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婦女新知基金會
Awakening Foundation



FRIEDRICH NAUMANN
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“以性別平等與民主價值 鞏固對抗中國威權崛起的 堅實防線”

Defending Taiwan's Democracy :
Gender Equality and Democratic Values
as a Bulwark Against the PRC's Authoritarianism



政策建議書／Policy Brief

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出版頁

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婦女新知基金會緣起於 1982 年婦女新知雜誌社，成立以來，在多項婦女運動與性別平等議題上扮演開拓和倡導的角色，並以提倡和監督婦女與性別平等政策、遊說立法、推動女性參政、培力女性參與公共事務等作法，逐步改造體制和性別文化。同時也致力於開發婦女潛能，培訓民法諮詢熱線志工，提供婚姻家庭法律的免費諮詢及轉介服務。

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本出版品為財團法人婦女新知基金會在合作夥伴弗里德里希諾曼自由基金會支持下執行 “Freedom Gudard Project: Advancing Democracy, Human Rights, and Gender Equality in Defense Policy Project” 之成果，出版品中表述的觀點和意見均屬作者，未必反映弗里德里希諾曼自由基金會的立場。

摘要

- ▶ 因應中國專制政權崛起，台灣與其他民主國家的「備戰」不應只有政府官方角色，也不能只考量武力，對基本價值的認同與堅持、民防制度及政策與多元社會無縫接軌，避免民防實作與社會脫節，亦是「備戰」時強化社會韌性的關鍵元素，也是避免民防政策與社會斷裂，奠基於社會價值的方法。於此，公民社會的多元觀點以及基於平等、自由、人權、民主價值的參與不可或缺。
- ▶ 有鑒於「備戰」的陽剛特質與戰爭動員中「例外狀態」的反民主特質，婦女與性別團體基於女性主義交織性觀點對民防與國防介入十分重要，例如確保民防、國防政策能回應社會多元性，以及確保即便進入戰爭狀態仍能維持基本的民主運作。
- ▶ 應厚實台灣公民社會，特別是婦女與性別團體因應台海、東亞及國際局勢變化，基於平等、自由、人權、民主價值提出論述與發聲的能力，因為這會是阻止中國破壞台灣人民主信心的重要防線。
- ▶ 應積極強化台灣國防與民防體系等「備戰」相關制度與政策的性別、人權與多元觀點，多元參與能進一步強化備戰的實力與完整性。







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簡介

中國是一個正在全球視野崛起中的專制政權，對全球政治、經濟、軍事的影響力，以及對自由、平等、民主、人權價值倡議的衝擊，在可見的未來將持續上升。中國政府近年對國內各種公民力量進行打壓，包括對其國內女權運動以及性少數運動的封殺，一方面對台灣持續展現出明確的政治與軍事意圖，也擴張威權的影響力。在復興中華民族的國族主義論述下，中國不斷強調台灣是中華民族的一部分，使台灣成為中國施展其政權影響力的重要目標。中國不但在台灣周邊進行日常化的軍事活動，也透過經濟利益與文化價值的輸出，制度性且系統性地拉攏台灣商界、青年與地方勢力等，並透過資訊戰影響台灣輿論走向，激化內政衝突，摧毀公共政策討論空間，促成台灣社會內部「民主無用論」發酵。

台灣作為在 20 世紀末新興的東亞民主國家，處於回應中國專制政權影響力的關鍵位置，同時持續面臨國內民主深化的挑戰，而台灣

社會與政府對於自由、平等、民主、人權價值的堅持，也將在非武力甚或武力衝突升高的情勢下不斷地遭受考驗。也因此，台灣的經驗對於其他在世界上深受威權勢力威脅，仍不懈追求民主的國家與區域，有重要參考價值。

為了探討 **(1) 如何厚植台灣社會與政府在非武力甚或武力衝突情勢升高的情況下持續堅持自由、平等、民主、人權價值的實力，以抗衡中國運用政治、經濟、軍事與價值輸出的威權影響力，以及 (2) 如何運用這些價值，建構以民主為基礎，得以強化社會韌性、扎根社會的民防政策**，婦女新知基金會與弗里德里希諾曼自由基金會合作，於 2024 年 4 月至 10 月舉辦四場講座，邀請研究中國社會與公民運動、台海戰略與民防運動的專家學者與台灣關注婦女、性別及人權議題的公民團體進行引言、對談，並據此提出政策建議。

SION



諮詢方法

- ▶ 2024 年 4 月 16 日，邀請研究性別與家庭、中國社會的婦女新知基金會顧問、清華大學社會學研究所沈秀華副教授主講「為什麼認識中國很重要？民間團體可以如何認識中國？中國的對台政策為何？」，共 14 位關注婦女、性別議題的民間團體成員參與進行對話。
- ▶ 2024 年 7 月 23 日，邀請黑熊學院共同創辦人暨首席顧問何澄輝主講「民防的政策面向、台灣公民團體可以如何監督民防與國防」，共 14 位關注婦女、性別議題的民間團體成員參與進行對話。
- ▶ 2024 年 6 月 3 日，邀請中國第一個女權新媒體平台「女權之聲」創始主編、青年女權運動和北美中國女權社群的早期培育者呂頻、北京為平婦女權益機構共同發起人馮媛等中國女權運動者，與 7 個台灣關注婦女、性別與民主的民間團體對談「中國女權運動的倡議」。
- ▶ 2024 年 10 月 8 日，中央研究院民族研究所副研究員劉文主講「女性主義與戰爭想像：民防作為一場公民運動」，共 24 位關注婦女、性別與人權議題的民間團體成員參與進行對話。



重要發現

**台灣公民社會是確保台灣民主韌性的關鍵力量，
其中婦女與性別團體的介入十分重要**

- 在中國專制政權崛起的脈絡下，須確保台灣公民社會的多元性，維持並加強其深化台灣自由、平等、民主、人權價值的能量，對抗中國政權在台灣社會中傳播「民主無用論」；台灣婦女與性別團體基於對女性主義與性別觀點、對平等與自由價值的重視，以及對交織性與多元性的高度關注，推展倡議行動時，除了彼此合作、相互聲援，也與來自各個不同領域的公民團體如人權、勞工、環境、移民移工、社會福利、司法改革……等維持連結與合作關係，從各個面向上深化台灣民主。
- 從群眾基礎的面向來說，台灣女性雖極少以國防、民防作為其專業，但對於國際、台海情勢的變化，以及面對可能發

生的衝突，仍有一定的關注與行動意願。女性在正式的民防編制中佔比極少，且國家體制下的軍事與戰爭組織，高比例由男性組成並主導決策且缺乏性別觀點，甚至與社會脫節、相對缺乏民主基礎。但根據推廣民防訓練的民間團體「黑熊學院」辦理活動的經驗，自願參與民間團體民防培訓的女性比例，「女性佔六成、男性佔四成」是每一場活動的常態，有些場次女性比例更高，顯示在台灣，女性其實有強烈的動機了解並參與民防事務，然而這樣強烈的動機，尚未被決策者察覺並運用為強化女性參與民防政策與治理機制、促成民防政策與多元社會接軌的依據，以維繫、加強備戰與衝突下的社會韌性。



► 婦女、性別團體的倡議，是公民社會的關鍵力量之一，面臨台海與國際情勢變化，台灣婦女與性別團體：

- a. 基於共同價值，具有與中國與其他國際上關注重視性別平等與人權價值的公民運動強化連結的基礎，能確保台灣對中國有全面性的了解，理性地發展出守護民主價值、而非仇恨特定國家的民防政策，避免落入中國操弄社會仇恨作為心理戰攻擊的陷阱。
- b. 具備發展具有性別觀點的論述對抗國內外反民主觀點的潛能。
- c. 擁有豐富倡議改革經驗，可推動政策與治理機制，促使官方與公民社會廣

泛的連結合作，確保衝突升高的情況下仍能維繫民主運作、保障基本人權與弱勢群體權益，避免戰爭狀態下與民防實作導致性別不平等惡化。

因此，在國際與兩岸局勢升高的脈絡下，婦女與性別團體的介入十分重要。



婦女與性別團體對於中國政權、國際與兩岸局勢的關注仍少

- ▶ 由於台灣民主化以來參與國際組織與國際場合阻礙極多，台灣民眾對中國的認識，普遍以中華民國體制下的政治情勢出發，以中國作為台灣建構國族認同與政治認同的重要因素，但這樣的視角對於全面性地理解國際政治經濟與兩岸局勢變化有其侷限，無法作為判斷整體情勢走向的精準依據，也使國防跟民防政策與社會之間的連結逐漸減弱。即便公民社會也須培養、強化相關知能，對中國政權、區域與國際局勢建立更全面、多元（如金馬離島有別於台灣本島）的觀察視角。其中婦女與性別團體經營、推動的議題雖然廣泛，仍極少關注中國政權、國際與兩岸局勢發展。
- ▶ 台灣 1980 年代以來婦女運動的興起，與對抗威權的歷史息息相關。婦女運動

前輩、婦女新知基金會首任董事長李元貞曾撰文指出，台灣民主運動為女人打開公領域說話的權力，婦女運動必須與民主運動聯合對抗專制。在當今脈絡下，中國專制政權透過軍事與非軍事手段破壞台灣的民主體制，若民主體制遭到破壞甚至不復存在，亦將直接衝擊女性與少數群體的政治參與權、經濟與社會權利等基本人權。這正是台灣的婦女與性別團體亟須學習並了解中國專制政權的運作邏輯、國際與兩岸局勢發展、民防與國防相關政策，以防禦台灣民主體制、對抗中國威權影響力的原因。

- ▶ 加強台灣公民社會與中國公民運動（特別是當前最有影響力的女權運動）連結十分重要，一方面擴展台灣社會看待中國的視角，一方面與之分享對民主社會



願景的想像，作為減弱中國政權對台、對外影響力的策略。中國女權運動早期專注確保女性權益，2012年後藉網路興起，組織多場抗爭行動，但自2015年以來便受到中國政權打壓，更加倚賴網路線上的動員平台。近年中國女權運動者除了關注女性權益，同時積極參與新興的公民行動如白紙運動，並在更廣泛的公民運動中辯論性別議題；台灣公民社會可以在彼此追求平等與民主的基礎上提供支持。

- 民防體系的改革與運作，不只關乎加強對硬體軍事及戰爭的了解，或急難救助相關技能的培養，心理及認知（論述）作戰也是重要的一環；在武力衝突尚未發生的當下，資訊戰與各種社群認知作戰已經是現在進行式，其中性別議題常

被用來激化不理性的社會對立、削弱信任並阻斷社會溝通的可能性，婦女與性別團體除具備釐清性別議題、促進溝通的論述能力，也必須深入了解中國政權的治理邏輯、對台工作策略、中國社會的多元樣貌，厚植婦女與性別團體因應認知作戰的實力。

- 目前台灣婦女、性別與關注多元議題的民間團體，對於國內外如何看待專制政體對民主社會的影響，或者對於現代戰爭當中可能面臨的性別與人權議題，仍十分陌生，建議就上述議題進行廣泛的交流學習、形成基礎共識，作為開啟後續倡議行動的基礎。

HUMAN RIGHTS
DEMOCRACY

台灣仍欠缺根基於性別觀點的和平／戰爭論述、 民防與國防政策及治理機制

- ▶ 台灣社會內部仍有辯論，一邊是主張備戰會激怒中國因而引發戰爭的「反備戰和平論」，另一邊是主張中國無論如何都會侵略因此備戰不可避免的「反侵略論」，台灣婦女與性別團體未來應尋找突破點，從女性主義觀點提出符合台灣脈絡關於和平的論述與新概念。
- ▶ 衝突升高時，必須確保弱勢族群所需的物資、社會福利、醫療等基本生存資源分配到位，以及因應社會弱勢群體在戰亂中可能面臨暴力樣貌的應對（如「強暴作為戰爭武器」對女性與少數社群的影響），這些目標之達成高度仰賴民防、國防體系將性別敏感度、多元與交織性觀點融入其運作體系與治理機制當中。然而，台灣民主化過程中，負責民防、國防的政府單位較無與公民社會對話經驗與管道，決策者甚至整體成員組成中，少有女性與多元弱勢族群背景者，且缺乏性別意識、多元觀點與交織性觀點，而公民社會特別是關注婦女、性別議題的團體，對民防、國防體系、治理機制與政策不熟悉，對現代戰爭與戰略的認識不深，尚未發展出專業與獨立觀點，可與政府單位對話並進行監督。
- ▶ 台灣婦女與性別團體中，有長期關注孕產婦自主權、托育政策、多元性別、性別暴力等議題，且專業程度十分成熟者，有潛力提供寬廣且多元的觀點，豐富社會與政府對於民防與國防領域理解與想像。例如，武力衝突的情況下，男性很有可能面臨高度軍事動員，而女性則不得不承擔起維繫社會運作的生產者、社區組織者與照顧者等多重角色，



現有醫療、托育、長照體系若能在衝突情勢下順利整合民防實作，將有助於大幅減輕女性戰時身心壓力並維繫戰時社會韌性。又例如，儘管軍事體系中的性別暴力已受到關注，但其預防、調查、處置與支持復原倖存者的做法是否妥適完善，尚須檢視；而武力衝突下，軍事人員與非軍事人員間，甚至他國協防軍事人員與我國軍事人員、非軍事人員之間可能發生的性別暴力，應如何預防、調查、處置，並提供倖存者支持與復原，相關政策與制度的討論都還待開啟。

- 女性、多元性別、少數族群雖然在戰爭體制中處於權力邊陲位置，但仍會被高度動員參與戰事，而軍事與戰爭動員中也常以「例外狀態」、「暫時擱置權利」的方式運作，使得民主體制中的例外權

力高度集中，讓非民主模式成為日常，導致民主體制容易陷入危機，性別議題與人權議題被邊緣化。因此，不但女性主義與性別觀點應及早介入民防、國防體系，政府的備戰與民防體系，也應積極主動納入民間婦女、性別、人權與關注各多元議題團體的參與，涵納多元觀點作為推動改革的依據。例如，推動修訂民防法、全面檢討各縣市官方民防團隊的運作，或者針對女性從軍、保障軍中女性人權與推動性別平等，進行性別影響評估並進行滾動式修正等等，確保衝突升高時仍能維持民主體制運作，避免性別、人權議題遭到邊緣化。確立民防、國防的政策論述本身以民主為基礎，可以避免被扭曲為挑釁或仇恨某個國家，也避免台灣重蹈戰爭時或戰爭後，例外狀態變成常態的威權歷史。

結論與建議

台灣公民社會是確保台灣民主韌性的關鍵力量，
其中婦女與性別團體的介入十分重要

1

台灣政府「備戰」應納入性別、人權與多元觀點，建立民主參與機制

台灣政府因應資訊戰與備戰的相關體制與政策，如民防、國防等，應積極納入性別、人權與多元觀點，建議政府、婦女與性別團體共同發起民防與國防政策的對話平台，在治理體系中建立正式、透明、可課責的民主參與機制，納入公民社會的性別、人權與多元觀點，並增加女性與多元背景者在民防、國防體系中的比例，特別是掌握決策權力的高階職位。上述改革應根基於更多對台灣民防、國防體系缺乏多元觀點現狀的實證研究與對實務情況的了解，並參考聯合國安理會第 1325 號以降多項關於女性、和平與安全 (WPS) 的決議¹，以及積極將女性、和平與安全納入國家行動計劃的各國做法²，參考其關注之議題、最佳實踐與重點價值，作為制定台灣女性、和平與安全國家行動計劃之基礎。國際決策者與各國民間團體，亦可在與台灣政府交流的過程中，針對上述議題對台灣政府提出建議，分享經驗。

2

應強化台灣公民社會如婦女與性別團體「備戰」相關之政策與治理機制的國內外交流、學習及參與

台灣民主化進程中，各官僚體系與公民社會的互動經驗，及其民主化程度是不均質的，國防與民防體系的政府單位，便是極少與公民社會互動且受民主化影響相對小的部門。其結果是雙向的，一方面官僚體系與整體社會有所脫節，另一方面公民社會也對相關議題少有關注，缺乏專業、管道與官方進行互動與對話。然而，公民社會的參與及多元觀點，對相關部門的民主化與落實改革至關重要。建議台灣婦女、性別及人權團體等公民社會力量透過學習、分享與交流，強化民防與國防相關知能，積極爭取參與政府的民防與國防決策與治理體系，要求並監督政府納入性別、人權與多元觀點。國際決策者與民間團體，也可在此面向上給予台灣婦女、性別與人權團體提供支持與協助。

3

應厚實台灣公民社會與國際社會基於性別、人權價值的持續性連結，以及因應台海局勢變化的論述能力

為因應區域衝突升高的可能性，台灣政府從過去幾年至今，持續透過外交或其他各種管道進行準備。相對而言，台灣公民社會也應發展自身的國際交流管道，並對台海、東亞國際局勢的變化，發展出基於性別價值、人權價值的多元觀點與組織連結，並培養出面對局勢變化仍可依據性別、人權價值多元發聲之能力與量能，以此削弱中國專制政權的影響力。建議台灣婦女、性別及人權團體等公民社會力量，積極與來自中國及其他關注東亞情勢、重視性別平等與人權觀點的公民社會力量建立持續性的連結與對談管道，而國際決策者亦可培力、支持台灣公民社會與來自中國、東亞與其他區域，具有共同價值的公民社會力量建立連結，厚實捍衛自由、平等、民主、人權的跨國民間力量。

¹ 聯合國安理會有關 WPS 的決議請見：

<https://www.un.org/shestandsforpeace/content/united-nations-security-council-resolutions-women-peace-and-security>。

² 以國家行動計劃（National Action Plans, NAPs）為政策工具落實 WPS 議程已是許多國家採用的做法，可參考 Biddolph, Caitlin and Laura J. Shepherd (2024) WPS National Action Plans: Content Analysis and Data Visualisation, v4. Online, at <https://www.wpsnaps.org/>。



HUMAN RIGHTS
DEMOCRACY





Defending Taiwan' s Democracy:

**Gender Equality and Democratic Values as a Bulwark
Against the PRC' s Authoritarianism**

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Established in 1982 as Awakening Publishing House, the Awakening Foundation has been a pioneer in women's movements and advocacy for gender equality. The foundation works to promote and monitor gender equality policies, lobby for legislation, advance women's political participation, and empower women in public affairs in order to gradually transform institutional systems and gender culture. It also focuses on developing women's potential, training volunteers for civil law consultation hotlines, and providing free marriage and family legal consultation and referral services.

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Executive Summary

- ▶ In response to the growing influence of authoritarian China, Taiwan’ s defense preparations must go beyond government and military measures. We need to integrate civil defense seamlessly with our diverse society by strengthening democratic values, developing inclusive defense systems, and ensuring defense policies reflect current social realities in Taiwan. This approach will build social resilience while preventing a disconnection between civil defense and society. Civil society’ s active participation, rooted in equality, freedom, human rights, and democratic values, is essential to construct that approach.
- ▶ Civil defense and wartime mobilization often prioritize masculine traits and sometimes suspend democratic norms through “states of exception” . Therefore, women’ s organizations and gender rights groups must play a role in shaping defense policies through a feminist intersectional lens. This will help ensure our civil and national defense strategies embrace social diversity and democracy can still function in at least a basic level, even during wartime.
- ▶ Taiwan must strengthen its civil society, in particular to enable women’ s and gender rights groups to analyze and advocate on regional and global issues on the basis of democratic values and human rights. This will create a bulwark against the PRC’ s efforts to erode Taiwanese confidence in democracy.
- ▶ We need to integrate perspectives on gender equality, human rights, and diversity into Taiwan’ s military and civil defense systems. Including a diversity of voices as such makes our defense preparations more robust and comprehensive.





NO AGGRESSION

Introduction

China is an ascending authoritarian power on the global stage that will continue to expand its political, economic, and military influence while challenging the fundamental values of freedom, equality, democracy, and human rights. Domestically, the regime has intensified its crackdown on civil society, including a recent suppression of feminist and LGBTQ+ movements. In relation to Taiwan, China maintains clear political and military ambitions while extending its authoritarian influence. Under its nationalist rhetoric of Chinese national rejuvenation, China consistently claims Taiwan as part of “the Chinese nation,” making the island a primary target of its influence operations.

In addition to conducting regular

military activities around Taiwan, China uses economic incentives and cultural influence to systematically court Taiwanese business leaders, young people, and local factions. Its information warfare aims to shape public opinion in Taiwan, amplify domestic political divisions, undermine spaces for public policy dialogue, and fuel the notion that democracy is ineffective within Taiwanese society.

As a democracy that emerged in East Asia during the late 20th century, Taiwan stands at the frontline of resistance against China’s authoritarian influence while working to strengthen its own democratic institutions. Taiwan’s society and government both face ongoing tests of their commitment to freedom, equality,



democracy, and human rights as tensions escalate in both non-military and military senses. Thus, Taiwan's experience will offer crucial insights for other nations and regions around the world that are pursuing democratic values while also confronting authoritarian threats.

The Awakening Foundation and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom hosted a series of four seminars between April and October 2024. The seminars addressed two key objectives: to examine how Taiwan's society and government can build stronger resilience in order to uphold the values of freedom, equality, democracy, and human rights amid rising tensions—both non-military and military—and use it to defend Taiwan against China's multi-

faceted authoritarian influence exerted through political, economic, military, and ideological channels; and to explore how we can apply these democratic values to construct a civil defense policies that is truly based on democracy, thereby become deeply rooted in society and finally strengthen social resilience.

The seminars brought together scholars and experts on Chinese social movements, Taiwan Strait strategy, and civil defense and Taiwanese civil society groups working on women's rights, gender issues, and human rights. The resulting dialogues led to several concrete policy recommendations.

Consultation Seminars

- ▶ On April 16, 2024, Associate Professor Shen Hsiu-Hua from the Institute of Sociology at National Tsing Hua University, who is also a consultant for the Awakening Foundation specializing in gender, family, and Chinese society studies, gave a talk entitled “Why Understanding China Matters: How Can Civil Society Organizations Understand China and Its Taiwan Policy?” The session was attended by 14 members from civil society organizations focused on women’s and gender issues, who engaged in dialogue with the speaker.
- ▶ On June 3, 2024, we hosted a discussion on “Advocacy in China’s Feminist Movement” featuring prominent Chinese feminist activists, including Lu Pin, the founding editor of Feminist Voices (China’s first feminist new media platform) and a pioneer in nurturing youth feminist movements and North American Chinese feminist communities, along with Feng Yuan, co-founder of Beijing-based women’s rights organization Equality. Seven Taiwanese civil society organizations focusing on women’s rights, gender issues, and democracy also participated in the dialogue.

► On July 23, 2024, Kuma Academy's co-founder and chief advisor Ho Cheng-hui led a discussion on "Policy Aspects of Civil Defense: How Can Taiwanese Civil Society Organizations Monitor Civil and National Defense?" The session brought together 14 members from civil society organizations focused on women's and gender issues.

► On October 8, 2024, Liu Wen, Associate Research Fellow, the Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica, spoke on "Feminism and Imaginings of War: Civil Defense as a Civil Movement". Twenty-four members from civil society organizations working in women's rights, gender issues, and human rights joined the discussion.

Key Findings

- ▶ In the context of China’ s rising authoritarianism, it is essential to maintain the diversity of Taiwan’ s civil society and strengthen its capacity to deepen Taiwan’ s values of freedom, equality, democracy, and human rights. This helps counter Chinese propaganda that promotes “democracy is useless” narratives within Taiwanese society. Women’ s and gender rights organizations in Taiwan, grounded in feminist principles and gender perspectives that value equality and freedom, pay close attention to intersectionality and diversity in their work. In their advocacy efforts, these organizations not only collaborate and support one another, but also maintain active partnerships with civil society groups across many sectors, including human rights, labor, environmental protection, migrant workers’ rights, social welfare, and judicial reform. Through these multifaceted efforts, they help strengthen Taiwan’ s democracy.
- ▶ While few Taiwanese women work professionally in national or civil defense, they actively follow cross-strait tensions and the current situation of international politics, and show willingness to prepare for potential conflicts. Women are notably underrepresented in formal civil defense structures. The military and defense organizations remain male-dominated in both personnel and decision-making, lacking gender perspectives and thereby disconnected from society and relatively lacks of foundation of democratic principles.
- ▶ The experience of Kuma Academy, an NGO offering civil defense training, gives us an important message—women consistently make up 60% of their voluntary participants, with some sessions seeing even higher female attendance. This demonstrates that Taiwanese women have strong motivation to learn about and participate in civil defense matters. Yet policymakers have

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Taiwan's civil society, particularly women's and gender organizations, plays a crucial role in safeguarding democratic resilience of Taiwan.

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not recognized this motivation and used it to increase women's involvement in civil defense policy and governance, nor to better align civil defense policies with Taiwan's diverse society, which are steps that would strengthen social resilience during conflict preparation or wartime.

► Women's and gender rights organizations are a vital force in civil society. As cross-strait and international tensions rise, Taiwanese women's and gender rights organizations offer three key strengths:

a. They share common values with civil rights movements in China and across the world that champion gender equality and human rights. This enables Taiwan to maintain a clear-eyed understanding of China and develop civil defense policies that aims to protect democratic values instead of merely fostering hatred towards any particular country. Such an approach helps Taiwan

avoid falling prey to China's psychological warfare tactics that aim to stir up social hatred.

b. They can develop gender-conscious arguments to counter anti-democratic views at home and abroad.

c. They bring rich experience in advocacy and reform to help shape policy and governance. This promotes stronger partnerships between government and civil society, helping preserve democratic functions and protect human rights, especially for vulnerable groups, during times of heightened conflict. Their involvement helps prevent gender inequality from worsening during wartime and civil defense activities.

These capabilities make women's and gender rights organizations essential players as international and cross-strait tensions escalate.



“

Women’ s and gender rights organizations show limited focus on the Chinese regime, international affairs, and cross-strait relations

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► Throughout Taiwan’ s democratic era, the country has consistently faced major obstacles to participating in international organizations and forums. This isolation has resulted in a mindset whereby most Taiwanese people understand China primarily through the given lens of the Republic of China (ROC) regime, which makes China an important factor that enables people to define their national and political identity. This perspective is understandable, but it may limit our view to fully grasp the complexities of international political-economic developments and evolving cross-strait dynamics. Such view cannot reliably interpret broader trends and has contributed to

a growing disconnect between defense/civil defense policies and society at large. Therefore, civil society organizations themselves need to build deeper expertise and develop more nuanced perspectives on the People’ s Republic of China (PRC) regime and regional/international developments, including diverse perspectives and understandings, such as those between the offshore islands of Kinmen and Matsu versus Taiwan’ s main island. In addition, despite the broad scope of issues that women’ s and gender rights organizations tackle, they rarely engage with matters concerning the PRC regime, international relations, or cross-strait developments.



- ▶ Since the 1980s, women's movements have been inseparable from the struggle against authoritarianism in Taiwan. Lee Yuan-Chen, a women's movement pioneer and founding chairperson of the Awakening Foundation, noted that Taiwan's democratic movement empowered women to speak up in the public sphere, making it essential for the women's movement to stand alongside democratic forces in opposing autocracy.
- ▶ In the current landscape, China's authoritarian regime is using both military and non-military tactics to undermine Taiwan's democracy. If Taiwan's democratic system were to be compromised or even dismantled, it would directly threaten basic human rights—from political participation to economic and social rights—especially for women and minority groups.
- ▶ This reality underscores why women's and gender rights organizations in Taiwan must study and understand the inner workings of the PRC's authoritarian regime, monitor international and cross-strait developments, and understand civil defense and national security policies. These steps are crucial for safeguarding Taiwan's democracy and countering Chinese authoritarian influence.

► Strengthening ties between Taiwan’ s civil society and Chinese civil rights and democracy movements (especially the influential feminist movement) is vital. This connection will give Taiwanese society a broader view of China while creating opportunities to share Taiwan’ s visions of democratic society, and can serve as a strategy to weaken the Chinese regime’ s influence both in Taiwan and abroad.

► China’ s feminist movement began by focusing on women’ s rights. It gained new momentum through social media after 2012, organizing multiple protests. Following government crackdowns in 2015, the movement has increasingly

relied on online platforms for mobilization. In recent years, Chinese feminist activists have expanded their scope beyond women’ s issues, taking part in emerging civil movements like the White Paper protests, while bringing gender perspectives into wider civil rights discussions. Taiwan’ s civil society can lend support through their shared commitment to equality and democracy.

► Civil defense reform involves more than just understanding military hardware and warfare or developing emergency response skills. Knowledge of psychological and cognitive warfare is equally vital. Even without active military conflict, information warfare and

social media influence campaigns are already in full swing in Taiwan. Gender issues are frequently exploited to fuel social divisions, break down trust, and prevent meaningful dialogue. Women's and gender rights organizations need both the ability to effectively address gender issues and foster communication and a thorough grasp of the PRC regime's governing approach, its Taiwan strategy, and the complex reality of Chinese society. This knowledge is essential for countering cognitive warfare campaigns.

- Currently, Taiwanese civil society groups working on women's rights, gender issues, and diversity have limited understanding of how people in Taiwan and across

the world perceive the impact that authoritarian regimes bring to democracies and what the gender and human rights challenges will we face in modern warfare. These organizations should engage in broad discussion and learning about these issues to establish a shared understanding that can inform future advocacy work.



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Taiwan lacks gender-based perspectives in peace/war discourse and defense policy

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- ▶ A debate continues in Taiwanese society between two opposing views: one side arguing that military preparation would provoke China into war against Taiwan (the “peace through restraint” position), and the other maintaining that Chinese aggression is inevitable and preparation is essential (the “resistance to invasion” position). Women’s and gender rights organizations in Taiwan need to find breakthrough points to develop new peace-related concepts and narratives from feminist perspectives that are grounded in Taiwan’s context.
- ▶ In times of conflict, critical resources—supplies, social services, and healthcare—must

reach vulnerable populations. The system must also protect vulnerable groups from conflict-related violence, such as the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war against women and minorities. To reach these goals, it depends on integrating gender sensitivity and intersectional perspectives into both civil and national defense frameworks. However, throughout Taiwan’s democratic transition, defense agencies have had minimal interaction with civil society. Their leadership and membership rarely include women or people from or with understanding of diverse vulnerable groups, and they lack awareness of gender and intersectional issues and diverse perspectives. Similarly, civil



society groups, especially those working on women's and gender issues, have limited familiarity with defense systems and policies and lack expertise in modern warfare and strategy, which prevents them from developing informed positions that would enable them to effectively engage with and monitor government agencies.

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- Women's and gender rights organizations in Taiwan have developed deep expertise in maternal rights, childcare policy, gender diversity, and gender-based violence. Their insights could greatly enrich both civil and government approaches to civil and national defense. During military conflict, while men face widespread military mobilization, women have to simultaneously serve as workers, community organizers, and caregivers. Successfully integrating existing healthcare, childcare, and elder care systems into civil defense operations would help reduce women's psychological burden and maintain social resilience during wartime.

Another critical issue is gender-based violence in the military. While it has gained attention, we still need to evaluate whether current prevention, investigation, response, and survivor support systems are adequate. We must also develop frameworks to address potential gender-based violence between military personnel and civilians, and between foreign defense forces and local military and civilian personnel, including comprehensive survivor support programs.

- During conflict, women, gender-diverse individuals, and minority groups are also heavily mobilized despite their peripheral position in wartime systems. Additionally, war typically brings about “states of exception” and temporary suspensions of civil rights, intensively concentrate excessive power to the government. This concentration of power will normalize non-democratic practices even within democratic systems, pushing gender and human rights issues aside.

To prevent this marginalization, Taiwan must incorporate feminist and gender perspectives early on in its civil and national defense planning. The government should actively collaborate with women's groups, gender advocacy organizations, human rights organizations, and other civil society groups. Their wide-ranging perspectives should shape key reforms, including

amending civil defense laws and reviewing civil defense team operations across jurisdictions. Equally important are ongoing assessments of how policies affect women in the military, alongside strengthened protections for women's rights and gender equality in military service.

These measures serve two crucial purposes: maintaining democratic functions during crises and keeping gender and human rights at the forefront of policy. By grounding its civil and national defense policies in democratic principles, Taiwan will accomplish two goals. First, it will ensure its defensive preparations are not misinterpreted as provocative actions or expressions of hatred toward any country. Second, it will prevent a backslide into its authoritarian past, where emergency measures became standard practice during and after conflict.

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations



Integrating gender equality, human rights, and diversity into Taiwan' s defense preparedness

Taiwan' s defense strategy against information warfare and its overall defense preparedness, including both civil and national defense, needs to actively embrace perspectives on gender equality, human rights, and diversity. The government should work with women' s groups and gender rights advocacy organizations to create a policy dialogue platform for civil and national defense. This will establish formal, transparent, and accountable channels for democratic participation, ensuring that civil society' s views on gender, human rights, and diversity are heard. A key priority is increasing the representation of women and people from diverse backgrounds throughout the civil and national defense systems, especially in senior decision-making roles. These changes should be informed by thorough

research into the current lack of diverse perspectives in Taiwan' s defense systems, along with practical field experience.

The reforms should be guided by UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and later resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (WPS)¹, and should be informed by the experience of countries that have successfully embedded WPS principles in their National Action Plans.² Their experiences, best practices, and core values should help shape Taiwan' s own National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. Taiwanese government should have more exchanges with international policymakers and civil society groups to gain valuable insights and recommendations on these issues to Taiwan' s government.

2

Building civil society's capacity in defense policy through local and international engagement

Taiwan's path to democracy has not affected all institutions equally. Defense institutions—both military and civilian—have remained among the most isolated, with minimal engagement with civil society and limited democratic reforms. This has created a gap that works both ways: defense agencies have grown distant from society at large, while civil society groups lack the expertise and channels to engage meaningfully with defense officials.

Yet civil society involvement and a diversity of viewpoints are essential to democratizing these institutions and driving meaningful reform. Taiwanese women's groups, gender rights advocates, and human rights organizations should deepen their understanding of civil and

national defense through learning and exchange programs. These groups need to push for a seat at the table in defense policy-making and governance, while ensuring the government incorporates perspectives on gender equality, human rights, and diversity. International policymakers and civil society groups can play a valuable role by supporting these efforts among Taiwanese women's organizations, gender rights advocates, and human rights groups.

3

Building international civil society networks grounded in gender equality and human rights

While Taiwan's government has been preparing for heightened regional tensions through diplomatic and other channels over the last few years, Taiwan's civil society must forge its own path. This means developing international connections and the capacity to analyze cross-strait and East Asian political situation through the lens of gender equality and human rights. These diverse perspectives and partnerships can serve as a counterweight to China's authoritarian influence.

Taiwanese women's groups, gender rights advocates, and

human rights organizations should work to build lasting connections and open dialogue with civil society partners from China and others who follow East Asian affairs and share values of gender equality and human rights. International policymakers can foster these relationships by helping Taiwan's civil society connect with like-minded groups in China, East Asia region, and beyond. This will strengthen the global network of civil society organizations working to protect freedom, equality, democracy, and human rights.

¹ For UN Security Council resolutions on WPS, see:

<https://www.un.org/shestandsforpeace/content/united-nations-security-council-resolutions-women-peace-and-security>

² The adoption of National Action Plans (NAPs) as policy instruments to implement the WPS agenda has become common practice in many countries. For reference, see Biddolph, Caitlin and Laura J. Shepherd (2024), WPS National Action Plans: Content Analysis and Data Visualisation, v4. Available at: <https://www.wpsnaps.org/>





“以性別平等與民主價值 鞏固對抗中國威權崛起的 堅實防線”

Defending Taiwan's Democracy :
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