

Taiwan Affairs Office Statement

May 17, 2004

At present, the relations across the Taiwan Straits are severely tested. To put a resolute check on the "Taiwan independence" activities aimed at dismembering China, and to safeguard peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits are the most pressing tasks before the compatriots on both sides of the Straits.

Four years ago, Chen Shui-bian pledged himself to the so-called "five no's" policy. His track record, however, was one of broken promises and bad faith. He said he would not declare "independence", but he has mustered together all kinds of separatists for "Taiwan independence" activities. He said he would not change Taiwan's so-called "national title", but he has incessantly clamored for "rectification of Taiwan's name" and "desinification" in Taiwan. He said he would not push for the inclusion of the so-called "state-to-state" description in the constitution, but he has dished out a separatist proposition of "one country on each side". He said he would not promote "referendum to change the status quo in regard to the question of independence or unification", but he has tried every possible means to promote "Taiwan independence" by way of referendum. He said there was no question of abolishing the "National Unification Council" and the "National Unification Guidelines", but he has long since shelved them, letting them exist only in name. What's more, Chen Shui-bian has left Taiwan society deeply torn with his vicious mischaracterization of the popular will of the Taiwan people, his unbridled instigation of hostility and animosity towards the mainland, and his frenzied provocation to the status quo that both the mainland and Taiwan belong to the one and same China. He has even put out a timetable to move the island to independence through the making of a new constitution, thus pushing the cross-Straits relations to the brink of danger.

"Taiwan independence" does not lead to peace, nor national dismemberment to stability. We will never compromise on the one-China principle, never give up our efforts for peace negotiations, never falter in our sincere pursuit of peace and development on both sides of the Straits with our Taiwan compatriots, never waver in our resolve to safeguard China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and never put up with "Taiwan independence".

No matter who holds power in Taiwan in the next four years, as long as they recognize that there is only one China in the world and both the mainland and Taiwan belong to that one and same China, abandon the "Taiwan Independence" stance and stop the separatist activities, then, cross-Straits relations can hold out a bright prospect of peace, stability and development along the following lines:

-- Resumption of cross-Straits dialogue and negotiations, formal ending of the state of hostility through equal-footed consultations, establishing a mechanism of mutual trust in military field, and jointly building a framework for peaceful, stable and growing cross-Straits relations.

- Maintaining close links in an appropriate manner between the two sides of the Straits so as to address the problems in cross-Straits relations through timely consultations.
- Realizing comprehensive, direct and two-way "three links" so as to facilitate commerce, trade, exchanges, travel, tourism and other activities by compatriots on both sides.
- Establishing closer economic cooperation arrangement on the basis of reciprocity and mutual benefit. Taiwan can optimize its industrial structure and upgrade its enterprise competitiveness in the course of cross-Straits economic exchanges and cooperation and join the mainland in meeting the challenges of economic globalization and regional integration. Taiwan can also acquire greater market access on the mainland for its agricultural products.
- Increasing exchanges between the compatriots on the two sides of the Straits in the interest of removing misunderstanding, enhancing mutual trust and building common ground.
- The Taiwan compatriots can realize their aspirations for cross-Straits peace, social stability and economic prosperity while enjoying harmony and tranquility in cross-Straits ties.
- Properly addressing, through consultations, the issue of international living space of the Taiwan region commensurate with its status so as to share the dignity of the Chinese nation.

If, however, the Taiwan leaders should cling to their "Taiwan independence" position and their separatist "one country on each side" stance, the afore-mentioned prospect will not come true. What is more, hopes for peace, stability, mutual benefit and a win-win scenario in cross-Straits relations will evaporate.

The Taiwan leaders have before them two roads: one is to pull back immediately from their dangerous lurch towards independence, recognizing that both sides of the Taiwan Straits belong to the one and same China and dedicating their efforts to closer cross-Straits relations. The other is to keep following their separatist agenda to cut Taiwan from the rest of China and, in the end, meet their own destruction by playing with fire. The Taiwan leaders must choose between such two roads. The Chinese people are not afraid of ghosts, nor will they be intimidated by brutal force. To the Chinese people, nothing is more important and more sacred than safeguarding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of their country. We will do our utmost with the maximum sincerity to strive for the prospect of peaceful reunification of the motherland. However, if Taiwan leaders should move recklessly to provoke major incidents of "Taiwan independence", the Chinese people will crush their schemes firmly and thoroughly at any cost.