

Remember Taiwan, US Congress members tell Obama

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Leaders of the US Congressional Taiwan Caucus have written to US President Barack Obama urging him to remember Taiwan's "vital interests" during the two-day summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping (习近平) which starts today in California.

"Taiwan is a strong democracy, a close trading partner, and an ally of the US," they said in the letter.

It is signed by Republican representatives Mario Diaz-Balart and John Carter, and Democratic representatives Gerald Connolly and Albio Sires.

"While we recognize that your discussions with Chinese leaders will cover a range of issues, we hope that you will be mindful of Taiwan's needs," the letter said.

The four Congressional members — all co-chairs of the caucus — said that should matters concerning Taiwan be raised, "we urge you to emphasize" that the US position remains clear, consistent with the assurances that the US offered Taiwan in 1982, that is, the US will support Taiwan's security and will continue to provide it with arms as required under the Taiwan Relations Act.

They reminded Obama that it is US policy to consider any non-peaceful means to determine Taiwan's future "a threat" to the peace and security of the Western Pacific, and of "grave concern" to the US.

China "has engaged in a large-scale military build-up over the past few years and has not abandoned the threat of force, with over 1,600 ballistic and cruise missiles now being aimed at Taiwan, a significant increase from the previous year," they wrote.

Taiwan is now one of the main targets of Chinese cyberwarfare, the Congressional members said, and it is "of the utmost importance" that Beijing understands the US' firm commitment to ensuring that Taiwan has the tools to defend itself.

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“We also hope you will raise the issue of Taiwan’s participation in international organizations, as it will greatly benefit Taiwan and the rest of the world if Taiwan can be included in the International Civil Aviation Organization and other multilateral bodies,” the letter said.

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