

Chinese politics & policy

China's foreign minister warns against interference in Taiwan

Qin Gang's remarks follow South Korean president's accusation of Beijing changing status quo



China's foreign minister Qin Gang said at the Lanting Forum in Shanghai on Friday that 'the Taiwan question is the core of the core interest of China' © Aly Song/Reuters

Joe Leahy in Shanghai and **Christian Davies** in Seoul 6 HOURS AGO

China's foreign minister Qin Gang has warned of "dangerous" consequences for countries that intervene in Taiwan, saying "those who play with fire . . . will eventually get burned" amid heightened tensions over the island nation.

Qin's remarks came after South Korea's president accused Beijing this week of "attempts to change the status quo" on Taiwan "by force" and as the US and Philippines [conducted their largest joint military exercises](#) in more than three decades in the region.

"Recently there has been absurd rhetoric accusing [China](#) of challenging the so-called rules-based international order, of unilaterally changing the status quo across the Taiwan Strait through force and coercion and of disrupting peace and stability across the Strait," Qin said on Friday. "The logic is absurd and the consequences dangerous."

South Korean president Yoon Suk Yeol, who will travel to Washington for a state visit next week, had blamed Beijing's campaign of diplomatic and military coercion against Taipei for recent hostilities.

"These tensions occurred because of the attempts to change the status quo by force, and we together with the international community absolutely oppose such a change,"

Yoon said in an interview with Reuters on Wednesday.

“The [Taiwan](#) issue is not simply an issue between China and Taiwan but, like the issue of North Korea, it is a global issue.”

Tensions have escalated between China and countries including the US over Taiwan, which Beijing claims as part of its territory and has threatened to conquer. US lawmakers have called for more arms sales to Taiwan to enable it to defend itself from an attack by China.

China held [three days of military drills](#) around Taiwan this month in response to a meeting between the country's president Tsai Ing-wen and US House Speaker Kevin McCarthy in California, the highest-profile meeting between US and Taiwanese officials on American soil.

Qin will travel to the Philippines on Friday for a three-day visit that coincides with the Balikatan military drills, which opened last week one day after China concluded its exercises. The drills will include operations that Beijing may interpret as a response to its military activity, including in the South China Sea and around Taiwan. The Philippines this year also granted the US [access to four more military bases](#).

In response to Yoon's comments, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin on Thursday said the Taiwan issue “is a matter for the Chinese, who do not need to be told what should or should not be done”.

He added that tensions over Taiwan were being stoked by “separatist activities with the support and connivance of foreign forces”.

The Chinese ambassador in Seoul was summoned to the South Korean foreign ministry on Thursday evening in protest against Beijing's “rude” response to Yoon's comments.

Qin's remarks in Shanghai on Friday were part of a hard-hitting speech in which he underlined Beijing's stance that Taiwan was a domestic issue.

“The Taiwan question is the core of the core interests of China,” Qin told a forum held to promote Chinese diplomacy and its [model of development](#).

“We will never back down in the face of any act that undermines China's sovereignty and security. Those who play with fire on Taiwan will eventually get themselves burned.”

Oin also said China had a “solemn duty” to uphold the UN Charter, which seeks to

protect the territorial integrity of sovereign states, despite Beijing's [failure to condemn](#) Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

“Dominance and hegemony is not the aim of China’s development,” he said.

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