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PLAAF JETS OVERFLY TAIWAN, WASHINGTON RESPONDS

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Taiwanese F-16 fighter scrambles to intercept PLAAF fighters on the evening of Jan. 23

During the evening of January 23rd, a swarm of 19 fighters from the Chinese mainland overflew the island nation of Taiwan in a completely unprecedented escalation of cross-strait tensions from the People's Republic of China. Taiwanese F-16s, with

assistance from carrier-based F-18s from the USS Ronald Reagan, attempted to intercept the Chinese fighter formation, but aborted the engagement after the Chinese fighters locked onto the encroaching Taiwanese fighters. The fighters returned to their bases in mainland with Taiwanese and US jets maintaining a safe distance. The jets, which directly overflew the island's airspace, conducted approaches over the capital city of Taipei and loitered over known military areas in a blatant show of force by the People's Republic of China.

The White House has issued a statement of condemnation of the "obvious and overt aggression of the Beijing regime". An emergency meeting of the UN Security Council is expected to be held, but action is unlikely to be taken as the PRC is a permanent member of said council.

However, early in the morning during an emergency meeting of the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance, it was announced that NATO nations would be conducting an economic embargo of the PRC in response to what is now being called the "Taipei Incident". NATO's Secretary General reaffirmed their commitment to Taiwanese sovereignty and promised the deployment of additional naval assets to the region. China, in a public statement, maintained that it is executing its right to conduct military operations over Taiwan, which it regards as part of its territory, even though the island has never been ruled over by the People's Republic.