



By: TA | AP Brief

Trump asked Xi if he wants to buy US arms



President Donald Trump has justified the pending U.S. arms sale to Taiwan to Chinese President Xi Jinping by downplaying it as just one of many sales Washington makes around the world — even asking Xi if he'd be in the market for U.S. arms, Trump's ambassador to China said on Sunday.

David Perdue said Trump raised the prospect of the arms sales from the U.S. to its ascendant geopolitical rival, an unlikely offer that if consummated would upend generations of U.S. policy toward China and Taiwan and potentially expose U.S. technology to a potential foe.

Perdue, speaking to Shannon Bream on "Fox News Sunday" days after **Trump hosted Xi** for a state visit in Washington, didn't specify when the offer was made.

Bream had cited concerns from Republican and Democratic lawmakers over delayed aid packages and **weapons orders to Taiwan**, the self-ruled democracy, to defend itself from China's threat to invade the island. Bream asked if the U.S. is denying Taiwan to appease the Chinese president, who visited Trump last week.

Perdue pushed back on the suggestion, stating that Trump "is as strong on Taiwan as I've ever seen anybody" and has sold it plenty of weapons. Perdue also said Trump and Xi continue to talk about future U.S. weapons sales to Taiwan.

"But President Trump continues to say, 'Hey, we sell arms to other people around the world,'" Perdue said. "He actually asked President Xi, would he like to buy some, at one point."

Xi pressed Trump to oppose Taiwan independence

The U.S. is bound by its own laws to provide Taiwan with the means to defend itself.

While not recognizing Taiwan as a country, the

U.S. is the island's strongest informal backer and arms provider.

But multiple U.S. leaders have left ambiguous whether they would commit military force to defend the U.S. ally should China invade.

In their private talks at the White House last week, Xi pressed Trump to oppose Taiwan independence

China has pressed Washington to halt the arms sales, most prominently during a previous summit in May between Trump and Xi in Beijing.

After that meeting, the United States paused the sale of a record-breaking \$14 billion package — and Trump described arms sales to Taiwan as a "very good negotiating chip" with China.

In their private talks at the White House last week, **Xi pressed Trump** to oppose Taiwan independence, according to Chinese state media.