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**民主進步黨**  
Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan

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## DPP Representative Highlights President Lai's Commitment to National Defense and International Support at U.S.-Taiwan Defense Industry Conference

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On September 22-24, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) took part in the U.S.-Taiwan Defense Industry Conference in Philadelphia, reaffirming its dedication to Taiwan's national defense and international cooperation. The DPP were represented by Vincent Chao, Taipei City Councilor, alongside Iris Shaw, Director of the DPP Mission in the U.S.

### **President Lai's Leadership in Strengthening Taiwan's Defense**

During the panel discussion, Chao underscored President Lai Ching-te's leadership in advancing Taiwan's self-defense capabilities and rallying international support in response to increasing threats from the People's Republic of China (PRC).

“President Lai Ching-te is absolutely committed to Taiwan's self-defense, and fully determined to lead by example. The world should recognize that **on our security, the buck doesn't stop here in the United States but in Taiwan,**” Chao stated.

### **Boosting Defense Spending and Building Resilience**

This commitment is reflected in Taiwan's record-high defense budget of **NTD 647 billion**—a remarkable **80% increase since 2017**. The additional funding will enhance training, combat readiness, defense procurement, and strengthen the resilience of Taiwanese society against external threats.

Chao highlighted Taiwan's holistic approach to national defense, emphasizing that President Lai's newly established **Whole-of-Society Defense Resilience Committee** aims to bolster civilian preparedness, energy security, and critical infrastructure protection, while safeguarding information and financial networks.

### **Regional Defense Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific**

Chao also pointed to the rising defense budgets of key regional allies, such as **Japan and the Philippines**, which are addressing the security challenges posed by the PRC. These countries are strengthening their defense cooperation with the United States, which is vital to securing critical areas like the Bashi Channel and Miyako Strait—essential components of the First Island Chain, including Taiwan.

Additionally, Chao discussed the evolving hub-and-spoke model of defense cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, where like-minded nations closely coordinate with the U.S. but rarely engage directly with each other. Shaw added, with recent initiatives like the “latticework strategy” referenced by National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, the U.S. will remain a key player in shaping regional security cooperation.

## **International Collaboration and Multilateral Efforts**

Chao further emphasized the importance of international partnerships in Taiwan's defense strategy. Taiwan's security relies not only on our own efforts but also on the support of the global community. Arms sales, technology transfers, and joint defense initiatives are crucial in raising the costs and risks for Beijing's aggressive actions.

He also welcomed the growing international recognition of Taiwan's importance to regional stability. Germany's recent transit through the Taiwan Strait—its first in over 20 years—demonstrates that countries beyond the immediate region, including the United States, France, the UK, and Australia, recognize the significance of peace in the Taiwan Strait.

The DPP remains committed to multilateral defense cooperation under President Lai's leadership and is optimistic that Taiwan's defense efforts will not only benefit the Indo-Pacific region but contribute to global peace and security as well.

## **Maintaining the Status Quo in the Taiwan Strait**

Iris Shaw, Director of the DPP Mission in the U.S., pointed out that the Lai administration has frequently engaged in high-level discussions with international stakeholders on strengthening Taiwan's defense readiness. Shaw reiterated the importance of continued cooperation, stating, "we are in close communications with Washington's policy community on President Lai's commitment to maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, building on President Tsai's efforts over the past eight years. We believe that our counterparts have acknowledged and supported this dedication."

Chao also reiterated President Lai's consistent message of maintaining the status quo in the Taiwan Strait. "Taiwan will neither yield nor provoke. We will maintain the status quo and fulfill our responsibilities," he said, referring to global peace and stability.

## **Bipartisan Unity in Taiwan's Defense Strategy**

Chao closed his remarks by stressing the importance of bipartisan

support for Taiwan's defense initiatives. He praised the participation of representatives from the Kuomintang (KMT) and Taiwan People's Party (TPP) at the conference, noting that both parties pledged during the last election to increase defense spending and enhance Taiwan-U.S. military cooperation. "We look forward to those commitments being realized in the Legislature's budgetary process," Chao added.

[Vincent Chao's full remarks at the 2024 US-Taiwan Defense Industry Conference >>>](#)

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