

# US and Taiwan Plan to Equip Kiev Regime Forces With 'Swarms-of-Swarms' Drones

by *Drago Bosnic*, published on *InfoBRICS*, March 28, 2023

There's very little doubt that warfare has changed dramatically in recent decades, with the tactical gap between leading militaries and those of local powers (or even the usually overlooked small countries) narrowing as the proliferation of unmanned systems continues unabated. With the advent of the information era, the abundance of war footage has essentially eliminated the once-assured readiness of tens of millions to go to war, leaving militaries around the globe struggling to meet their recruitment quotas. Losing even a hundred drones is certainly preferable to having ten soldiers (or even one) killed and/or wounded in action, particularly for politicians and their respective parties seeking reelection. As a result, drones, robots and other unmanned vehicles have become increasingly important.

The combination of these factors created the "perfect storm" for the dramatic rise and adoption of unmanned systems by most militaries around the world. Perhaps the best proof of this has been the mass usage of drones by both sides of the Ukrainian conflict. Ranging from commercial quadcopters to HALE (high-altitude, long-endurance) military drones, these weapons are changing the face of warfare in a manner no less revolutionary than airplanes and tanks did during the First World War. Interestingly, as both the Russian military and the Kiev regime forces deploy advanced long-range air defenses (particularly the former), the role of larger drones has subsided, leaving smaller platforms as the more cost-effective alternative, while also providing significant tactical advantages.

Aside from circumventing advanced SAM (surface-to-air missile) systems, miniature drones offer an important upper hand in terms of first-strike capabilities and forward reconnaissance. Apart from Russia and the Kiev regime, the US-led political West is also taking this into account, especially when considering the fact that NATO's massive ISR (intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance) capabilities have been used to observe virtually every inch of the vast Ukrainian battlefields. Precisely this is pushing the belligerent alliance to equip the Neo-Nazi junta forces with the latest unmanned technologies, both as a way of providing its favorite puppet regime with weapons to counter the Russian military, as well as battle-testing the said drones against an advanced state adversary.

And while the Kiev regime's pompous announcements of an upcoming offensive may be dismissed as routine propaganda stunts, Russian intelligence found solid evidence that such weapons are being supplied to the Neo-Nazi junta. Needless to say, the political West sending advanced weapons to Kiev is hardly breaking news, but what's unusual is the participation of Taiwan. Apparently, China's breakaway island province is working directly with the US on developing and manufacturing the new unmanned systems. Another novelty in this particular case is the ostensible ability of these drones to autonomously coordinate their attacks and act as a swarm, or more precisely, "*swarms-of-swarms*", as the program's name clearly indicates.

The project, named AMASS (Autonomous Multi-Domain Adaptive Swarms-of-Swarms), is directly supervised by DARPA (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency), the Pentagon's top advanced weapons programs agency. In order to accomplish the task of controlling hundreds of drones simultaneously, the use of advanced artificial intelligence (AAI) is a given in this case. Considering that AAI is one of DARPA's main fields of study, its involvement in the project is effectively

guaranteed. Military experts estimate that several hundred kamikaze drones can function within one network, further connected to a much larger system that includes thousands of drones. DARPA's share in the project is by far the largest, although Taiwan seems to be providing key manufacturing facilities.

Back in early February, several media reports emerged that the AMASS project was fast-tracked by DARPA due to Pentagon's plans to create a "swarms-of-swarms" system that would "simultaneously counter multiple adversarial assets and enable warfighters to operate within the A2/AD [anti-access/area denial] environment". With Russia and China being the only countries with such capabilities, it's essentially guaranteed they are the primary targets. This is further reinforced by the involvement of the government in Taipei, which clearly aims to counter China's A2/AD "bubbles". These still represent an insurmountable obstacle against which the Taiwanese military is effectively powerless, both in terms of offensive and defensive capabilities.

However, before the possible deployment of AMASS in Taiwan, the system needs to be battle-tested in Ukraine. If it were to be proven effective, Washington DC and Taipei would certainly mass-produce it. Thus, it's extremely likely that the project was discussed by Russian and Chinese military delegates during President Xi Jinping's latest visit to Moscow, as it's in the interest of both to see the program fail. Otherwise, if it proves successful in Ukraine, the Chinese military itself would most certainly face it in Taiwan, endangering the success of a possible amphibious operation in case of a US-orchestrated escalation. And while China has advanced systems capable of countering such weapons (including its own drone swarms), the best possible defense is preventing their deployment altogether.

Nevertheless, with the Russian military poised to be the first to encounter weapons such as the AMASS, Moscow has already

started crucial upgrades to its air defense systems. Still, Russia's A2/AD, better known as "echeloned defense" in Russian military nomenclature, is only one segment of its (recently revised) strategy, with the so-called "active defense" being the key to neutralizing immediate threats. This includes adopting new offensive capabilities and precisely this could have been one of the main topics of behind-closed-doors talks about Sino-Russian technological cooperation, which almost certainly includes the exchange of information on drone swarms.

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# Ukrainian Government Deploys Armed Drones Against Separatists

*by Jason Melanovski, published on World Socialist Website, November 16, 2021*

Despite its obligations under the signed 2015 Minsk Accords peace agreement, the Ukrainian government is continuing to ramp up its military capabilities against Russian-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine. In late October, it deployed Turkish-made Bayraktar TB2 drones there for the first time ever.

In response to an ostensible shelling by separatists, Ukraine used the TB2 drone to destroy a Russian-made howitzer, provoking the deployment of Russian troops to the Ukrainian

border and the renewed risk of a full-scale war between Moscow and NATO-backed Kiev.

The attack in the separatist-controlled village of Hranitne, which was reported on favorably by the *New York Times* on Tuesday, is another demonstration that the government of President Volodymyr Zelensky is committed to a policy of escalation as it seeks to reintegrate the breakaway provinces of Lugansk and Donetsk in eastern Ukraine.

For the past year the Ukrainian ruling class has sought to deepen military ties with the Turkish government, with both powers seeking to diminish Russian naval control over the strategic Black Sea region. The Ukrainian government offered Ankara advanced missile technology and in exchange received the coveted Turkish-made armed aerial drones.

Drones played a pivotal role in Azerbaijan's defeat of Russian-backed Armenia last year in the Nagorno-Karabakh war, and the Ukrainian oligarchy quickly became enamored with their potential use against its own Russian-backed separatists.

Kiev received the first shipment of drones in July and plans to purchase approximately 50 of the TB2 drones. In September, the two sides signed a memorandum to create a joint drone training and maintenance center in Ukraine.

Russia has predictably reacted with hostility to the use of drones in Ukraine, which could spark a new wave of targeted bombings and assassinations by Kiev in the more than seven-year-long war that has claimed the lives of over 14,000.

Speaking Saturday on Russian state television about drones and Ukraine, President Vladimir Putin accused the Zelensky government of violating the 2015 Minsk accords, which specifically ban the use of aerial weapons:

*"Now the current president cheerfully reports they're using Bayraktars, that is, unmanned aerial vehicles. Europe said*

*something incomprehensible and the US even supported it and officials in Ukraine openly say that they used them and will use them further.”*

With Russian troops now amassed across its northern border in response to its drone use, the Zelensky government has continued to duplicitously depict Russia as the aggressor while domestically preparing for war and refusing to abide by the 2015 Minsk peace accords that call for a cease fire, free elections, and a special federated status for the breakaway provinces.

Speaking of the reported Russian troop buildup, Zelensky hypocritically stated via a recorded video speech,

*“I hope the whole world can now clearly see who really wants peace and who is concentrating nearly 100,000 soldiers at our border.”*

In reality, the right-wing government of Zelensky, which originally came to power thanks to mass opposition to the militaristic, nationalist policies of former President Petro Poroshenko, has taken increasingly reckless actions in order to provoke Russia and gain military and economic support from its imperialist backers, namely the United States, France and Germany.

In March of this year, Zelensky and the country's National Security and Defense Council provocatively approved a strategy that is aimed at retaking Crimea and reintegrating the strategically important peninsula. This step ultimately led to a similar Russian troop buildup along the border last spring, although Moscow later withdrew its forces.

In addition to the purchase of Turkish drones, Zelensky's foreign policy since that time has only increased the risk of all-out war between the two countries.

Following the pull-back of Russian forces, the Zelensky government spent the summer begging for NATO membership and held a number of joint military and naval drills that were openly directed against Russia.

In August, the Zelensky government held its inaugural *"Crimea Platform"* summit, which brought together its imperialist backers in Kiev. Zelensky took photos with world leaders and declared *"Crimea is Ukraine."*

In response, the Russian government openly declared its opposition to Ukraine's NATO accession, stating,

*"President Putin has repeatedly noted the issue of the potential broadening of NATO infrastructure on Ukrainian territory, and (he) has said this would cross those red lines that he has spoken about before."*

NATO's major powers have recklessly backed Kiev's escalation. On Monday, French President Emmanuel Macron warned Putin via a phone conversation that he would be prepared to defend Ukraine in case of war between the two countries.

*"Our willingness to defend Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity was reiterated by the president,"* a French adviser to Macron told reporters regarding the phone call between the leaders of the two nuclear-armed countries.

The US has sent a missile destroyer, the tanker USNS John Lenthall and the staff ship USS Mount Whitney, to participate in the US Joint Forces Command Europe military drills in the Black Sea.

This past Sunday, the British press reported that the UK was preparing to send 600 troops to Ukraine.

Ukraine itself has deployed 8,500 troops to its side of the border with Russia and announced that parts of its naval fleet would move from the Black Sea to the Sea of Azov, whose waters

are claimed by Russia.

The tensions between Moscow and Kiev are escalating as the conflict between neighboring Poland and Belarus escalates over a refugee crisis in which thousands of desperate migrants seeking safe harbor in the EU have been trapped at the border and brutalized by Polish forces. Russia, which is allied to Belarus' government, is accused of playing a central role in orchestrating the crisis.