

China's space know-how said threat to U.S., Taiwan

Jim Wolf, Reuters

(Reuters) - China's growing capabilities in space could undercut any U.S. military response if Beijing resorted to force to bring self-ruled Taiwan into its fold, a study released Friday by a congressionally mandated U.S. commission said.

China's military is rapidly boosting its space programs to advance Communist Party interests "and defend against perceived challenges to sovereignty and territorial integrity," said the 84-page report by the Project 2049 Institute, a research group on Asia-Pacific security issues.

[China](#) [1] has claimed Taiwan as its own since the end of the Chinese civil war in 1949 and has vowed to bring the island under mainland rule, by force if necessary.

Washington, under the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, considers any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by "other than peaceful means ... a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States."

The study said China's growing push in military space programs "may complicate U.S. freedom of action in the Asia-Pacific region" for instance, because Beijing can use its satellites to track U.S. aircraft carriers and target them with anti-ship ballistic missiles.

The report was prepared for the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, a 12-member bipartisan group set up in 2000 to report to U.S. lawmakers on security implications of U.S.-China trade.

"Taiwan remains the principle illustrative scenario guiding the PLA's military ambitions in space," said the study, referring to the People's Liberation Army, as China's military is known.

The PLA is improving its ability to monitor events in the Asia-Pacific region through an expanded system of space-based remote sensing, communications and navigation satellites, the Project 2049 Institute said.

Such space assets could help China threaten an expanding number of targets throughout the western Pacific Ocean, South China Sea and elsewhere around its periphery, according to the report.

Among the potential targets of Chinese anti-ship ballistic missiles, it said, would be any "intervening U.S. forces," such as aircraft carriers.

China's space know-how said threat to U.S., Taiwan

Published on Electronic Component News (<http://www.ecnmag.com>)

Former President Bill Clinton sent two U.S. carrier battle groups to the region in 1996 after Chinese missile exercises in waters surrounding Taiwan, ahead of presidential elections on the island.

(Reporting by Jim Wolf; Editing by [Eric Beech](#) [2])

Source URL (retrieved on 03/30/2015 - 1:52pm):

<http://www.ecnmag.com/news/2012/04/chinas-space-know-how-said-threat-us-taiwan>

Links:

[1] <http://www.reuters.com/places/china>

[2]

<http://blogs.reuters.com/search/journalist.php?edition=us&n=eric.beech&>