and return control of the territory to the People's Republic of China (PRC). Part of the handover agreement requires Hong Kong to be an autonomous administrative district with a free market-based economic system for no less than 50 years. Chinese and British leaders agreed upon those terms in good faith, but now the Chinese leadership is ready to tear up that agreement.

The protests in Hong Kong over the past year are solely the result of Xi and the CCP's machinations regarding the special administrative region and a lust for authoritarian power. Their goal is to remove any form of democratic governance from within their territorial boundaries.

In essence, Beijing has broadcast to the world that "the People's Republic of China and the Chinese Communist Party cannot be trusted."

What does this say about the future relationship between Taiwan, the Republic of China, and the mainland PRC?

Xi and his communists have made threatening overtures stating that Taiwan is part of China and that the PRC will "reunify" the two nations by "draw[ing] blood if necessary."

The idea that Taiwan is a territory belonging to the PRC is inherently false.

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This notion comes from a vague meeting in 1992 referred to inappropriately as the “1992 consensus.” At that meeting, the concept of “one China” was discussed, but no consensus was agreed upon. The conclusion of that meeting has been interpreted differently by Taiwanese and PRC officials, but the fact remains: Taiwan is not and never has been part of communist China.

It is time for China to recognize Taiwan as the independent nation that it is. Taiwan has a sovereign and defined border, and its own form of democratic government, economy, military, flag and national anthem. The people of Taiwan view themselves as Taiwanese, not Chinese.

It is time for the US government to stand firm with Taiwan as a sovereign, self-ruling, independent and democratic nation.

For more than 40 years, the US government has been mandated by law to furnish defensive weapons to protect Taiwan’s sovereignty. If it does not lead the world on this issue and encourage partner nations to do the same, China will fill the gap and attempt to take Taiwan by force. This much was indicated last month when Beijing removed calls for “peaceful unification” with Taiwan in official documents.

That is why I will be introducing legislation requiring the US to defend Taiwan from forceful unification with the PRC.

In the prelude to any conflict, once the dominos begin to fall it is already too late to prepare. As we are witnessing the fate of the Hong Kong people, we must remember that this might only be the first domino. The next could easily be Taiwan.

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