

China Threatens as US Defends Taiwan Arms Deals

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China on Sunday renewed a warning to the United States over its arms deal with Taiwan, after Washington defended the five arms sales transactions worth \$6.4 billion.

“China firmly opposes and is strongly dissatisfied with arms sales to Taiwan by the United States,” Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu said in a statement Sunday, Al Jazeera reported.

China says the deal — which includes 60 Black Hawk helicopters, a pair of Osprey mine-hunting ships, 114 advanced Patriot air defense missiles, advanced Harpoon missiles and loads of advanced communications technology systems — will seriously harm American-Sino ties.

The fresh warning comes after the Obama administration sparked a diplomatic row with the Communist regime by notifying Congress of its plan to proceed with the proposed arms deal on Friday.

In an unusually broad series of retaliatory measures on Saturday, China postponed a very important arms control meeting and suspended plans for visits between the Chinese and US military.

It also announced plans to impose sanctions on certain US arms makers.

Washington defended the deal and expressed regret about China’s reaction.

“We regret that the Chinese side has curtailed military-to-military and other exchanges” said Pentagon spokesman Geoff Morrell, according to Reuters. “We also regret Chinese action against US firms transferring defensive articles to Taiwan.”

The State Department describes the arms deal to Taiwan — which neither China nor the United States recognizes as an independent country — as a way to guarantee security and stability, despite China’s strenuous objections.

“Such sales contribute to maintaining security and stability across the Taiwan Strait,” said Laura Tischler, a State Department spokeswoman.

MSD/MD

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