Is China-Taiwan Rapprochement Possible? Experimental Evidence from Taiwan.

Hsin-Hsin Pan[1] Scott L. Kastner[2] Margaret M. Pearson[2]

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[1] Associate Professor of Sociology, Soochow University, Taipei, Taiwan
[2] Professor, Department of Government and Politics, University of Maryland, College Park

Introduction[1]

The *Economist* magazine recently described the Taiwan Strait as "The most dangerous place on Earth" (The Economist 2021), reflecting a widespread sentiment that, despite the absence of overt war, the risk of military conflict in the Taiwan Strait is both real and increasing. Chinese military operations near Taiwan, including frequent incursions into Taiwan's air defense identification zone, have received widespread global media attention. As Chinese President Xi Jinping warns that the Taiwan issue should not be handed down to future generations, high-ranking US military officials publicly speculate that the People's Republic of China (PRC) might launch a war of unification with Taiwan sometime this decade. Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, and China's tough reaction to US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's 2022 visit to Taiwan, have reinforced worries in both Washington and Taipei about stability in the Taiwan Strait.

The increasingly tense Cross-Strait environment, in turn, has given rise to a flurry of analyses assessing whether a Cross-Strait war is likely to happen (e.g. Kastner 2016; Kastner 2022; Mastro 2021; Bush, Glaser and Hass 2021; Pan, Wu and Chang 2017). Receiving somewhat less attention in the recent hype over a Cross-Strait military conflict is how a more lasting peace might be secured. In the 1990s and 2000s, numerous peace agreement proposals were advanced by analysts and officials, and analysts continue to propose new frameworks (Saunders and Kastner 2009; Lai 2020; Grossman 2019). But these proposals have never garnered much traction, and when Taiwan's politicians in recent years have floated the idea of a peace agreement they have faced significant pushback. For instance, Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou raised the possibility of

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a Cross-Strait peace agreement during his re-election campaign in 2011, but quickly backtracked after the idea came under withering domestic criticism (Romberg 2012). Likewise, in early 2019, Nationalist Party Chair Wu Den-yih faced significant domestic criticism after suggesting that his party would pursue a peace agreement if it were to win the presidency in 2020 (Aspinwall 2019). These and similar episodes point to an important reality: any understanding that helps to defuse military tensions in the Taiwan Strait must ultimately have the support of—or at least the acquiescence of—the Taiwan people. Taiwanese public opinion is thus a critical factor that helps to delineate the boundaries of what is possible in future China-Taiwan relations and constrains what Taiwan's leaders can achieve in relations with Beijing. Not surprisingly, a large body of scholarly research explores how Taiwan's public views issues central to the relationship with Beijing. Yet we still know relatively little concerning how Taiwan's citizens think about the specifics of possible peace arrangements with the PRC. What, in concrete terms, are Taiwanese willing to give up to secure peace with Beijing, and what do they demand in return? Do PRC threats make agreements more, or less, likely? How do expectations about US behavior affect support for agreements? And do Taiwanese citizens believe that a peace agreement, if achieved or not, would influence the perceived likelihood of war with China? In this article, we offer new empirical evidence to help fill these important gaps.

More specifically, we describe results from a novel experimental survey undertaken in Taiwan in April, 2022. The experiment was in the form of a single-case conjoint analysis, in which we randomly presented individual Taiwan citizens with different US and China stances and hypothetical bargains where China and Taiwan respectively offer a combination of policy concessions to each other. Based on the hypothetical agreements, respondents then indicated

whether they viewed the agreement favorably or not, and assessed the probabilities of China's attack conditional on accepting or rejecting the bargain.

We find that sovereignty or security-related concessions by Taiwan tend to lower support for agreements, and that such concessions from the PRC tend to increase support. Overall, the path to finding majority support is relatively narrow, but even agreements that involve significant policy concessions by Taiwan can reach that threshold if the PRC itself offers substantial sovereignty and security-related concessions. We also find that PRC threats do not significantly increase support for agreements, and somewhat surprisingly neither does expressed support by the US. US support can even backfire by reducing support for agreements with policy concessions other than China renouncing the use of force to unify Taiwan or Taiwan pledging to renounce independence. And we find that Taiwanese citizens are more pessimistic about the risk of conflict when told that Taiwan's government rejects an agreement than when it accepts it—suggesting in turn that there is a certain proportion of people who believe that reaching an agreement could help stabilize relations.

We proceed as follows. In the following section we provide brief background information on the Cross-Taiwan Strait dispute and public opinion in Taiwan as it relates to the Cross-Strait dispute. Next, we summarize our initial expectations, grounding our discussion in the bargaining and war literature. We then outline our research design and present our findings. We conclude with a brief summary of our findings and discuss broader implications.

The Cross-Strait Dispute and Public Opinion in Taiwan

The dispute between the PRC and Taiwan is one of sovereignty and identity: at stake is whether Taiwan is, or should be, a part of China.[2] The dispute dates to the end of the Chinese Civil War in 1949, when the losing Nationalist Party (or KMT)—along with its government, the Republic of China (ROC)—retreated to Taiwan while the victorious Chinese Communist Party established the PRC on Mainland China. Both the PRC and the ROC subscribed to a one China principle, where each viewed itself as the rightful government of all of China, and each viewed Taiwan as a part of China. As Taiwan democratized in the late 1980s and early 1990s, however, whether Taiwan should be considered part of China became openly contested on the island, and the newly formed Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) embraced formal Taiwan independence in the early 1990s. Since the DPP captured the presidency for the first time in 2000, Taiwan's policy toward reunification has fluctuated along with the alternating control between the KMT and DPP; in turn, Cross-Strait relations have typically been tense under DPP rule, while subject to a partial thaw under KMT rule (the KMT has been willing to subscribe to a version of a one China principle in the form of the 1992 Consensus).[3] Since the DPP, led by Tsai Ing-wen, recaptured the presidency in 2016, and continuing into the presidency of her successor, Lai Ching-te, Cross-Strait relations have become increasingly conflictual, and the PRC has undertaken frequent displays of military force.

In democratic Taiwan, leaders are accountable to the electorate and hence constrained in how far they can push Cross-Strait relations—toward either accommodation of or confrontation with the PRC. Thus, any major understanding or agreement with the PRC to stabilize the Cross-

[2] For an overview of the Cross-Strait relationship, see Bush (2013).

[3] The "1992 Consensus" refers to a 1992 meeting between representatives from the PRC and Taiwan. The KMT interprets the consensus as a shared understanding between Taipei and Beijing that only one China exists, but that the two sides have different interpretations as to what "one China" means. The DPP denies that any consensus was reached in the 1992 meeting, and has refused to embrace the concept.

Strait relationship ultimately requires the support of the Taiwan people. The basic contours of Taiwan public opinion on identity and sovereignty issues have been well-established by extensive survey research and analysis. To uncover what sorts of agreements are potentially feasible in Taiwan, it useful to consider how Taiwan's public views PRC goals, and how Taiwan's public views possible concessions that Beijing might offer to Taiwan in order to obtain those goals. The following overview frames the theoretical and empirical discussion that follows.

To begin, the PRC clearly seeks formal unification with Taiwan and to block any movement toward formalization of Taiwan's de facto independence. Since the 1990s, however, surveys repeatedly have revealed that a growing percentage of respondents in Taiwan self-identify as solely Taiwanese, rather than as Chinese or both Chinese and Taiwanese; indeed, solely Taiwanese identifiers make up a large majority of respondents in recent surveys (National Chengchi University 2022a). While periodic fluctuations in these polls reflect events such as the 2019-2020 PRC crackdown in Hong Kong and the 2022 Pelosi visit to Taiwan (and subsequent PRC military exercises), the longer-term trend likely reflects China's growing capabilities and Taiwan's growing international marginalization (Rigger 2013; Zhong 2016).

On the other hand, despite trends toward a more Taiwan-centric identity among Taiwan's residents, polls routinely suggest that most Taiwanese are quite pragmatic regarding sovereignty issues. For instance, some surveys find very low support for either unification or an immediate declaration of independence, showing instead that most respondents prefer some version of the status quo (National Chengchi University 2022b). Other surveys show that many Taiwanese have conditional preferences regarding Taiwan's future status. Support for unification rises (although still to low levels in recent surveys) in a hypothetical scenario where Taiwan and Mainland China are similar socially, economically, and politically. And support for independence is widespread if

it could be achieved peacefully, but support is substantially more limited if it would trigger military conflict with China (Duke University 2022; National Chengchi University 2022c; Niou 2004; Chu 2004).

Although support for the PRC's proposed One Country, Two Systems model of unification is generally low in Taiwan (Duke University 2022), some surveys find evidence of flexibility concerning a one China principle. For instance, one survey finds, over the years 2005-2020, that a majority of respondents have consistently favored conducting Cross-Strait exchanges/communications under the principle of one China with respective interpretations (which largely mirrors the KMT's interpretation of the 1992 Consensus) (Duke University 2022). On the other hand, one recent survey conducted by Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council finds that a large majority of respondents opposes PRC insistence on the 1992 Consensus under a one China policy (CNA 2022). These differential results suggest that framing likely matters a great deal, with much lower public support when it appears Beijing is pressuring Taiwan to accept a one China principle, but higher support when it is framed as a pragmatic way to accomplish other objectives like increased exchanges.

The PRC also seeks a weakened US-Taiwan security relationship, and here too there appears to be some flexibility among Taiwan's citizens. In one poll conducted over the years 2003-2015, a plurality of respondents—and often a majority—favored reducing arms purchases from the US in exchange for the withdrawal of PRC missiles along China's southeast coast (CNA 2022). And polls generally find broad support, in principle, for economic exchanges with the PRC. One poll finds that a plurality of respondents (and in some years a majority) has consistently favored increased rather than decreased economic exchanges with China (dating back to the early 2000s) (CNA 2022).

Thus, although Taiwanese increasingly self-identify as solely Taiwanese, widely disapprove of Beijing's preferred model of unification, and indeed are generally opposed to unification in principle, the surveys summarized above nevertheless suggest considerable pragmatism and flexibility. Some of the survey responses noted above also hint at possible Taiwan "asks" or demands in the context of any sort of negotiated Cross-Strait bargain. Most obviously, Taiwan citizens would like to see a reduced PRC military threat aimed at the island, to the point that a majority would to accept reduced arms purchases from the US in exchange (Duke University 2022). One survey finds, meanwhile, that a large majority of respondents view the PRC military threat against Taiwan as serious (Wang 2013), and not surprisingly a large majority (exceeding 90 percent) reject PRC military threats against Taiwan (CNA 2022). In addition to substantial support for economic exchange with the PRC, surveys have also found widespread dissatisfaction with Taiwan's exclusion from international organizations, including in particular the World Health Organization (WHO) (Mainland Affairs Council, Republic of China (Taiwan) 2017). Previous surveys thus suggest that there are clear "carrots" that Beijing could potentially offer—including increased participation in international organizations, increased economic exchanges, and reduced military threats—that could increase support for a Cross-Strait peace agreement among Taiwan's public.

However, we still know very little about what sorts of tradeoffs Taiwanese individuals are willing to make in order to achieve better relations with China, and we know very little about what they would demand in return from Beijing. Most surveys, for instance, are not designed to assess whether support for specific policies—such as the 1992 Consensus—is conditioned on what Taiwan might receive in return. Moreover, designing a direct-questioning survey to assess these tradeoffs is inherently difficult, since both identification problems and social desirability bias are

likely to loom large.[4] In the remainder of this paper, after outlining our expectations, we develop an approach that aims to better understand these tradeoffs.[5]

Expectations: Conflict, Peace Agreements, and Credible Commitments

We are interested in three broad facets concerning how Taiwanese citizens view possible peace agreements with the PRC. First, which policy attributes of hypothetical Cross-Strait agreements do Taiwanese most or least prefer, and what sorts of tradeoffs among policy concessions are they willing to make? Second, are Taiwanese preferences conditioned by great power stances on the agreements? For instance, does US support for an agreement increase support for that agreement in Taiwan? Does support increase if the PRC threatens Taiwan if the agreement is not signed? Lastly, do Taiwanese think that an agreement would have the effect of making military conflict less likely?

In the remainder of this section, we develop expectations concerning how individuals in Taiwan view possible peace agreements and their effects. We ground our discussion in the bargaining model of war, which Lake has described as the "workhorse" model of international conflict (Lake 2010). We do so not to suggest that war is inevitable in Cross-Strait relations, but rather to tease out some of the underlying factors that could give rise to conflict and that have made it difficult for Taiwan and China to find a durable peace.

[4] Identification problems refer to a failure to identify and compare supporting rates for distinct policy components that might be included in hypothetical Cross-Strait agreements. Moreover, levels of support for different policy concessions are highly correlated. Social desirability bias occurs when respondents are insincere or unresponsive to the survey questions because they might be reluctant to reveal their true yet marginal or socially unacceptable attitudes towards specific policies.

[5] Our hypotheses were not pre-registered.

In the bargaining model of war framework, two broad causal mechanisms can give rise to war despite war's ex post inefficiency in resolving disputes. First, information problems can lead to war under certain conditions. Leaders, for instance, might underestimate the resolve of their adversaries, and those adversaries might have difficulties credibly communicating their true resolve. Second, credible commitment problems can give rise to conflict. Simply put, leaders might not trust their adversaries to uphold bargains that all might in principle prefer to fighting a war (Fearon 1995; Powell 2006; Gartzke 1999; Weisiger 2013).

Formal peace agreements can potentially mitigate both problems, thereby reducing the likelihood of conflict or helping to resolve conflicts once started. For example, formal peace agreements can serve as a credible signal of peaceful intent under some circumstances, such as if they require parties to undertake costly and verifiable actions (such as taking steps that make surprise attack more difficult like allowing international arms control inspections or peacekeepers). If the intentions of each country are less uncertain, then the likelihood of conflict arising due to information problems could decline. Peace agreements could also help to mitigate commitment problems by generating international audience costs (a country's reputation for trustworthiness could suffer were it to renege on an agreement ex post) or, in some cases, by including external enforcement mechanisms (Fortna 2003; Walter 1997; Fearon 1994; Morrow 2000).

However, as Walter observes in the case of civil conflict, and Powell in the case of international conflict, commitment problems can be extraordinarily difficult to overcome in some cases (Walter 1997; Powell 2006). In the Taiwan Strait, several overlapping credible commitment problems loom especially large (Kastner 2022; Lin 2022; Kastner and Rector 2008). First, as noted in the last section, support for unification is low in Taiwan and a growing number of Taiwan's citizens have identified as exclusively Taiwanese in recent years. Since Taiwan's leaders are

directly accountable to the public, and since Cross-Strait relations are a highly salient political issue in Taiwan, any government that makes concessions on sovereignty-related issues will have a difficult time convincing PRC leader that these concessions will be upheld by future governments. As a case in point, former President Ma Ying-jeou was able to open the door to dialogue by embracing a version of a "one China" principle (the 1992 Consensus), but his successor Tsai Ing-wen did not endorse such a formulation; the PRC, in turn, halted Cross-Strait dialogue once Tsai entered office. In other words, PRC leaders have reason to doubt the long-term credibility of any sovereignty-related concessions made by Taiwan's government.

Second, the PRC has its own obvious difficulties in making credible promises to protect Taiwan's interests in the context of any agreements reached with the island. Although the PRC pledges that Taiwan would maintain considerable autonomy were it to move toward formal unification, Beijing's record in other regions formally promised autonomy—most notably Hong Kong—is not reassuring. Beijing also has difficulty making promises to Taiwan credible in the context of China's highly authoritarian political system that lacks institutional checks and balances, and with a nationalist public that potentially acts as a further constraint on conciliatory policy. In turn, Taiwan has reason to doubt the credibility of any promises that China might make in the context of a peace agreement.

Third, a formal peace agreement could have subtle implications for the balance of power in the Taiwan Strait. For instance, a peace agreement could plausibly lead to concern in Washington that Taiwan was moving closer to the PRC; in turn, the US might be more reluctant to provide support to the island should Taipei move toward a peace agreement with China. To the degree that a peace agreement increased the PRC's bargaining power in this way, Beijing would have a difficult time credibly reassuring Taipei that it wouldn't use this increased bargaining power

to demand more of Taiwan in return. Taiwan, then, has reason to remain cautious about entering into any formal agreements with China. In other words, Cross-Strait relations appear to be characterized by a dynamic commitment problem (Fearon 1995, 408–9).

It is our contention that these underlying commitment problems, in combination, have made the Cross-Strait sovereignty dispute especially difficult to resolve. It follows that effective Cross-Strait peace agreements would likely need to mitigate the severity of at least some of these commitment problems. The presence of these underlying problems thus informs our hypotheses—discussed below—concerning how Taiwan's citizens assess potential Cross-Strait peace agreements.

Attributes of Agreements: Security, Sovereignty, and Economic Policy Concessions

To begin, we consider how Taiwanese are likely to view different hypothetical Cross-Strait peace agreements, and the tradeoffs they are willing to make in order to obtain an agreement. The credible commitment problems outlined above suggest that there should exist a good deal of baseline skepticism toward peace agreements among Taiwanese respondents, since reaching an agreement could signal to Washington that Taiwan is moving closer to the PRC and hence may lead to greater reluctance to provide security support to Taipei. But we expect that Taiwanese citizens will be especially reluctant to make sovereignty or security-related concessions to Beijing given the possibility that such concessions will affect Taiwan's future bargaining power. In turn, our initial hypothesis is as follows:

H1: All else equal, Taiwanese citizens should be less likely to support peace agreements that involve Taiwanese concessions relating to Taiwan's sovereign status or its ability to defend itself, relative to agreements that do not involve Taiwanese sovereignty or security-related concessions.

We further expect that PRC concessions on sovereignty and security-related issues are most likely to yield increased support for agreements in Taiwan. A public promise to eschew the use of force, for instance, might help to alleviate some of the commitment problems because it would engage Beijing's reputation and perhaps make it more costly for the PRC to use military coercion against Taiwan in the future. On the other hand, we expect that PRC concessions relating to economics will have no meaningful effect on support for an agreement in Taiwan as such concessions do little to address underlying commitment issues.

H2: All else equal, Taiwanese citizens are more likely to support peace agreements that include PRC concessions relating to Taiwanese sovereignty or security, relative to agreements that do not contain PRC concessions on sovereignty or security issues.

H3: All else equal, the inclusion of PRC economic concessions in a peace agreement has no effect on public support for the agreement in Taiwan.

The Moderating Effect of Great Powers' Stances: US Support and China's Threat

We are also interested in whether individual Taiwanese preferences over peace agreements are conditioned by the stances of the United States and China—the two relevant great powers in the Cross-Strait relationship. Our expectations here are again informed by the credible

commitment problems that loom over Cross-Strait relations. To begin, we expect that explicit United States support for a hypothetical agreement should, on balance, increase support for that agreement among the Taiwan public. Explicit US support would potentially alleviate concern that an agreement could lead to a weakening of US security ties to Taiwan, thereby helping to mitigate the dynamic commitment problem outlined earlier. It could also increase confidence among the Taiwan public that Washington could act as an external enforcer of an agreement (even if such assurances aren't explicit).

H4: All else equal, explicit United States support for a proposed peace agreement should increase support for that agreement among the Taiwanese public.

Evaluating China's stance on an agreement is somewhat more complicated since Beijing would be party to the agreement. Here, we focus on the impact of explicit threats that China could make should an agreement not be reached. Would support for an agreement increase if Beijing were to threaten military action if negotiations fail and an agreement is not reached? Here, we expect that Chinese threats along these lines would have limited impact on support for an agreement in Taiwan, since they would not resolve the underlying commitment issues that are the root of the Cross-Strait impasse. Indeed, it is possible that threats could increase Taiwanese reluctance to accept an agreement, since they would come across, "Godfather"-like, as making an offer Taiwan could not refuse, and thereby reinforce in the minds of Taiwan citizens the PRC's hostile intent.

H5: All else equal, explicit PRC threats about the consequences of rejecting a proposed peace agreement have no impact on support for the agreement among the Taiwanese public.

Consequences of an Agreement: Perceived Likelihood of a Chinese Attack

Finally, we consider how Taiwanese citizens evaluate the likelihood of a PRC attack conditional on whether Taiwan actually accepts a particular agreement. We adopt an agnostic position concerning the likely average impact of Taiwan accepting or rejecting an agreement. On the one hand, respondents might worry that Taiwan rejecting an agreement would provoke Beijing and increase the risk of an attack. On the other hand, given the pervasive credible commitment problems, respondents might view potential agreements as having minimal impact on ultimate PRC decisions to use force.

However, we do expect some differences to emerge across agreements that the Taiwan government has accepted. Agreements containing PRC sovereignty and/or security-related concessions should help to alleviate underlying commitment problems and hence should help to ameliorate perceived risks of conflict among the Taiwan public. Meanwhile, agreements that include Taiwanese sovereignty and/or security-related concessions imply that Taiwan has yielded ground on some of the key underlying issues that could lead to conflict in the first place, which in turn should lead to a decreased expectation of a PRC attack.

H6: All else equal, Taiwan accepting proposed peace agreements with major security and/or sovereignty-related concessions by either the PRC or Taiwan should reduce the perceived likelihood of a PRC attack on Taiwan more than the acceptance of agreements without these concessions.

Research Design

To study public support for a Cross-Strait agreement in Taiwan, we design a single-case conjoint experiment administered to a sample of 2,905 Taiwanese citizens over 20 years old representative of the population.[6] The Survey Research Center at Academia Sinica distributed the Qualtrics link to its respondents via text messages or emails from April 8th to 25th, 2022. Once logged onto the Qualtrics link, respondents are first required to check the consent form. Each of the 2,905 respondents is first primed with a great power stance randomly selected from a pool of four contexts and then randomly assigned five hypothetical agreements that draw from 8 policy concessions, yielding a total of 14,525 responses to 255 hypothetical agreements.

To test the moderating effect of great power stance on the agreement (H4 and H5), respondents are randomly assigned to four contexts: (1) control group (blank), (2) US support ("If the Cross-Strait governments sign the following Cross-Strait agreement, the US government would support it"), (3) China's threat ("If the Cross-Strait governments do not sign the following Cross-Strait agreement, the mainland China government suggests that it would militarily attack Taiwan"), and (4) US support and China's threat ("If the Cross-Strait governments sign the following Cross-Strait agreement, the US government would support it. If the Cross-Strait governments do not sign the following Cross-Strait agreement, the mainland China government suggests that it would militarily attack Taiwan.").

[6] We use a single-case conjoint experiment, instead of a two-profile experiment, because the single-case design better reflects how a peace agreement would likely be presented to the public in the real world, where the public would be reacting to a single agreement negotiated by elites.

After viewing the great power stance on a hypothetical agreement,[7] respondents read a hypothetical agreement with a combination of randomized policy concessions offered by both sides of the Taiwan Strait. We randomly assigned the policy concessions to be hidden or shown. Excluding an agreement where China and Taiwan both make zero policy concessions, the number of policies in hypothetical agreements ranges from one (either Taiwan or China makes at least one policy concession) to eight (both Taiwan and China make four policy concessions at most). Our conjoint experiment thus ended up with 255 hypothetical agreements (2^8 minus one combination of zero concessions from both sides). We randomized the order of policy attributes to avoid contamination of ordering effects on the dependent variables. A screenshot of one hypothetical agreement in Chinese and English is presented in Figure 1.

[Figure 1 here]

Table 1 lists the possible security, sovereignty, and economic policy concessions China and Taiwan could make to each other in reaching an agreement. Each hypothetical agreement includes from 0 to 4 of the policy concessions listed in Table 1 from each side.[8]

[Table 1 here]

[7] Framing/priming effects in conjoint designs can be elusive due to the complex choices respondents must make (which can make it difficult to keep primes in mind). We minimize this issue by keeping the prime simple (one short sentence) and placing it on the same screen directly above each hypothetical agreement (see figure 2 below).

[8] Due to divided identities in Taiwan (Chu 2004), we use the term "our country" throughout the survey questions to avoid leading bias.

The eight concessions were constructed according to five criteria. First, we developed a set of concessions for each side that were consistent with peace agreement proposals in the political and scholarly discourse over the past several decades. These proposals have tended to have several common features, and we sought to incorporate these broad features into our concessions. Second, we drafted concessions that the Taiwan public would view as reasonably realistic. Third, our concessions are written to be sensitive to current politics in Taiwan (at the time of the survey). Thus, we avoided use of highly loaded political terms (such as the "1992 Consensus") that might cause leading bias. Fourth, we chose concrete concessions to maximize intuitive understanding and minimize diversified interpretations. Fifth, to enable us to test our hypotheses, we chose at least one concession relating to sovereignty, one relating to security, and one relating to economics for each side.

Although details differ, many peace agreement concepts broached since the 1990s have included a core bargain trading a Taiwan commitment not to pursue independence in exchange for a PRC commitment not to use military force (e.g. Manning and Montaperto 1997; Lieberthal 2005; Saunders and Kastner 2009). This core bargain is reflected in two of our possible concessions: the PRC concession to pursue unification without use of force, and the Taiwan concession of renouncing independence. We treat the former as a security concession since it involves use of force, and the latter as a sovereignty concession since it involves Taiwan's current status. Although some past peace agreement proposals have included a commitment to unification as a final outcome of the Cross-Strait dispute, we do not include such a concession in our list because it would be seen as unrealistic by most Taiwanese respondents given public attitudes in Taiwan.[9]

[9] In recent polls conducted by National Chengchi University (2022b), fewer than 10 percent of respondents favor unification even as a long-term outcome in cross-Strait relations. For a discussion of how peace agreement proposals have approached the issue of Taiwan's final status, see Wenger and Chen (2017, 943–45).

Some analysts have also highlighted the important role that confidence-building mechanisms (CBMs) are likely to play in any possible Cross-Strait peace agreement.[10] We thus include one security-related CBM from each side: reducing arms purchases from the US for Taiwan, and ending military flights near Taiwan and reducing missiles targeting Taiwan for the PRC. The specific focus of the PRC concession is motivated by recent concerns over increasing Chinese military incursions into Taiwan airspace, and the PRC's large number of missiles deployed in range of Taiwan. The Taiwan concession reflects long-standing PRC opposition to, and concern over, US arms sales to Taiwan, and would likely be viewed in China as a significant CBM.

Some peace agreement proposals also include sovereignty-related concessions that do not address Taiwan's final status, but that move beyond the core no independence, no use-of-force bargain noted earlier. For instance, when discussing a possible Cross-Strait peace agreement, PRC scholars and officials tend to highlight the importance of some sort of commitment to a "one China" principle by Taiwan (the definition of which might be left vague).[11] We included recognizing that both sides belong to one China as a sovereignty-related concession by Taiwan (without defining precisely what "one China" means in the concession). And because proposals often include a promise for increased international space for Taiwan, we include support for Taiwan's participation in international organizations (such as the World Health Organization) as a PRC sovereignty-related concession.[12] Finally, we propose one economic concession for each

[10] See especially Manning and Montaperto (1997).

[11] See, e.g., Chen (2011). Former Chinese President Hu Jintao, when broaching the idea of a peace agreement in a 2008 speech (as part of his six-point proposal), emphasized that it should done on the basis of the One China principle. See Hu (2008).

[12] See, , e.g., Nye (1998); Manning and Montaperto (1997). Chinese leaders have long been explicit that Taiwan's international space is negotiable in the context of a one China principle. See Grossman (2019, 199). We reference

side.[13] These are framed broadly, where the PRC agrees to allow increased Taiwan exports to China, and Taiwan agrees to allow increased Chinese investment in Taiwan.

To minimize measurement errors due to inattentive responses, we perform attention checks, and drop responses from those who finished the survey in less than half of the median time as a further check on attentiveness.

When respondents pass the attention check, conditional on the great power stance on each hypothetical agreement and policy concessions in the agreement, respondents are required to respond to three dependent variables, including support for the agreement, the perceived probability of China attacking Taiwan conditional on Taiwan accepting the agreement, and the perceived probability of China attacking Taiwan conditional on Taiwan rejecting the agreement (responses to the last two prompts enable us to test H6). For the first, the measure is on a four-scale metric from "strongly oppose" to "strongly support," which are re-grouped into a binary variable. For the latter two, the measure is on a 100-percentage scale to evaluate the probabilities of China attacking Taiwan conditional on accepting or rejecting the agreement respectively. We regressed public support for agreements and perceived probabilities of war on all policy concession attributes in the pooled sample and the separate samples of the four scenarios of great power stances. (See Appendix 1 for the full questionnaire in Chinese, with English translation.)

Our conjoint experiment advances understanding of public support for agreements on several fronts. First, given that the number and the values of policy attributes are randomized, the conjoint experiment enables us to identify the effect of each policy attribute on the dependent

the World Health Organization (WHO) in particular since the PRC previously acquiesced, during the Ma Ying-jeou administration, to Taiwan participating as an observer in the WHO's World Health Assembly.

[13] On economic side payments linked to a peace agreement, see Saunders and Kastner (2009).

variables.[14] Randomization gives us leverage to disentangle the effects of correlated policy concession attributes. Second, the policy attributes are measured on the same scale to check the policy concession attributes' relative significance in an agreement. By pooling the policy attributes, the conjoint experiment helps us to address the issue of social desirability for sensitive attributes (Horiuchi, Markovich and Yamamoto 2022), such as trade-offs regarding sovereignty and security in an agreement. Third, we rank the hypothetical agreements by the predicted support rate in a post-hoc fashion, revealing what policies the most and least popular agreements contain. We are also able to predict the support rates for specific agreements containing particular concessions. Lastly, we test priming conditions to see whether great power stance sways public support for agreements and evaluate the perceived risk of China's attack conditional on accepting or rejecting agreements.

Findings

The Effects of Policy Concessions on Support for Agreements

Figure 2 illustrates the effects of policy concessions on public support for agreements in the conjoint experiment by visualizing the average marginal component effects (AMCE) (Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto 2014) on the left and the marginal means (MMs) on the right (Leeper, Hobolt, and Tilley 2020). For both figures, the solid dots refer to point estimates and the lines stretching from the dots refer to 95 percent confidence intervals of a policy attribute value on the probability of respondents supporting hypothetical agreements. To obtain accurate

[14] Prediction analysis based on a conjoint experiment typically requires modeling, as Horiuchi, Smith and Yamamoto (2018) suggest. In this paper, we do not take such a modeling approach because we measure the probabilities of support for 255 hypothetical agreements including all possible combinations of policy concessions (see appendix 2b for a list of all hypothetical agreements).

variance estimates, we cluster the standard errors by the respondents whose preference for supporting one hypothetical agreement or not is independent from another agreement.

The findings presented in Figure 2 address our first hypothesis, which focuses on sovereignty and security concessions. Figure 2 shows that Taiwan concessions on sovereignty ("Pledge to renounce Taiwan's independence" and "Recognize that the two sides belong to one China") and security ("Reduce arms procurement from the US") lead to a sharp drop in support for agreements (by 10, 12, and 5 percentage points in AMCEs respectively). The marginal mean of support for an agreement drops from 52 percent if a pledge to renounce independence is excluded, to 39 percent if that concession is included. On the other hand, the economic concession ("Reduce restrictions on mainland China's investments in our country") does not have a statistically significant effect on support for an agreement.[15] These findings generally confirm H1.

The effects of various Chinese concessions on support for agreements are generally quite small in the AMCEs, although policy concessions on security and sovereignty issues are statistically significant, a finding which largely confirms H2. Ceteris paribus, "Pledge to unify Taiwan without the use of force", "Stop fighter jets from circling Taiwan and reduce missiles targeting Taiwan", and "Support our country's participation in international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO)" were 5, 3, and 4 percentage points more popular when they are shown than when they are hidden. If any of the three policies appears singly, the marginal means for an agreement increase from about 43 or 44 percent support to 47 or 48 percent support. On the other hand, consistent with H3, the inclusion of the economic concession "increase our country's exports to China" does not have a statistically significant effect on support for an agreement (the MM increases by only one percentage point).

[15] Minor discrepancies between AMCEs and MMs are due to rounding.

[Figure 2 here]

Table 2 presents the big picture as to how respondents rank different possible Cross-Strait agreements. In Table 2, agreements are arranged from least supported (the first percentile in terms of predicted support) to most supported (the 99th percentile in terms of predicted support).[16]

[Table 2 here]

The first percentile agreement is one in which Taiwan makes all possible concessions and receives nothing from China in return. About 24.4 percent of respondents viewing such a scenario in Taiwan support the agreement. Contextually speaking, the size of the KMT base of "pan blue" voters in Taiwan is roughly a quarter of the population.[17] Given that KMT officials have tended to be supportive of a Cross-Strait peace agreement (as noted earlier), it is not surprising that a quarter of all respondents to our survey would express such unconditional support for an agreement. In other words, particularly since we dropped inattentive respondents, we do not believe this finding represents measurement error.[18]

On the other extreme, the 99th percentile agreement is one in which China makes all possible concessions, while Taiwan gives up nothing in return. For a terrific deal like this, the supporting rate is 66.9 percent. This suggests that even a sweet deal for Taiwan is met with

[16] These rankings are based on the estimated marginal means (MMs) presented below.
[17] In Taiwan politics, the "pan blue" camp is composed of the KMT and allied parties, while the "pan green" camp is composed of the DPP and allied parties.
[18] Note that we cannot apply Clayton et al.'s (2023) proposed method to detect and fix measurement error since we do not use a binary forced-choice design.

skepticism by a significant percentage of respondents. This is not surprising: given that the KMT has been identified with the peace agreement concept (as noted earlier), we would expect that most pan DPP-supporters would be disinclined to support any such proposals.

Between these two extremes, we show several hypothetical agreements where China and Taiwan made various policy concessions to each other. In a trade-off between China's trade favors to Taiwan ("Increase our country's export to China") and Taiwan's recognition of one China ("Recognize that both sides belong to one China"), such a deal—reminiscent, perhaps, of Ma Ying-jeou-era bargains—gains 40.5 percent support. However, the support rate increases to 49.4 percent when China's trade concession to Taiwan ("Increase our country's export to China") is exchanged for security concessions ("Curtail arms procurement from the US") rather than sovereignty concessions from Taiwan. Support for agreements rises if China makes sovereignty and security concessions to Taiwan. For instance, if China were to lift its security threat ("Pledge to unify Taiwan without the use of force" and "Stop fighter jets from circling Taiwan and reduce missiles targeting Taiwan") and deliver economic favors ("Increase our country's export to China") in exchange for Taiwan renouncing independence, a majority (52.6 percent) would support it. An agreement involving purely economic concessions between the two sides also wins majority support (53 percent).

Given our original expectations, our findings show that a surprisingly wide range of possible peace agreements win the support of a majority of respondents. Although about a third of our respondents are ready to reject even the best possible agreements for Taiwan (and thus appear unwilling to accept any agreement), most respondents appear to be pragmatic and are willing to entertain supporting at least some agreements depending on what was contained in them. That is, although the path to majority support might be a narrow one, our findings clearly suggest

that there is such a path nonetheless. Figure 3 shows the probability of support ranges from 33 percent for a relatively unpopular agreement (in the 10th percentile, or less popular than 90 percent of all hypothetical agreements) to 58 percent for a relatively popular agreement (in the 90th percentile, or more popular than 90 percent of all hypothetical agreements).

In Appendix 2a we present a table that is based on a rank-ordering of the average support rate for all 255 possible agreements. After placing agreements into the top 10 decile, next 10 decile, and so forth, we calculate the percentage of agreements within each decile containing each concession. Among agreements in the top decile (the most supported), none contain the "renounce Taiwan independence" or "recognize both sides belong to one China" concessions. On the other hand, all of the agreements in the bottom decile (the least supported) contain these two clearly unpopular concessions. For reference, Appendix 2b lists all 255 hypothetical agreements, ranked by average support rate.

[Figure 3 here]

In sum, our findings suggest surprisingly wide support for peace agreements among Taiwanese respondents, and generally confirm H1-H3: we found that Taiwanese respondents most want security and sovereignty-related policy concessions from China, and that economic concessions—at least those proposed in our experiment—do not increase support for agreements. On the other hand, security and sovereignty-related concessions from Taiwan reduce support for agreements, whereas economic concessions from Taiwan do not have such an effect.

The Moderating Effect of Great Power Stance on Public Support for Agreements

We next consider whether the stance of the United States or China influences public support for agreements. We hypothesized that US backing would increase support for an agreement in Taiwan (H4), but that China's threats would not (H5). Figure 4 depicts how great power stance moderates the effect of policy concessions on support for an agreement. Note that the AMCEs vary by only a few percentage points across all four contexts. In other words, both stated US support for an agreement, and China's threats about the consequences of rejecting an agreement, have virtually no effect on the propensity of respondents to support agreements, regardless of the configuration of concessions embedded in the agreement. While the statistically insignificant outcome of China's threats is consistent with H5, we are surprised that expressed US support has such little impact, a finding which disconfirms H4. If we further look at the differences in the effects of policy concession between the control and US support groups, US support significantly reduces the support rates by 5 percent of marginal means on average when hypothetical agreements do not contain either China's pledge to unify Taiwan without the use of force or Taiwan's pledge to renounce Taiwan's independence. The results suggest that US support could backfire on the support rate for hypothetical agreements involving policy concessions other than China's use of force or Taiwan's sovereignty issues. These finding might reflect underlying doubts about how much the US could do to help ensure an agreement is honored.

[Figure 4 here]

Perceived Likelihood of War Conditional on Acceptance of Agreements

We further consider how Taiwan accepting or rejecting the proposed agreement affects respondent assessments of the probability of China attacking Taiwan. We illustrate the perceived

probabilities of China attacking Taiwan conditional on acceptance or rejection of agreements in Figure 5. The two graphs of AMCEs and MMs on the left-hand side of Figure 5 show the perceived probability of China attacking Taiwan conditional on Taiwan accepting the agreement. Here, consistent with H6, accepting agreements that include Taiwanese policy concessions on sovereignty ("renounce Taiwan's independence" and "recognize the two sides belong to one China") significantly reduces the assessed probability of China's attack when they appear in the agreement. Since the two policy concessions have been especially emphasized in PRC official statements, the message appears well received by the Taiwanese public. On the other hand, and largely at odds with H6, China's policy concessions on security and sovereignty fail to have a significant effect on the perceived probability of China's attack. This finding could underscore the magnitude of the credibility problems facing the PRC: here, even though Chinese concessions on security and sovereignty help to increase support for an agreement among the Taiwan public, they still fail to move the needle much concerning views on the likelihood of an actual attack. Thus, support for H6 is mixed. Overall, the effect size is approximately 30 percent across all policy concessions for hypothetical agreements (on balance, respondents assess a 30 percent chance of attack if an agreement is accepted).

What about the consequences of rejecting the agreement? The right-hand AMCEs and MMs of Figure 5 display the perceived probability of China attacking Taiwan conditional on rejecting the agreement. Turning down China's concession on "Pledge to unify Taiwan without the use of force" in the agreement significantly bumped up how individuals assessed the likelihood of China's attack. Taiwanese respondents also understood that refusing to renounce Taiwan's independence would result in a greater risk of China's attack. In general, the effect size is around 45 percent across all policy concessions, creating a 15 percent jump in the risk of war when Taiwan

rejects, rather than accepts, an agreement. Although we were initially agnostic concerning the impact of Taiwan rejecting an agreement, the large size of this effect was surprising to us.

[Figure 5 here]

Perceived Credibility, Great Power Stance, Policy Concessions, and Support for Agreement

We dug deeper into our findings by considering why great powers' strong push for even highly favorable agreements still fail to increase support for an agreement in Taiwan. To begin, we considered whether respondents' perceived credibility of great powers significantly predict their support for an agreement. Figure 6 considers perceptions of US and Chinese credibility among Taiwanese respondents. Credibility is widely seen as a key factor shaping the prospects for international cooperation (Simmons 2010; von Stein 2010), and it follows from our theoretical discussion that perceptions of credibility should matter (affecting the perceived believability of Chinese promises as well as the perceived likelihood the US would support Taiwan in the event of conflict in the Taiwan Strait). Not surprisingly, individuals who view China as credible (12.6 percent of respondents) were much more likely to support agreements with China, regardless of concessions offered. However, the differences in MMs between believers and non-believers in China's credibility are marginal across all policy concessions. Meanwhile, those who deem the US as credible (57.3 percent) were less likely to support an agreement with China. There exists roughly a 20 percent gap across all policy concessions between believers and non-believers in US credibility. Presumably, those who view the US as credible tend to believe that peace agreements are unnecessary for Taiwan: US deterrence is credible and serves to preserve peace in the Taiwan

Strait. In sum, the perception of US credibility decreases support for agreements and the perception of China's credibility increases it.

[Figure 6 here]

We also map demographic and attitudinal attributes to paint a general hypothetical profile for supporters and non-supporters of any type of agreement in Appendices 4-13. For attitudinal attributes, supporters tend to be those who value economics over security, prefer the status quo or unification with China, identify with pan-blue parties, embrace Chinese or both Chinese and Taiwanese identity, and represent the elder generation born before 1978. Non-supporters of agreements tend to value security over economics, are pro-independence, identify with pan-green parties and as Taiwanese, and are part of the younger generation born after 1978. As for demographic features, we show the effects of several other personal traits, including gender, region of residence, income, and social contacts with China. These personal traits do not significantly influence the supporting rates for an agreement.

Discussion and Conclusion

Because Taiwan is a democracy, Taiwanese public opinion is a critical factor that ultimately helps to determine what is possible in future China-Taiwan relations. Yet, to our knowledge, no empirical studies have examined the tradeoffs Taiwan's citizens are willing to make to achieve better relations with Beijing. What, in concrete terms, are Taiwanese willing to give up, and what do they demand in return? To address these questions, we fielded an experimental survey in Taiwan that utilized conjoint analysis. We randomly presented individual Taiwan

citizens with different hypothetical bargains where the PRC would offer certain concessions in exchange for a set of concessions from Taiwan. Respondents then indicated whether they viewed the bargain favorably or not. Such a design enabled us to compare the relative importance of different hypothetical policy concessions on a single scale. That is, we were able to assess which concessions Taiwanese respondents were most willing to offer, and how they ranked various concessions that China might offer in return.

Several notable findings emerged from our analysis. First, we found that the specific content of agreements—perhaps not surprisingly—has a large impact on support. Security and sovereignty-related concessions from China increase support, while security and sovereignty concessions by Taiwan decrease support. Economic concessions from Beijing have little impact on support for agreements. And some respondents—roughly one-third—reject even sweet agreements for Taiwan that exchange extensive Chinese concessions for no Taiwanese concessions. Yet importantly, we also found that quite a few hypothetical agreements, including some that included significant Taiwan policy concessions, could garner majority support among Taiwan's citizens. Our findings thus suggest that Cross-Strait rapprochement is possible, but the path is narrow.

Second, we found the stance that the US and China take on agreements has relatively little impact on support for agreements among Taiwan's public. Contrary to our expectations, stated US support does not greatly increase public support for an agreement. Military threats by China likewise have only a minor effect on support.

Third, we found that whether Taiwan accepts or rejects an agreement has a substantial effect on the perceived likelihood of a PRC attack, with respondents assessing a 30 percent likelihood of attack (on balance) if Taiwan accepts an agreement, but a 45 percent likelihood if

Taipei rejects the agreement. If Taiwan makes significant sovereignty-related concessions, and then accepts an agreement, perception of the likelihood of an attack drops sharply. However—likely reflecting doubts about PRC capacity to make credible commitments—PRC security-related concessions do not reduce the perceived likelihood of attack among accepted agreements.

Our findings have significant implications for the broader international relations literature on peace agreements and conflict prevention. To begin, most extant studies of the impact of peace agreements focus on agreements made in the context of an ongoing or recently terminated war (e.g. Fortna 2003; Karreth et al 2023). Our study, in contrast, addresses what might be termed a preemptive peace agreement, where the goal is more forward-leaning: preventing conflict from breaking out in a relationship characterized by a long, but fragile, peacetime status quo. While the Cross-Strait relationship has many unique features, our findings offer insights into how a publicly accepted "preemptive" peace agreement might be discerned in other locations, and in particular in democracies where citizen approval of prospective agreements is crucial.

Second, our study's findings underscore the centrality of commitment problems as barriers to sustainable peace (e.g., Fearon 1995; Powell 2006; Walter 1997; Weisiger 2013). Our finding that PRC threats do not greatly improve support for agreements is particularly suggestive: as Schelling (1966, p. 72) and Christensen (2002) have pointed out, threats are most effective when paired with credible assurances that the target won't be punished if it complies with the threat. In this case, the PRC has had a hard time credibly reassuring Taiwan that its interests will be upheld if it complies with PRC demands; in turn, Chinese threats about the consequences of rejecting a peace agreement do little to increase public support for such an agreement in Taiwan.

Finally, our findings also speak to the substantial literature that highlights the importance of third party guarantees as an important pathway to overcoming commitment problems (e.g.,

Karreth et al 2023; Walter 1997; Walter et al 2021). Contrary to our own expectation that United States support for a hypothetical agreement would increase support for that agreement among the Taiwan public, our findings show negligible effect of such a US position. This was surprising to us because one of the biggest potential barriers to a Cross-Strait peace process centers on the possibility that US support for Taiwan might diminish if Taipei were to move closer to Beijing. We expected that stated US support for a peace agreement would alleviate this risk, thereby increasing Taiwan's confidence in moving forward with an agreement. That the Taiwan public didn't see it this way suggests considerable doubts about US credibility, doubts that have been confirmed by recent public opinion polling in Taiwan (Lee et al. 2021; 2022; 2023). In her seminal article on civil war termination, Walter (1997) highlights this second-order commitment problem associated with third party guarantees, arguing that third party commitments are themselves only credible if the third-party has a self-interest in carrying out its promises. Our findings suggest that this problem could loom especially large for states pursuing the sort of preemptive peace agreement explored in this article: here, even close and longstanding security ties with the state that most fears the commitment problem—in this case US ties with Taiwan—appear to be insufficient to alleviate this second-order problem.

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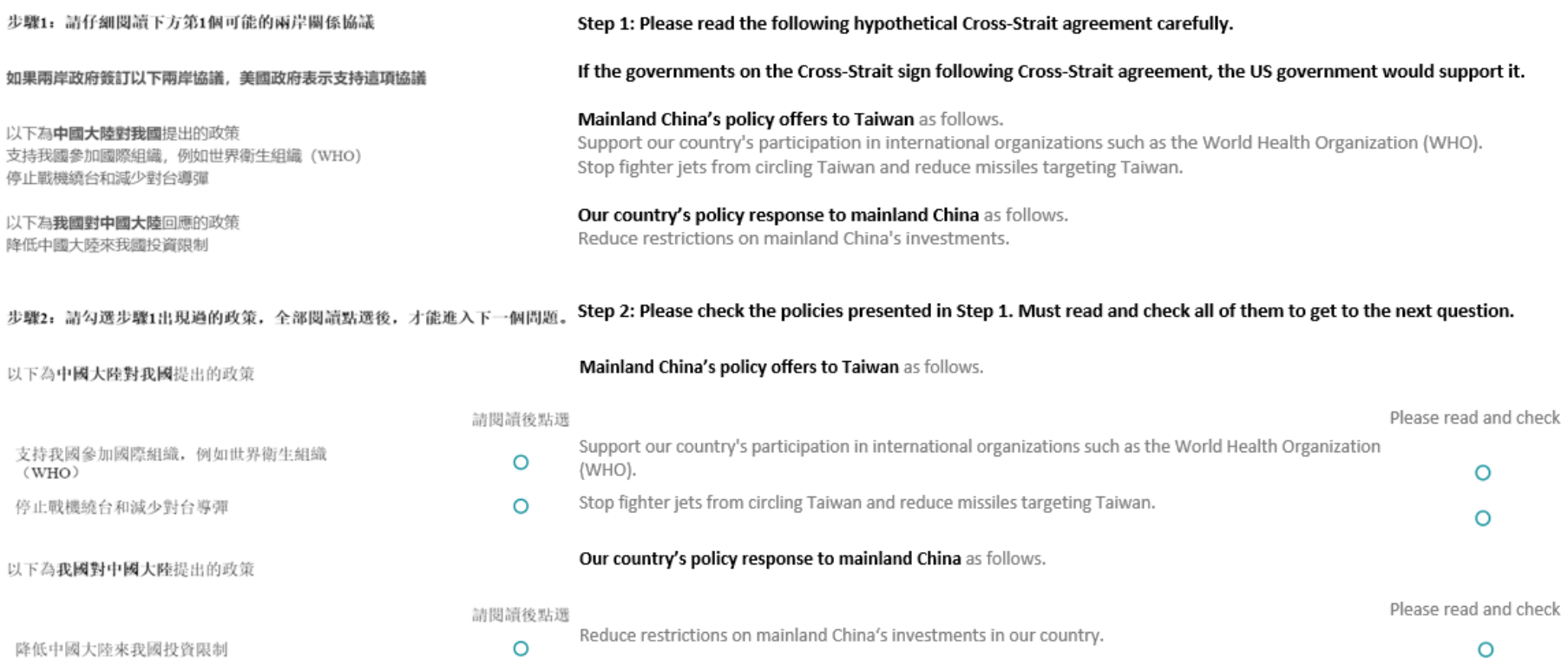
Table 1: Policy concessions by China and Taiwan

Attributes		Values
■ ***China's policy offer to Taiwan***		
Security	Pledge to unify Taiwan without the use of force.	0: Hidden 1: Shown
	Stop fighter jets from circling Taiwan and reduce missiles targeting Taiwan.	
Sovereignty	Support our country's participation in international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO).	
Economics	Increase our country's export to mainland China.	
■ ***Taiwan's policy response to China***		
Security	Reduce arms procurement from the US.	
Sovereignty	Pledge to renounce Taiwan's independence.	
	Recognize that both sides belong to one China.	
Economics	Reduce restrictions on mainland China's investments in our country.	

Table 2: Estimated probability of supporting selected agreements

Hypothetical Cross-Strait Agreement		Least Welcome	Trade for Taiwan to Recognize One China	Trade for Taiwan to Reduce Arms Procurement from the US	Security and Trade for Taiwan to Renounce Independence	Sheer Economic Exchanges	Most Welcome
Percentile		< 1st					>99th
Support rate		(24.4)	(40.5)	(49.4)	(52.6)	(53.0)	(65.9)
China's policy offer to Taiwan							
Security	Pledge to unify Taiwan without the use of force.				X		X
	Stop fighter jets from circling Taiwan and reduce missiles targeting Taiwan.				X		X
Sovereignty	Support our country's participation in international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO).						X
Economics	Increase our country's exports to mainland China.		X	X	X	X	X
Taiwan's policy response to China							
Security	Reduce arms procurement from the US.	X		X			
Sovereignty	Pledge to renounce Taiwan's independence.	X			X		
	Recognize that both sides belong to one China.	X	X				
Economics	Reduce restrictions on mainland China's investments in our country.	X				X	

Figure 1: Screenshot of one hypothetical agreement (Original text in traditional Chinese on the left and translation in English on the right)



步驟1：請仔細閱讀下方第1個可能的兩岸關係協議

如果兩岸政府簽訂以下兩岸協議，美國政府表示支持這項協議

以下為**中國大陸對我國**提出的政策
支持我國參加國際組織，例如世界衛生組織（WHO）
停止戰機繞台和減少對台導彈

以下為**我國對中國大陸**回應的政策
降低中國大陸來我國投資限制

步驟2：請勾選步驟1出現過的政策，全部閱讀點選後，才能進入下一個問題。

以下為**中國大陸對我國**提出的政策

請閱讀後點選

支持我國參加國際組織，例如世界衛生組織（WHO）

停止戰機繞台和減少對台導彈

以下為**我國對中國大陸**提出的政策

請閱讀後點選

降低中國大陸來我國投資限制

Step 1: Please read the following hypothetical Cross-Strait agreement carefully.

If the governments on the Cross-Strait sign following Cross-Strait agreement, the US government would support it.

Mainland China's policy offers to Taiwan as follows.
Support our country's participation in international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO).
Stop fighter jets from circling Taiwan and reduce missiles targeting Taiwan.

Our country's policy response to mainland China as follows.
Reduce restrictions on mainland China's investments.

Step 2: Please check the policies presented in Step 1. Must read and check all of them to get to the next question.

Mainland China's policy offers to Taiwan as follows.

Please read and check

Support our country's participation in international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO).

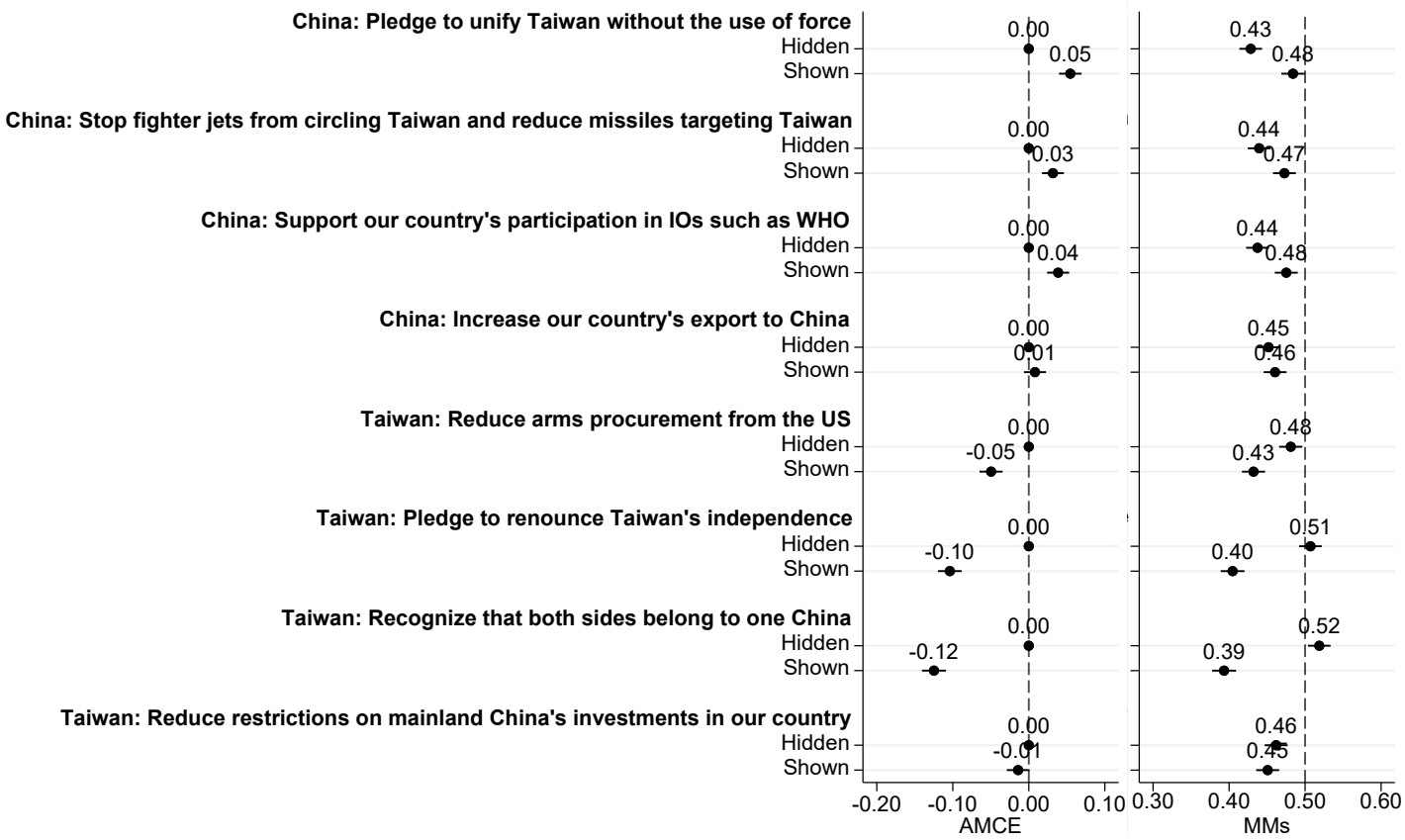
Stop fighter jets from circling Taiwan and reduce missiles targeting Taiwan.

Our country's policy response to mainland China as follows.

Please read and check

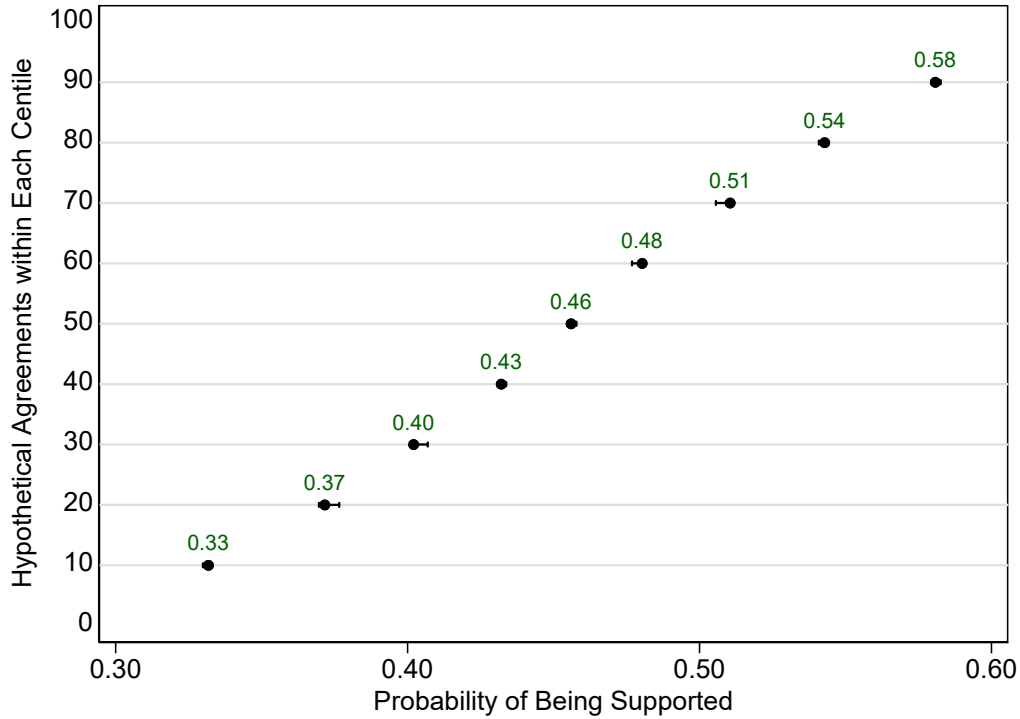
Reduce restrictions on mainland China's investments in our country.

FIGURE 2: Effects of Policy Concession on the Probability of Supporting Agreement



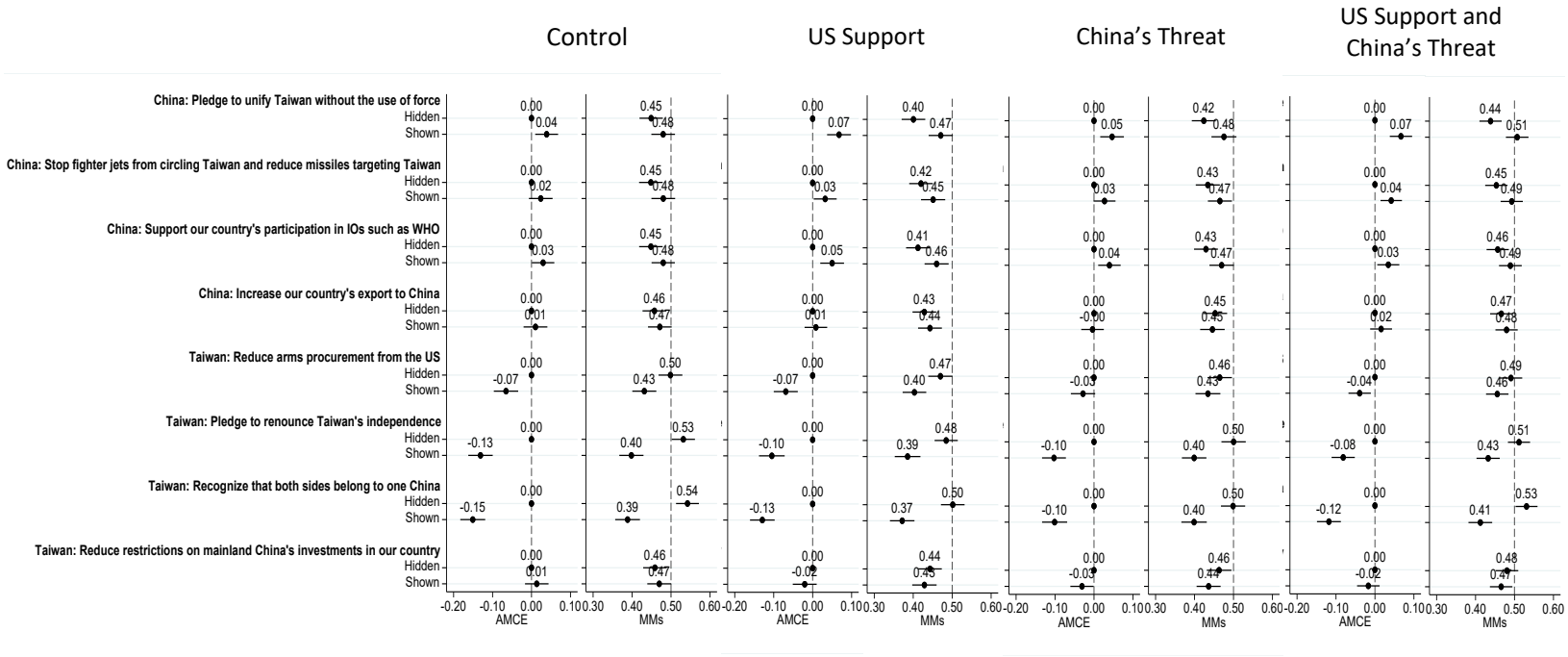
Note: In the left panel, each solid dot represents the estimated average marginal component effect (AMCE) of a specific policy concession on the probability that respondents would support a hypothetical agreement containing that policy concession. This estimate is made relative to the baseline policy concession and is averaged across all other policy concessions. In the right panel, each solid dot denotes the estimated marginal means (MMs) of a specific policy concession on the probability that a respondent will support a hypothetical agreement, averaged across all other policy concessions. For both panels, the horizontal bars extending from the solid dots illustrate the 95% confidence intervals, clustering at the respondent level. The results are derived from ordinary least square (OLS) models detailed in M1 of Appendix 3.

FIGURE 3: Probability of Support for Hypothetical Agreements by Centile



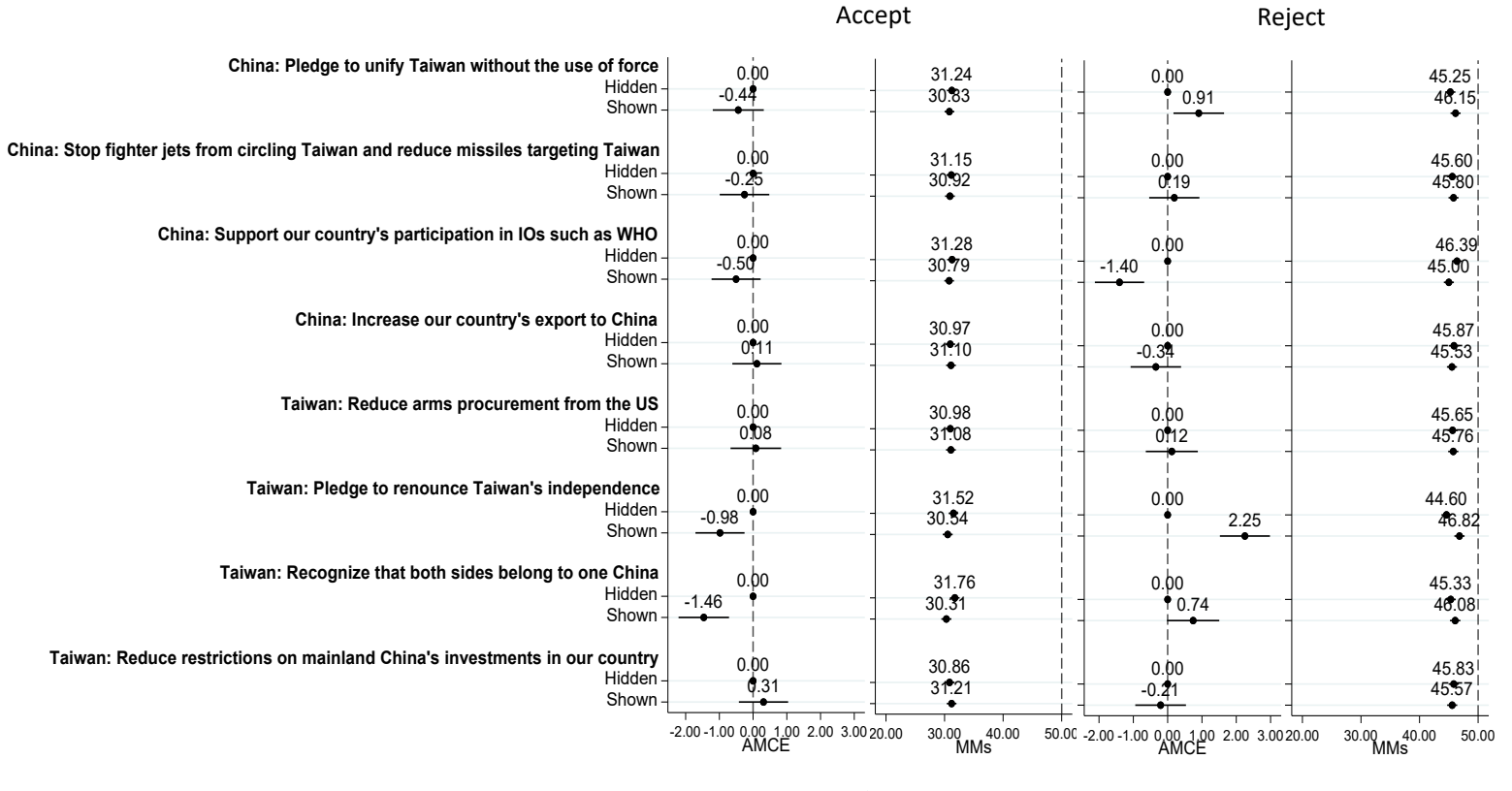
Note: The solid circles represent the ranks of the 255 hypothetical agreements with all possible combinations of policy concessions, namely all hypothetical agreements in centiles by the probabilities of being supported, as indicated on the vertical axis. The bars stretching from the solid circles are 95% confidence intervals.

FIGURE 4: Effects of Policy Concession on the Probability of Supporting Agreements, By Priming Conditions of Great Power Stance



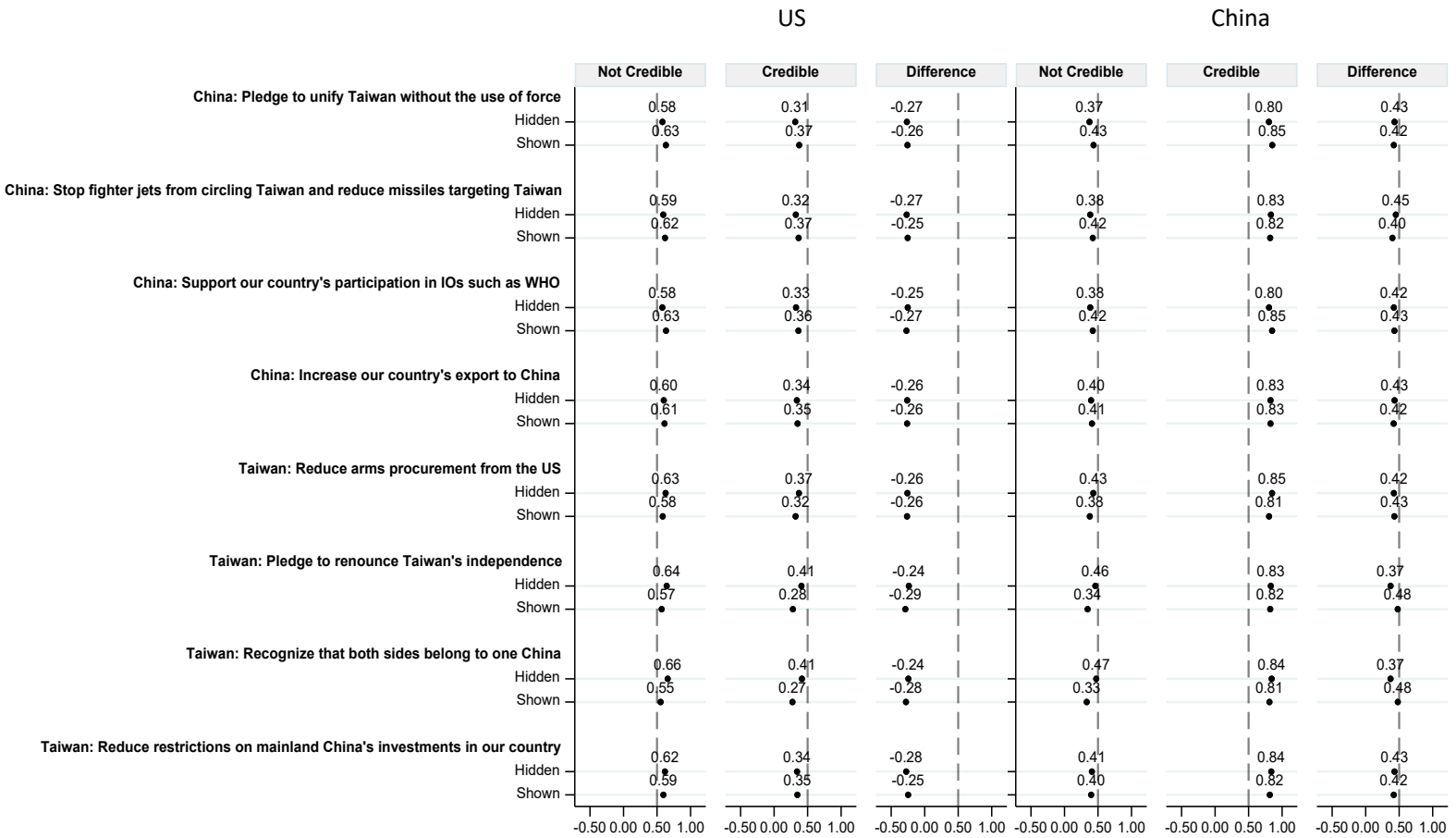
Note: Each of the four panels is prescribed a specific priming condition of great power stance. For each of the left plot in the four panels, each solid dot represents the estimated average marginal component effect (AMCE) of a specific policy concession on the probability that respondents support a hypothetical agreement containing that policy concession. This estimate is made relative to the baseline policy concession and is averaged over all possible combinations of other policy concessions within hypothetical agreements. For each of the right plot in the four panels, each solid dot denotes the estimated marginal means (MMs) of a specific policy concession on the probability that respondents support a hypothetical agreement, averaged across all other policy concessions. For the four panels, the horizontal bars illustrate the 95% confidence intervals, clustering at the respondent level. The estimates are derived from ordinary least square (OLS) regression models detailed in M2-5 of Appendix 3.

FIGURE 5: Effects of Policy Attributes on the Probability of China Attacking Taiwan Conditional on Accepting or Rejecting Agreement



Note: Each of the two panels is prescribed a specific condition of accepting or rejecting agreement. For the left two plots in the two panels, each solid dot represents the estimated marginal means (MMs) of a specific policy concession on the probability that respondents support a hypothetical agreement, averaged across all other policy concessions. For the two panels, the horizontal bars illustrate the 95% confidence intervals, which are robust to clustering at the respondent level. The estimates are derived from ordinary least square (OLS) regression models detailed in M6-7 of Appendix 3.

FIGURE 6: Effects of Policy Attributes on Probability of Supporting Agreement by Respondent's Perceived Credibility of Great Powers (Marginal Means)



Note: We map respondents' perceived credibility of great powers to their support to hypothetical agreements. For each of the left two plots in the two panels, each solid dot denotes the estimated marginal means (MMs) of a specific policy concession on the probability that respondents assign to China's attack conditional on the perceived credibility of either great power being not credible and credible respectively. The right plots are the differences between the left two plots. For the two panels, the horizontal bars illustrate the 95% confidence intervals, which are robust to clustering at the respondent level. The estimates are derived from ordinary least square (OLS) regression models detailed in M8-9 of Appendix 3.