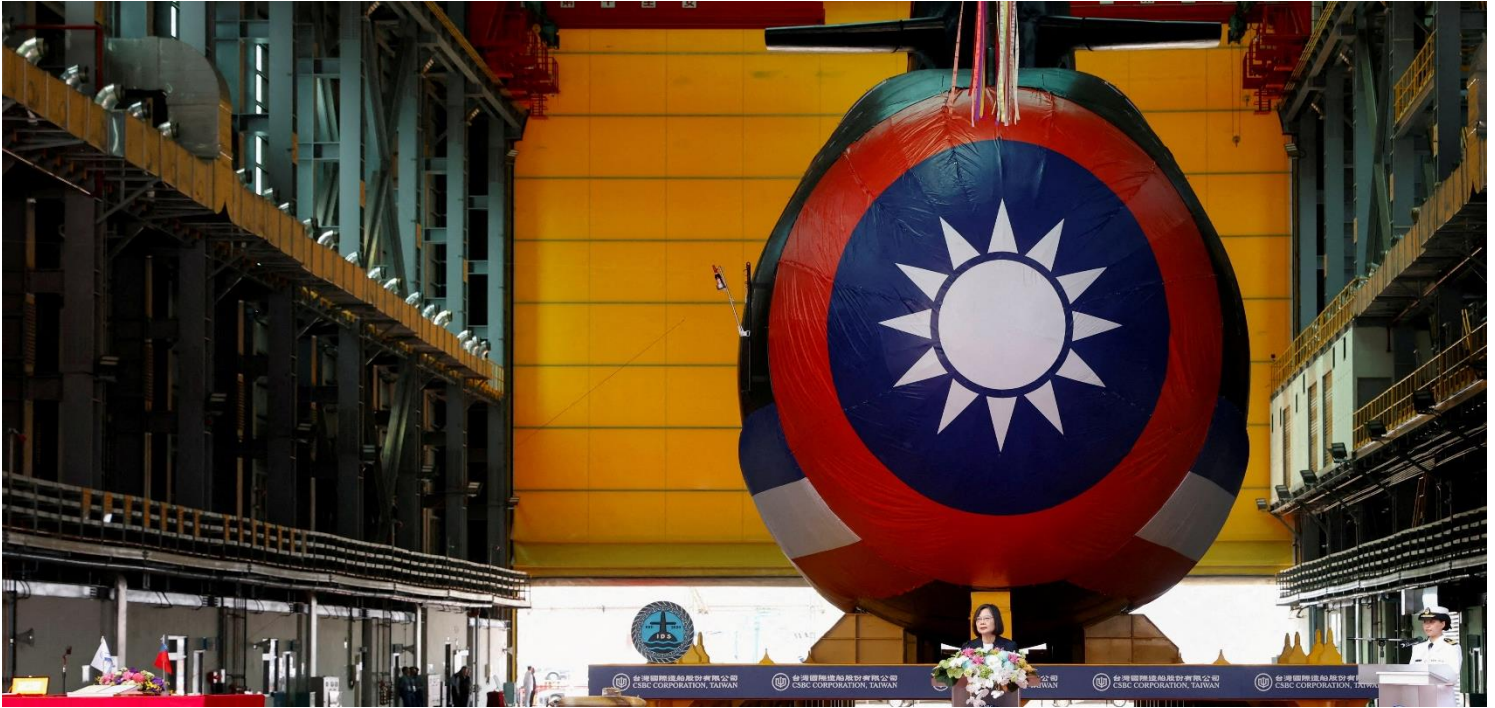


# Weekly Intelligence Brief

A Chanticleer Intelligence Brief Project



## South Korea Fears Economic Retaliation from China Over Support for Taiwan's Submarine Program

**Samuel Lockett**  
Analyst  
China Desk

On 16 OCT, information was revealed about South Korea's prosecution of domestic private contractors for their alleged support of Taiwan's domestic submarine program. South Korea fears economic retaliation from China, its largest trading partner, after a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said that countries that help Taiwan with its program are "playing with fire."

SI Innotec provided materials and labor to ensure the hull can withstand pressure, whereas Keumha Naval Technologies and S2&K provided technology for torpedo firing. South Korea has sent affidavits to these

companies, imposed fines, and arrested executives in response. South Korea's Foreign Trade Act requires approval from the Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA) to export goods for military applications. Contractors have asserted that the goods and technologies do not violate this act and claim their business with Taiwan was for dual-use goods, which require no such oversight.

South Korea is a top-ten supplier of military goods worldwide. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations and South Korea work together on defense issues, and since 2021, contractors have signed arms deals with Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia. The United States provided critical technology to

Taiwan's submarine program, in addition to other packages that included ammunitions, various missiles and cannons, armored vehicles, and advanced search and track systems for F-16s.

Although South Korea and the United States share common allies and interests in East and Southeast Asia, they differ in their stance on contributions to Taiwan. While Seoul and Taipei currently share no diplomatic ties, we can assess with moderate confidence that the United States will likely work to mitigate South Korea's economic reliance on China and will likely encourage cooperation between its partners in Asia.

# Sinaloa Cartel Bans Fentanyl Production

## Brenden Stell

Senior Analyst  
Americas Desk

On 16 OCT, an announcement was made that the Sinaloa Cartel would prohibit the manufacturing and distribution of fentanyl, with violators facing death as a penalty. This decision was influenced by pressure from U.S. law enforcement agencies. The directive appears to originate from the "Chapitos," the group currently led by the four sons of the former Sinaloa Cartel leader, Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman.

The cartel aims to alleviate the pressure from U.S. law enforcement,

although U.S. authorities have doubts about the ban's enforcement. Notably, a former midlevel member of the Sinaloa Cartel, previously involved in chemical precursor operations, suggests that the Chapitos may be withdrawing from the fentanyl trade to divert U.S. attention toward the Jalisco New Generation Cartel. Prior to the Chapitos' new directive, banners appeared in Northern Mexico on 02 OCT that claimed the Sinaloa Cartel ended the sale and production of fentanyl. The bottom of the poster was signed by a faction of the Sinaloa Cartel.

We can assess with moderate confidence that it is likely the Sinaloa Cartel will continue its production and distribution of fentanyl, as this drug represents their primary revenue source and most widely circulated product.



# The United States Deploying Military Assets in the Region of the Israel-Hamas War

## Noah Ankenbrand

Senior Analyst  
Americas Desk

On 16 OCT, The United States Department of Defense issued an order for the Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group to deploy within the Eastern Mediterranean. The US Department of Defense has also ordered the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit to be on standby for deployment.

These deployments are in response to threats from Iran and Hezbollah wanting to support the Hamas military

following the 07 OCT Hamas attack on Israel. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said, "The increases to U.S. force posture signal the United States' ironclad commitment to Israel's security and our resolve to deter any state or non-state actor seeking to escalate this war.". Because Israel is a close ally of the United States within the Middle East Region, the United States has expressed its continuing support for Israel.

We can assess with high confidence that it is likely the United States will continue to deploy its military assets within the region to signal to other

parties to not get involved with this. We further assess with high confidence that it is likely the United States will continue to support Israel financially and by supplying military equipment.



## Weekly Intelligence Brief

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