

Trump's China Policy and Its Implications for the "Cold Peace" across the Taiwan Strait

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Abstract

Donald Trump's election was a surprise to almost everyone all over the world. His presidency so far has been full of surprises and uncertainties as well. Although he has developed a good personal relationship with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Trump is still in search of a viable and coherent China policy. The U.S.-China policy and interactions between the U.S. and China are closely connected to the prospects of cross-Strait relations. The United States and China have different views on the current "cold peace" or stalemate across the Taiwan Strait, but they have shared an interest in avoiding conflict and maintaining peace and stability in cross-Strait relations. Neither President Trump nor President Xi wants to push the Taiwan issue to the top priority in U.S.-China bilateral relations. The Trump administration, unlike the Obama administration, has yet to articulate a clear regional strategy of hedging and balancing against China. It has no interest in pushing Taipei and Beijing to the negotiation table either. It is also unlikely that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait will come up with a new defining formula for the relationship, which is close to the "1992 Consensus," during the Tsai Ing-wen administration. If U.S.-China relations do not sour drastically under Donald Trump, cross-Strait relations will continue as a "cold peace" for the coming years.

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