

White House Says US to Conduct 'Air and Maritime Transits' in the Taiwan Strait

Biden's top Asia official accused China of being 'provocative' in its response to Pelosi's visit to Taiwan

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*President Biden's top Asia official on the National Security Council [said the US will be conducting "air and maritime transits" in the Taiwan Strait](#) in the coming weeks in response to China's military exercises that were a consequence of **House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's** visit to Taiwan.*

"We will ensure that our presence, posture, and exercise account for China's more provocative and destabilizing behavior towards guiding the situation in the western Pacific towards greater stability," **Kurt Campbell**, the NSC's coordinator for the Indo-Pacific, [told reporters on Friday](#).

Campbell said that the stepped-up US presence in the region "includes conducting standard air and maritime transits through the Taiwan Strait in the next few weeks." The US typically sails a single destroyer through the Taiwan Strait about once a month, but it's possible the US could go for a bigger show of force after China conducted its largest-ever military drills around Taiwan in response to Pelosi's visit.

When asked what type of warships the US might send through the Strait, Campbell declined to share details.

"We don't make any comments about either the nature of our crossings or the timings across the Taiwan Strait," he said.

Campbell said that China "overreacted" to Pelosi's visit to Taiwan and claimed it had a precedent and that the US does not want to change the "status quo" across the Taiwan Strait. Newt Gingrich visited Taiwan as House speaker in 1997, but he also stopped in China as part of his Asia tour, and US-China relations were much better than they are today.

Pelosi's visit also followed a pattern of increasingly frequent congressional delegations to the island.

China's military is also much more advanced today than it was in the 1990s. In the weeks leading up to Pelosi's visit, China made it clear that it would view her trip as a provocation and warned that it would respond strongly. After the visit, China launched its largest-ever military exercises around Taiwan, simulated blockading the island, and fired missiles over Taiwan for the first time.

Campbell also revealed that the US plans to increase trade relations with Taiwan, [another thing Beijing has warned against](#). "We're developing an ambitious roadmap for trade negotiations, which we intend to announce in the coming days," he said.

Campbell is the co-founder of the hawkish Center for a New American Security (CNAS) think tank and worked in the State Department during the Obama administration, [where he led the policy known as the "pivot" to Asia](#). Last year, Campbell set the tone for the Biden administration's China policy by saying [the era of engagement with Beijing was over](#) and that the two countries' relationship will now be defined by competition.

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