

List of essential reading about the Taiwan question

Analysis:

Australia-Taiwan relations

[*Why should Australia be concerned about... rising tensions in the Taiwan Straits? – Linda Jakobson \(2021\)*](#)

Jakobson argues that Australian decision-makers will have to make difficult and rapid decisions about Australia's responses in an 'all means short of war' scenario.

[*Taiwan flashpoint: What Australia can do to stop the coming Taiwan crisis – Brendan Taylor \(2020\)*](#)

Taylor argues that Australia should advocate for more robust crisis management mechanisms to deal with the increasingly precarious Taiwan Strait situation.

[*Rethinking Taiwan policy: History, politics, ideology – Mark Harrison \(2019\)*](#)

Harrison calls for a reassessment of the Taiwan issue by outlining policy options Australia should consider when responding to possible future Taiwan Strait scenarios.

Beijing's cross-Strait relations policy

[*The Taiwan issue in US-China relations: Cause for concern – Wang Jisi, Evan Medeiros, Michael Green, and Wu Xinbo \(2020\)*](#)

Leading scholars from the United States and People's Republic of China (PRC) offer their views on the likelihood of a potential flashpoint across the Taiwan Strait.

[*Chinese government drops references to "peaceful" reunification with Taiwan – Kristin Huang \(2020\)*](#)

The PRC's annual work report removed the word "peaceful" in reference to reunification with Taiwan, signalling a potential change in the PRC's cross-Strait policy.

[*From pressure to coercion: Beijing's approach to Taiwan and Taiwan's response – Richard Bush \(2019\)*](#)

Bush outlines the evolution of the PRC's cross-Strait relations policy as well as internal political challenges to a consistent, unified response from Taiwan.

[*Will China seize Taiwan? – Peter Gries and Tao Wang \(2019\) \(Paywall\)*](#)

Gries and Wang argue that imminent conflict over Taiwan is possible, and Beijing, Taipei, and Washington's misguided beliefs of how each will act only heighten the risks.

Taiwan's cross-Strait relations policy

[*Coronavirus embitters cross-Strait relations – David Brown and Kyle Churchman \(2020\)*](#)

Churchman and Brown assess the damage caused to cross-Strait relations by Beijing's attempts to side-line Taiwan during the COVID -19 pandemic. The piece also highlights the effect PLA exercises, strong US-PRC ties and KMT reforms are having in further straining cross-Strait relations.

[*Tsai's second term and the Taiwan Strait: Greater clarity, same challenges – J. Michael Cole \(2020\)*](#)

Cole outlines cross-Strait challenges facing Tsai Ing-wen's government and provides recommendations to counter these risks amid an uncertain international environment.

[*China's art of war, in Taiwan – Patrick Mendis and Fu-Kuo Liu \(2020\)*](#)

Liu and Mendis argue that PRC-Taiwan tensions have been heightened by the global pandemic and that Taipei should avoid any direct or indirect actions to push for independence.

[*Why does the WHO exclude Taiwan? – Yu-Jie Chen and Jerome Cohen \(2020\)*](#)

A clear explanation of why Taiwan is excluded from membership in the WHO.

Washington's cross-Strait relations policy

[*Countering China's Adventurism Over Taiwan: A Third Way – Patrick Porter & Michael Mazarr \(2021\)*](#)

As America's policy choices narrow to two extremes – total commitment or abandonment – Porter and Mazarr propose a middle path in which the US focuses on helping Taiwan to defend itself while building a menu of options for deterring and punishing Beijing's aggression without fighting.

[*Biden wins over Taiwan – Melissa Conley Tyler \(2021\)*](#)

Interviews with Taiwanese insiders show that Biden is winning them over.

[*The US new approach toward Taiwan – Dean Chen \(2020\)*](#)

Chen describes the Trump administration's unprecedented public action to normalise Taiwan's international engagement, arguing that the trend of closer US-Taiwan ties is unlikely to change irrespective of the 2020 US presidential election result.

[*Taiwan: Select political and security issues – Congressional Research Service \(2020\)*](#)

An overview of US commitments to Taiwan, one-China and the Trump administration's Taiwan policy.

[*The Trump administration's policies towards Taiwan – Richard Bush's speech at the Taipei Forum \(15 June 2019\)*](#)

Bush assesses the Trump administration's security and economic policy towards Taiwan.

Taiwan's economy

[*Cross-Taiwan Strait economic relations in times of uncertainty – Tse-Kang Leng \(2020\)*](#)

Leng explains how Taiwan's government and businesses are changing the economic cross-Strait relationship to reduce risks exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the US-PRC trade war.

[*US-Taiwan trade relations – Congressional Research Centre \(2019\)*](#)

The 2019 report outlines the issues facing Taiwan's trade-dependent economy and its trade relations with the US.

[*Chip war: Taiwan's role in China's semiconductor industry policy – Yi-Ting Wang \(2019\)*](#)

A comprehensive look at how the semiconductor industry intersects with the politics of cross-Strait relations.

Recent books

[*Cross-Strait relations since 2016: The end of the illusion – J. Michael Cole \(2020\)*](#)

Cole provides an assessment of the DPP's pragmatic cross-Strait relations policy since 2016.

[*Dangerous decade: Taiwan's security and crisis management – Brendan Taylor \(2019\)*](#)

Taylor explains the increasing risk of Taiwan's unresolved political status growing into a major strategic crisis, advocating for the use of crisis-management mechanisms.

[*The Taiwan issue: Problems and Prospects – Benjamin Schreer and Andrew Tan \(eds\) \(2019\)*](#)

This book examines the internal and external political conditions facing Taiwan and evaluates the prospects for preventing conflict across the Taiwan Strait.

[Why Taiwan matters: Small island, global powerhouse – Shelley Rigger \(2011\)](#)

Shelley outlines Taiwan's key economic and political achievements and importance to the PRC, the US and the world.

Official documents:

Australia

[Joint communique of the Australian government and the government of the People's Republic of China concerning the establishment of diplomatic relations between Australia and China \(1972\)](#)

Establishes diplomatic relations between Australia and the PRC, and recognises that Taiwan is a province of the PRC and the PRC government is the sole legal government of China.

People's Republic of China

[The one-China principle and the Taiwan issue white paper \(2000\)](#)

White paper issued by the State Council summarises the basis for the one-China principle, and how it applies to issues in cross-Strait and international relations.

[Anti-Secession Law \(2005\)](#)

Article 8 of the Law provides the legal basis for the use of force should Taiwan make any move towards independence and Article 2 articulates the PRC's one-China principle.

["Working together to realize rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and advance China's peaceful reunification"– Xi Jinping speech \(2 January 2019\)](#)

Xi Jinping embeds the issue of unification into the PRC's goal for national rejuvenation. He emphasises peaceful reunification but does not rule out the use of force.

Taiwan

[Taiwan white paper on relations across the Taiwan Straits \(1994\)](#)

Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council white paper outlines Taiwan's understanding of cross-Strait divisions and its plans for achieving reunification in contrast to the PRC's policy.

[Statement on mainland China's white paper \(2000\)](#)

Taiwan's rebuttal to the PRC's one-China principle white paper. It rejects the PRC's unilateral definition of one China and argues that both sides should be able to maintain their own interpretation.

[President Tsai statement on China's President Xi's "Message to compatriots in Taiwan" \(2019\)](#)

Tsai adamantly rejects the PRC's 'one country, two systems' principle.

[Tsai Ing-wen's second-term inaugural address \(20 May 2020\)](#)

Tsai's speech has a clear domestic focus but reiterates her rejection of the 'one country, two system' principle, her commitment to the status quo and to national defence reforms.

United States

[Joint communique of the United States of America and the People's Republic of China \(1972\)](#)

US acknowledges that there is one China and Taiwan is part of China. US commits to the peaceful settlement of the Taiwan issue by the "Chinese themselves".

Joint communique of the United States of America and the People's Republic of China (1979)

US recognises the PRC and not the ROC as the sole government of China. US agrees to maintain only unofficial relations with Taiwan.

Taiwan Relations Act (1979)

Act provides a legal basis for unofficial US-Taiwan relations and provides commitments to Taiwan's security and support through arm sales.

Joint communique of the United States of America and the People's Republic of China (1982)

US declares intent to gradually decrease arm sales to Taiwan.

The "Six Assurances" to Taiwan (1982)

US passes six key but non-binding principles of US support for Taiwan as a unilateral US clarification to the 1982 US-PRC communique.