

Weekly Intelligence Brief

A Chanticleer Intelligence Brief Project



Joint Sword-2024B: Chinese War Games Move to Taiwan

Emily Falcon
Analyst
China Desk

On 14 OCT, the China Coast Guard Bureau encircled the Taiwanese islands of Matsu and Dongyin, entering these waters for the first time in history, as part of a continuing war games exercise. Chinese State media claimed that these games were a stern warning to Taiwan, which is actively seeking independence from China. The Chinese military's Eastern Theatre Command stated that this round of war games, Joint Sword-2024B, took place in areas north, south, and east of

Taiwan. China's defense military warned that these games were not a repeat of Joint Sword-2024A that took place in MAY 2024.

The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) stated this new round of war games is to serve as a warning in response to Taiwan's separatist acts and its efforts towards independence. Chinese warships, destroyers, and aircraft approached Taiwan and Taiwanese-controlled islands near the Taiwanese coast to focus on sea-air combat readiness and blockading key ports near Taiwan. These deployments were monitored by Taiwan's military.

The Chinese military's Eastern Theatre Command did not announce any further dates for continuing these war games.

Due to Taiwan's increasing steps toward possible independence, as well as past decisions by the PLA, we can assess with moderate confidence it is highly likely that China will continue these war games. We can also assess with high confidence that it is highly likely China will continue to survey the Taiwan Strait and may even take action if it deems it necessary.

Poland Strengthens Borders Amid Russian Threat

Kevin Taber
Analyst
Europe Desk

On 4 OCT, Poland's Deputy Minister of National Defense announced that construction of the first elements of the Eastern Shield will begin at the end of 2024. Poland's Prime Minister Donald Tusk first announced the plans for the project on 18 MAY. The Eastern Shield is projected to be completed by 2028 and will be equipped with a mix of physical barriers, anti-drone systems, data analysis centers, and various other high-end surveillance systems. The Polish government plans to spend around \$2.5 billion over the next four

years and has also begun to seek additional funds from the European Union. These plans come as tensions between North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) nations and Russia continue to rise.

After Russia launched the latest phase of its invasion of Ukraine in FEB 2022, Vladimir Putin's goal of re-establishing historic Russia has become a concern to neighboring NATO nations. Donald Tusk warned that Europe is in a "Pre-War Era" and that adding more extensive defensive measures to the Russian and Belarusian borders is critical to the defense against the Russian threat. This has led to Poland and several Baltic states to begin

strengthening their border defenses in order to ensure that they are properly prepared in case of a Russian invasion.

We can assess with high confidence it is likely that Poland and other NATO nations will continue strengthening their borders to provide further security from potential threats from Russia.



China's Significant Quantum Advancement in Breaking Advanced Encryption

Ryan Campbell
Analyst
Cyber/Transnational Desk

On 11 OCT, Chinese scientists reported they have executed the first successful quantum attack on widely used substitution-permutation network (SPN) structured encryption algorithms. This breakthrough was accomplished using the Canadian D-Wave quantum computer in a study that was led by Dr. Wang Chao of Shanghai University. Dr. Chao and his team reported that during their study, they chose to target multiple military-grade SPN structured algorithms

such as Gift-64 and Present. The D-Wave computer was used to breach the algorithms, marking the first time a quantum computer has successfully breached an algorithm of this kind. Dr. Chao reports that this breakthrough poses a real and substantial threat to the security and cryptography mechanisms that are currently used in the military and banking sectors around the world.

Dr. Chao's study also highlights the problems encountered with practical implications of this discovery. He reports that although this is a breakthrough for the quantum world,

there are still many factors such as immature hardware and low qubit numbers that inhibit scientists from pushing further. The D-Wave computer also could not break through the Advanced Encryption Standard, which is the standard encryption method used throughout the world.

We can assess with high confidence that it is highly likely that further advancements in the quantum cryptography industry will result in more vulnerabilities arising both in existing systems and new ones.

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Editor-in-Chief
Tessa Bentley

Associate Editors
Aubrey Belanger
Samuel Luckett
Jordan Maple

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