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China Tests Missile Defense System

Mainland Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu told reporters on January 12 that China has successfully carried out a test of military technology to shoot down missiles in mid-air. Jiang says the January 11 test of "ground-based, mid-course missile intercepting technology" had what she described as "the expected result."

A brief dispatch by Xinhua, the official Chinese news agency, reported: "The test is defensive in nature and is not targeted at any country."

VOA news reported that Jiang stressed that the anti-missile test is in line with what she described as China's path of peaceful development and was not targeted at any country. ??Jiang said that China maintains what she described as a "defensive international defense policy." She said China is stepping-up its defense modernization in the interest of national security, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. ??The test was conducted not long after the United States approved a sale of advanced missiles to the Republic of China on Taiwan, despite strong opposition from Beijing. VOA noted that in recent years China has arrayed hundreds of missiles along the Chinese coast, all pointed at Taiwan.

AFP, citing a statement on January 12 by Pentagon spokeswoman Major Maureen Schumann, reported that China did not notify the United States in advance of a missile defense test and that Washington has asked Beijing to clarify its intentions concerning the intercept weaponry. "We did not receive prior notification of the launch," said Schumann. "We detected two geographically separated missile launch events with a exo-atmospheric collision also being observed by space-based sensors."

"The US is requesting information from China regarding the purpose for conducting this interception as well as China's intentions and plans to pursue future types of intercepts," she added.

A *New York Times* report noted that China's Defense and Foreign Ministries have released a half-dozen warnings over the U.S.-Taiwan weapons deal, saying it would have grave consequences for U.S.-mainland Chinese relations and that the state-run *Global Times* newspaper urged readers to come up with ways to retaliate against the United States.

Chinese Maj. Gen. Jun Yinan, a professor at China's National Defense University, wrote in the *Study*





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Times newspaper that China had the power to strike back. "We must take countermeasures to make the other side pay a corresponding price and suffering corresponding punishment," wrote Jun.

The government on Taiwan is the successor to the Chinese Nationalist government headed by Chiang Kai-shek, who fled the mainland for Taiwan in 1949 after mainland China was taken over militarily by the communists led by Mao Zedong. The communist rebel forces under Mao, which had been supplied by the Soviet Union with arms from a stash of Japanese weapons left in Manchuria after World War II, were well equipped to wrest control of the mainland from the anti-communist, pro-American Chinese leader, Chiang.

Chiang's forces, in contrast, had been denied weapons through an embargo declared by General George Marshall of the United States. Marshall boasted of having disarmed 39 of Chiang's divisions "with a stroke of his pen." ??Finally in 1949, unable to continue the fight, and with China in economic collapse brought on by the communists' destruction of the nation's infrastructure, Chiang Kai-shek led his battered forces across the Formosa Strait to Taiwan and relocated the government of the Republic of China to the island.

The communist government in Beijing still officially regards Taiwan as a "breakaway province" of China.

Photo: AP Images



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