

By REGINE CHEN

Why Taiwan will continue to defend the 'Ocean of Peace'



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The recent launch of a nuclear-capable ballistic missile by the [People's Republic of China](#) into the South Pacific came at a moment when Australia and its Pacific partners were reaffirming historic commitments to regional security, mutual trust and an [Ocean of Peace](#). The act has rightly caused deep concern across the region. The Pacific region has spoken with clarity: it does not wish to become a testing ground for major-power rivalry, militarisation or nuclear intimidation.

Taiwan shares Australia's call that the peace and security of the region should be led, shaped and safeguarded by the Pacific itself, rather than coercion or strategic competition imposed from outside. Taiwan, too, is a [Pacific nation](#). We have been a longstanding partner of the Pacific Islands Forum for more than three decades: since 1993, we have participated in PIF-related mechanisms as a development partner under the name Taiwan/Republic of China. Taiwan has worked with the PIF Secretariat and Pacific partners on regional development assistance, scholarships and capacity-building.

Our approach has been practical, reliable and without political strings attached, from public health and disaster resilience to digital transformation and capacity-building, now carried forward through the Diplomatic Allies Prosperity Project under Foreign Minister Lin Chia-lung. Taiwan is an active contributor to the region's development. At last year's PIF Leaders Meeting, Taiwan pledged \$US3m (\$4.3m) to the Pacific Resilience Facility, demonstrating its firm commitment to Pacific-led climate resilience. We take pride in being a partner that keeps its word, honours its commitments and delivers tangible benefits to Pacific communities.

We have never sought to use the PIF platform to create division or confrontation. Recent attempts by some countries to inject cross-Strait political disputes into PIF processes and to pressure changes to arrangements that have stood since 1993 risk undermining regional unity and the Pacific's own agency. Such interference runs contrary to the Pacific Way and distracts from the Forum's core mission of advancing the common interests of the Blue Pacific.

Taiwan is no stranger to coercion. We recognise China's missile test in the Pacific as part of a broader pattern of military pressure, which Taiwan faces every day. China has sent PLA aircraft, PLA navy vessels and Chinese official ships operating around Taiwan, deliberately crossing the median line of the Taiwan Strait. These activities are accompanied by repeated threats of blockade, intimidation and the use of force. Yet our response remains calm, responsible and principled, guided by the same vision of an Ocean of Peace, whether in the South Pacific or across the Taiwan Strait.

On August 30, Pacific leaders will gather in Palau for the 55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, where discussions will unfold under the theme "BELAU — Building

Economies: Life. Action. Unity.”

Taiwan looks forward to again contributing as a development partner, which serves as a reminder that the region’s future vision will always be Pacific-led, not externally imposed.

Ocean of Peace is not a slogan. It is a regional aspiration rooted in painful history, sovereign dignity and a shared determination that the Pacific should never again be drawn into the vortex of great-power rivalry.

Taiwan will continue to uphold the principles of respect, co-operation, reciprocity and sustainability. We will work with Pacific partners and like-minded democracies to strengthen regional resilience, defend the rules-based international order, and ensure the Pacific and the Pacific Islands Forum remain focused on co-operation, development and the collective wellbeing of the Blue Pacific.

Regine Chen is Taiwan’s acting representative to Australia.

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