

**CHINA'S REACTIONS TO THE REGIME
CHANGE IN TAIWAN SINCE 2016**

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Executive Summary

1. Since Tsai Ing-wen won the presidential election in January 2016, Chinese netizens, think tank scholars and government have reacted to Taiwan's regime change differently.
2. Stimulated by rising Taiwanese nationalism since 2012, Chinese netizens' nationalistic sentiment against Taiwan has become increasingly militant. Since the regime change in Taiwan in 2016, the argument for a war against Taiwan has gained greater momentum among Chinese netizens.
3. There are four major justifications argued by some Chinese scholars and a retired general for a war: Firstly, peaceful unification is becoming impossible as the Taiwanese has been increasingly anti-China even under the pro-China Ma Ying-jeou administration.
4. Secondly, China's national and especially military power will become so powerful in the next few years that not only Taiwan will be defeated within 100 hours, but also the United States and Japan would not be able to rescue Taiwan.
5. Thirdly, China's Anti-secession Law provides the legal basis for non-peaceful unification. Fourthly, there has been no peaceful reunification in China's history and Taiwan will not be an exception.
6. Mainstream think tank scholars still do not support military takeover of Taiwan. Nevertheless, they propose that the Chinese government impose more pressure and punishment on the Tsai administration and other pro-independence forces.
7. The Chinese government's reaction to Taiwan's regime change may be summarised as "make the hard harder and the soft softer" (*ying de geng ying, ruan de geng ruan*). The Tsai administration and local governors in Taiwan who do not accept the One-China principle have been punished in the economic and international fields.

8. On the other hand, the Chinese central and local governments have been improving policies to attract more Taiwanese and their investment.