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Arms Sales Issue

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Summary:

An undated memo produced during the first Reagan administration outlining US law and previous exchanges between the US and the PRC on American arms sales to Taiwan.

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English

Contents:

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Arms Sales IssueTaiwan Relations Act of 1979

Sec.2.(b) It is the policy of the United States --

(5) to provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character

Sec.3.(a) the United States will make available to Taiwan such defensive articles and defensive services in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability.

(b) The President and the Congress shall determine the nature and quantity of such defensive articles and services based solely on their judgment of the needs of Taiwan.

President Reagan's Letter to Zhao Zeyang, 6 Apr 82

As I also told the Vice Premier, we expect that as a result of your offers there will naturally be a decrease in the need for arms by Taiwan. Our positions over the past two months have reflected this view. We have given you a clear definition of our future direction.

Draft Communique currently under negotiation

President has approved

The question of United States' arms sales to Taiwan was not settled in the course of talks between the two countries on establishing diplomatic relations. The two sides held differing positions, and the Chinese side reserved the right to raise the issue again, at a later time, following normalization.

President has disapproved

Under the foregoing circumstances, the United States Government states that, with regard to its arms sales to Taiwan, there should be no need to exceed, either in qualitative or quantitative terms, the levels supplied in recent years, since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and China. (Already tabled with Chinese.)

On the contrary, also under the foregoing circumstances, the United States Government states that it does not seek to pursue a policy of long-term arms sales to Taiwan, and, that it anticipates that its sales of arms to Taiwan will gradually diminish in future years. (Not tabled with Chinese.)

Chinese counterdraft tabled in Beijing, 22 Jan 82

The US government gives its assurance that its arms sales to Taiwan will not exceed either in quality or in quantity the level of those supplied since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and China, and that it will take measures to reduce gradually and finally cease, within a certain period of time, its arms sales to Taiwan altogether.

State Dept. review completed

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