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Nvidia CEO Downplays China Military Risk, Blasts U.S. Export Rules

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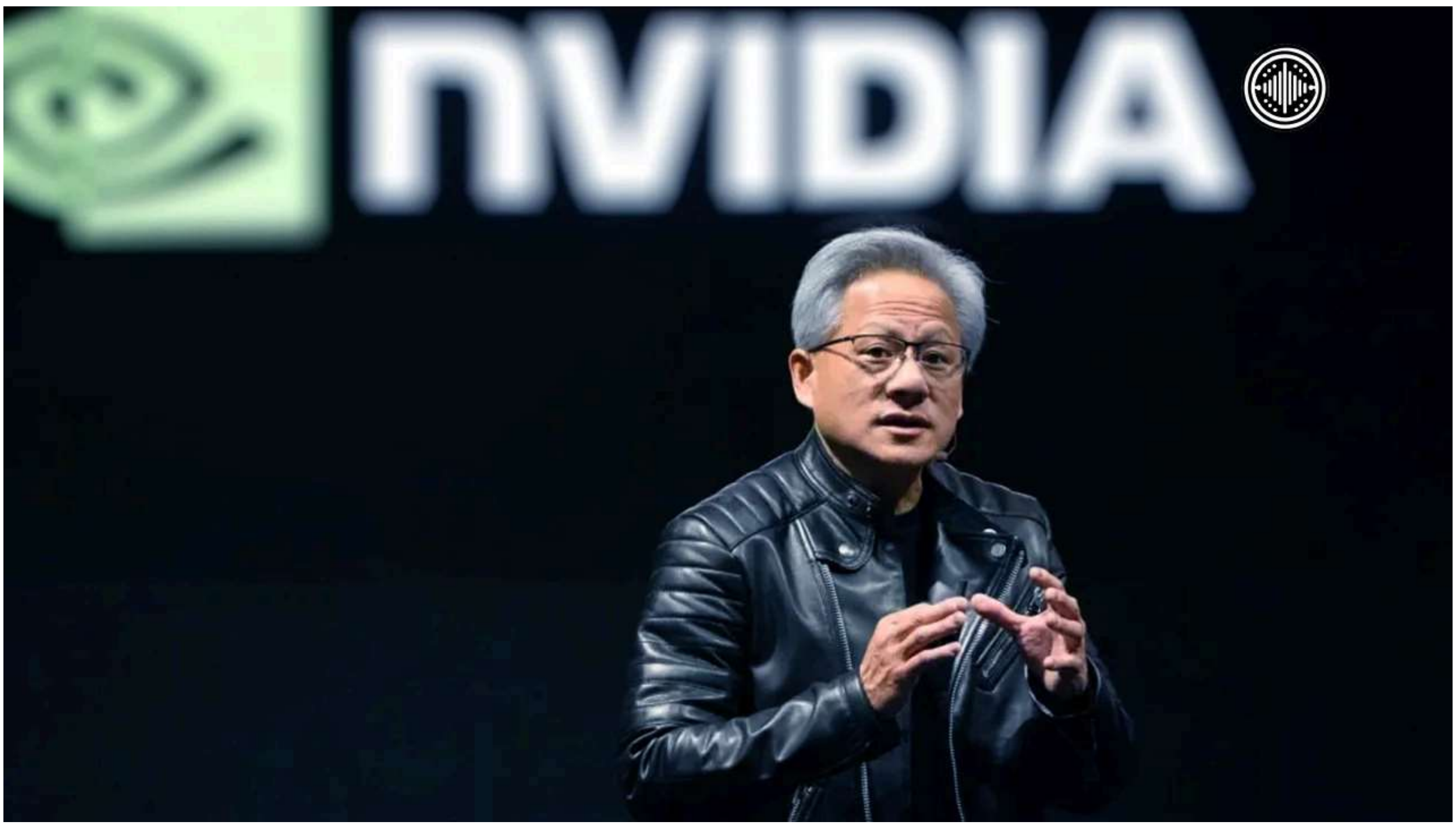

Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang says he isn’t concerned about China’s military acquiring his company’s advanced artificial intelligence (AI) chips. He points out that Beijing can’t depend on American technology due to tightening U.S. export restrictions.

While sharply critical of Washington’s policy stance, Huang made it clear that Nvidia intends to stay in the Chinese market legally and strategically.

In an interview with *CNN* aired Sunday, Huang dismissed fears that China's defense sector could use his chips. "They simply can't rely on it," he said, explaining that U.S. restrictions make American tech an unstable foundation for any military project. Since access could be cut off at any moment, he argued, China has little incentive to build its systems around Nvidia products.

His remarks came just days before his second visit to China this year, signaling that Nvidia still prioritizes regional commercial ties despite mounting pressure from U.S. lawmakers and national security officials. The company is trying to walk a careful line, balancing its global leadership in AI hardware with the political realities of doing business with a major geopolitical rival.

Tightrope Strategy

The administration has continued to tighten restrictions on AI chip exports to China, aiming to curb Beijing's access to cutting-edge American technology. These policies have blocked companies like Nvidia from selling their most advanced AI chips to Chinese customers. However, Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang has long opposed these measures, calling them "counterproductive" and warning that they could undermine the United States' global tech leadership.

"We want the American tech stack to be the global standard," Huang said, but warned that achieving that goal requires engaging with developers worldwide, including those in China. "Half of the world's AI developers are in China," he noted, pointing out that cutting off those engineers only risks pushing them toward alternative, non-American platforms.

The fallout from these policies is already being felt. After the U.S. rolled out fresh restrictions in April, Huang revealed Nvidia had lost nearly 50% of its market share in China by May. Still, instead of backing away, Nvidia is building new chips that comply with current export rules, aiming to maintain a presence in China without violating U.S. law.

Even so, not everyone is convinced that China wouldn't use Nvidia's products for military purposes. Daniel Newman, CEO of The Futurum Group, told *CNN* that Huang is pressured to keep U.S. officials and Chinese customers happy. "He's walking a tightrope," Newman said. "But it's hard to believe Nvidia's tech couldn't be used for military applications in China."

There's some evidence to support that skepticism. A U.S. official told *Reuters* last month that Chinese startup DeepSeek, which has ties to Beijing's defense and intelligence networks, trained its AI language models using Nvidia chips. Huang addressed the issue during the interview, acknowledging the concern but downplaying any immediate threat. He described DeepSeek's open-source R1 model as "revolutionary" and said access to such tools helps level the playing field for smaller players in the AI race.

Huang concluded the interview by offering a broader perspective on U.S.-China relations. "The fact of the matter is, we're competitors, but we're also highly interdependent," he said. We can compete, we can both try to win, and still respect each other while doing it."