

Taiwan gets barred from Jakarta defense summit

Written by Taipei Times

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A Taiwanese delegation was forced to withdraw from the third Jakarta International Defense Dialogue (JIDD) without being given an explanation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs deputy spokesman Calvin Ho (何志偉) said yesterday.

Ho said that the ministry has already instructed the Taipei Economic and Trade Office in Jakarta to demand an explanation from the Indonesian government, which was hosting the conference, soon after the four-member delegation was informed that it could not attend the summit.

The ministry made the comments following a report yesterday in the British newspaper the Financial Times, which said that China was behind the abrupt cancellation of Taiwan's invitation to attend the summit that began yesterday and revolved around the theme: "Defense and Diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific Region."

Ho declined to speculate on the reasons for the withdrawal, saying that the representative office in had not yet reported on the matter.

The delegation was composed of two representative office staffers and two academics.

Indonesian Major General Syaiful Anwar, who chaired the organizing committee for the JIDD, was quoted by the Financial Times as saying that the Chinese embassy in Jakarta had filed a verbal complaint with the Indonesian Ministry of Defense and "asked us to discourage them [the Taiwanese delegates]" from attending.

"As this is a government-organised event, we have to listen to any objections from other governments. If there are no objections, we welcome everybody," the newspaper quoted Anwar as saying.

Representative to Indonesia Andrew Hsia (許嘉樂) said Taipei was "not pleased" with the incident.

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“This [conference] is about security in the region [and] certainly we are one of the major players in the region,” Hsia was quoted as saying by the newspaper.

According to the JIDD's Web site, attendees at the summit included US Deputy Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter, as well as defense ministers and chiefs of the defense forces of more than 45 countries.

A source in Taipei familiar with the matter said Taiwan hoped to hold sideline meetings with delegates from the US and the Philippines to discuss security issues, the newspaper said.

The attendance of a Taiwanese delegation at last year's forum was hailed at the time by the Ministry of National Defense as a breakthrough in the nation's participation in one of the region's principle security coordination mechanism.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2013/03/22](#)