

Renouncing hostility, jointly creating prosperity and peace across the Taiwan Strait

Remarks by Minister Chiu Tai-san of the Mainland Affairs Council of the Republic of China (Taiwan) at the International Conference on Chinese Political, Economic, and Social Dynamics under the CCP

October 29, 2021

Chairman Ding and Secretary General Yang of the Chinese Council of Advanced Policy Studies (CAPS); Professor Huang; Distinguished scholars and experts; Ladies and gentlemen: Good morning!

I am deeply honored to attend today's symposium. This event offers a timely opportunity to discuss developments in mainland China and relations across the Taiwan Strait.

1. The CCP's increasingly harsh rule runs counter to people's democracy

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the socialism it espouses are at odds with the global system of democratic governance, both ideologically and philosophically. In recent years, the CCP has further centralized its power structure and decision-making process, demanded even more from party cadres, and resorted to nationalistic appeals to win public support for its one-party dictatorship and rise as a modern power. Furthermore, in order to effectively identify any potential threats to the regime, the party machinery has employed highly suppressive surveillance and control mechanisms without checks and balances. This has resulted in a severe lack of transparency; discouraged local governments from developing autonomous initiatives in political, economic, and social governance; and denied people and organizations the right to political participation and freedom of speech. Underscoring the CCP's intense concern for stability, these measures are indeed a far cry from the principles of people's democracy.

2. The CCP's high-handed expansion of influence poses a threat to the global democratic order

In recent years, the CCP has intensified its efforts to advocate the advantages of its party-state system and to export its "Chinese development model" to the world. At the

same time, it has actively built up military strength, expanded the extraterritorial application of its laws and regulations, sought influential positions in international organizations to serve its own interests, and repeatedly resorted to economic sanctions and strong-arm tactics to compel other countries to adjust their positions. The CCP thereby aims to change the international order and create a strategic environment favorable to Beijing. The CCP's high-handed expansion of influence has involved political and economic penetration and tilted the regional balance. Global democracies have closely monitored the CCP's actions and have taken joint measures in response.

3. Cross-strait disputes require both sides to engage in dialogue on the basis of parity

“The Republic of China and People’s Republic of China should not be subordinate to each other.” This is an indisputable fact and has been the cross-strait status quo for 72 years. The 23 million people of the Republic of China on Taiwan are determined to safeguard their nation’s sovereignty and democratic way of life. Beijing’s approach of political and military intimidation has never led to solutions to cross-strait political disputes. Unilateral actions and erroneous thinking have caused Beijing to be trapped in a contradiction of “peace” and “war”. We believe that the only way for the two sides to resolve disputes and adopt a forward-looking approach is rationally and pragmatically recognizing the parity between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait, upholding democracy and parity, and engaging in peaceful dialogue.

4. Conclusion: Beijing should renounce hostility and work with Taiwan to advance people’s prosperity and well-being across the Taiwan Strait

It is often said that “a just cause enjoys abundant support while an unjust one finds little.” Taiwan is force for good in the world and has received robust support from many like-minded countries. For more than five years, the Taiwan government has maintained a consistent position on cross-strait relations and pragmatically dealt with related issues by neither bowing to pressure nor acting rashly.

In the future, Taiwan will continue to do its utmost to make meaningful contributions to the security and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region. We will also further strengthen our democracy, consolidate domestic consensus, enhance our overall competitiveness, and deepen international cooperation to ensure our survival and development. We will never allow anyone to threaten or infringe our sovereignty, dignity, democracy, and freedom.

The two sides of the Taiwan Strait are separated by only a narrow body of water, and our people are in close contact with each other. I would like to take this opportunity to make four appeals:

- (1) We hope that, in its pursuit of modernization and overall strength, mainland China will not only seek common prosperity economically, but also share power with the people, promote democratic reforms, and progressively institutionalize the transfer of power, so that real power is vested in the people.
- (2) The Beijing authorities must realize that the four commitments made by President Tsai Ing-wen are the mainstream public opinion and bottom line of Taiwan. Given the fact that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait differ in their institutions and values, they need to pragmatically deal with issues of mutual concern through dialogue on an equal footing.
- (3) Our commitments remain unchanged. We hope the other side will soon renounce hostility and embrace peace as guiding principles so that together we can improve cross-strait relations.
- (4) Both sides of the Taiwan Strait should promote healthy exchanges to build mutual understanding and mutual trust. Taiwan is considering a gradual easing of controls on cross-strait exchanges after the COVID-19 pandemic abates. We are also proposing that government authorities on the two sides interact and communicate on related matters to safeguard the well-being of the people.

Finally, I wish today's symposium every success and wish you all good health and happiness. Thank you!