

Former US Senate leader Dole calls for pressure on Obama to support Taiwan

Written by Taipei Times

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Former US Senate majority leader and presidential candidate Bob Dole has urged the US Congress to increase pressure on the White House to help Taiwan build its own submarines.

US President Barack Obama should reinvigorate his “pivot to Asia” and at the same time “accommodate the security needs of Taiwan, our nation’s friend and ally,” Dole said in an article published by the *Washington Times*.

Other sources told the *Taipei Times* that Dole was lobbying the new Republican-dominated Congress to push for increased arms sales to Taiwan.

“Taiwan’s greatest need is new submarines,” Dole said in his newspaper article.

“Only the United States is willing to support Taiwan — which counts me among those assisting with its agenda in Washington — with major defensive weapons,” he wrote.

“Unfortunately,” he said, in spite of Washington’s military strength, it can still be intimidated by Beijing.

“In 2001, [then-US] president George W. Bush committed to help Taiwan acquire or produce eight more subs, but since then our government, apparently succumbing to intimidation, has taken no further action,” Dole wrote.

He also said that the failure to sell new F-16 jets to Taiwan has resulted in “another glaring deficiency in the nation’s arsenal.”

Dole wrote that the new Congress may be “more cognizant of the potential peril to Taiwan and the US” caused by the massive military buildup in China.

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“Taiwan has many supporters in Congress on both sides of the aisle and the number likely to play a more active role in promoting our bilateral security relationship increases with the influx of Republican members in both houses and the Republican takeover of control of the Senate,” Dole said.

He concluded: “I urge the august body that I once led to take early action to increase pressure on the administration to allow Taiwan to acquire the technical support and weapons systems necessary to produce its own submarines.”

“I hope that the Obama administration will move swiftly to heed congressional advice and simultaneously diminish the Chinese threat to Taiwan and regional security, lessen the US naval burden, and increase the responsibility of democratic nations seeking to maintain stability in their own China seas,” he said.

The Israeli Web site Defense-Update said on Friday that a study was likely to begin this year by Taiwan evaluating different alternative designs for submarines ranging from 1,200 to 3,000 tonnes.

“The Taiwanese navy ruled out the use of a large fleet of 120-ton [108.86 tonne] midget submarines instead of using conventional submarines,” Defense-Update said. “The use of midget submarines was one of the alternative plans promoted by the US administration seeking to bolster the region’s military might against the Chinese expansion along the Pacific Rim.”

Defense-Update said that opponents did not exclude the midget submarine concept, but not as an alternative for a fleet of full-size submarines.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2015/01/04](#)