



# Taiwan Communiqué

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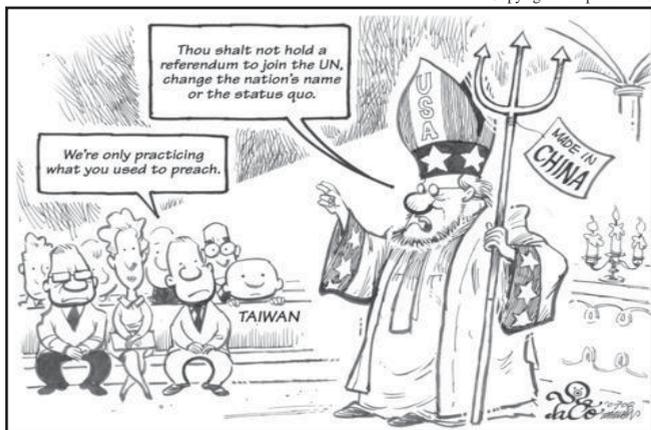
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## Why the UN referendum is necessary *Countering Beijing's relentless pressure*

During the past few weeks, the debate on Taiwan's proposed referendum on membership in the United Nations has become an international debate. Some observers, like Mr. Xavier Solana, the European High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, expressed his "concern", and others, like the US representative in Taiwan, Mr. Steve Young, said that it "undermines trust." In response, let us outline why the referendum is necessary. There are three reasons to go ahead:

First, the referendum is necessary in order to let the international community know that the Taiwanese people have no intention of letting themselves be subdued by an authoritarian regime in Beijing. All too often Taiwan is told "not to rock the boat", and that such a referendum is "provocative." These comments lack any sense of balance: Taiwan is not threatening China in any way – except perhaps by being a democratic "David" next to an authoritarian "Goliath." It is *China* that is acting provocatively by building up its missiles and military power.

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**Bishop USA:** "Thou shalt *not* hold a referendum to join the UN, change the nation's name or the status quo."

**Taiwan congregation:** "We're only practicing what you used to preach."

Second, the referendum is necessary to let the world know that the Taiwanese people want their country to be a full and equal member in the international community. Because of an unfortunate fluke in its history – the occupation by the Kuomintang, the losing side in the Chinese Civil War – Taiwan became an isolated outcast in the international community. Since the transition to democracy in the late 1980s / early 1990s it has tried hard to find ways to join the international community – only to be met by resistance from China and shrugs from the US and Western Europe — who officially profess to support democracy and human rights.

The referendum is not – as some outside observers try to imply – a political gimmick designed to garner votes for the DPP in the upcoming presidential elections. It is a key element in Taiwan’s quest for international acceptance, and it will put the Taiwanese on record as wanting to end the international isolation imposed on them by the faulty "One China" policy of the West. Taiwan’s democracy may be an “inconvenient truth”, but it would behoove the West to come to terms with it and work to correct the wrongs of the 1970s.

Third, the referendum is necessary to counter the PRC’s relentless pressure to isolate Taiwan and push it into a corner. The PRC’s strategy is designed to place Taiwan before a *fait accompli* by isolating the island politically and economically through a combination of military threats and intimidations, and by making the international community believe that this is an “internal affair.”

## ***Concern about Mr. Solana’s concern***

On 25 October 2007, Mr. Xavier Solana, the EU high representative common foreign and security policy, issued a statement that he was “*concerned by Taiwanese leaders comments on Taiwan’s application for UN membership.*” He reiterated that the fundamental position of the EU is that “*the Taiwan question must be solved peacefully through cross Strait negotiations between all concerned parties.*”

The statement said that the EU “*supports and shares Taiwan’s democratic values*”, but then went on to criticize the UN referendum, saying it “*might raise tension across the Strait*”, and “*risks making it harder for Taiwan to enjoy the pragmatic participation – which we support – in activities of specialized multi-lateral fora, where there are clear public interests for this and where statehood is not required.*”

**Taiwan Communiqué comment:** *Mr. Solana's remarks calls for a rebuttal. Let us try to summarize it along the following lines:*

- \* *By expressing criticism of the referendum while not saying anything specifically about China's military threat, Mr. Solana is showing a confounding lack of balance and proportion.*
- \* *Saying that the Taiwan question must be "solved peacefully through cross Strait negotiations between all concerned parties" may be a nice slogan, but it totally ignores the reality on the ground that Taiwan is a small democracy and China a big authoritarian bully, threatening Taiwan with military force.*
- \* *The tension across the Strait is not created by Taiwan's exercise of democracy in its quest for international recognition: it is caused by China's failure to accept Taiwan as a friendly neighbor.*
- \* *Mr. Solana speaks of EU support for "pragmatic participation in activities of specialized multilateral fora ...". Two questions: a) Taiwan has been trying this line for the past 10 years without any success. Where was EU support during that period? b) by restricting his support to organizations "where statehood is not a requirement", Mr. Solana seems to have made a determination of whether Taiwan is a state or not. This is not for him to decide but clearly enunciated in the 1933 Montevideo Convention (see "Is Taiwan a nation-state?", *Taiwan Communiqué* no. 111, December 2006).*

## ***US opposition is undermining trust in the US***

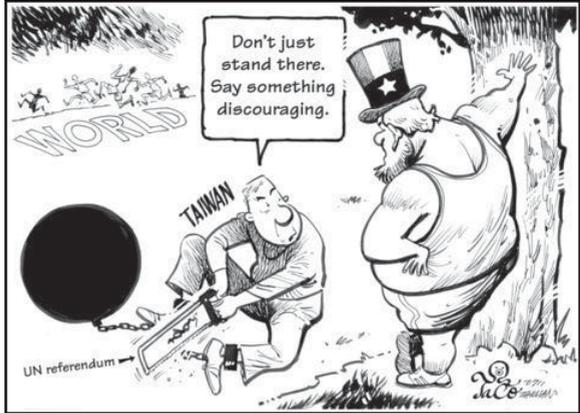
In a press conference in Taipei on 9 November 2007, the Director of the American Institute in Taiwan Mr. Stephen Young stated that the referendum to enter the UN is "*neither necessary nor helpful*", and that "*there is a price to be paid in mutual trust.*"

In a letter to Mr. Young dated 14 November 2007, the Formosan Association for Public Affairs expressed strong disagreement with Mr. Young's statements. In the letter, the Association outlined why the referendum is necessary, and said:

***"Yes, there is a price to be paid, but this price is the fact that US opposition to the referendum is severely undermining international trust in the US government's resolve to stand up for human rights and democracy in the world (emphasis added). Your statements, and those of other US government officials, are also undermining democracy in our homeland. We find this totally unacceptable."***

**Taiwan Communiqué comment:** *If the United States is serious about spreading democracy around the world, it needs to be supportive of – and nurture – those countries that have attained democracy through the hard work of their citizens. Taiwan is such a country, and if the US wants to maintain peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, it needs to show resolve in support of the island’s young and fragile democracy.*

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*Taiwan is not threatening China in any way: the Taiwan government has emphasized time and again that it wants the country to live in peace with all its neighbors, including China. However, China is building up its armed forces with the specific aim of attacking Taiwan, and is threatening Taiwan with 980+ missiles. In questioning the UN referendum, the US is sending the wrong signals and is giving China a carte blanche in threatening Taiwan with military might.*

**Taiwan -- trying to use the "UN referendum saw" to free itself from its "isolation iron ball" -- to the US: "Don't just stand there, say something discouraging."**

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## The “One China” policy: back to the basics

*By Gerrit van der Wees. Editor, Taiwan Communiqué. This article was first published in the Taipei Times on November 18<sup>th</sup> 2007. Reprinted with permission.*

Much has been written about the “One China” policy, what it is – and isn’t. One hears arguments that it has contributed to peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, and that it should therefore not be changed.

However, when asked, government officials are hard-pressed to give a precise definition. Assistant Secretary for East Asia and the Pacific James Kelly in an April 2004 hearing before the House International Relations Committee stated:

*“When it comes to our One China [policy], I did not really define it. I’m not sure I very easily could define it. However, I can tell you what it is not. It is not the One China policy or principle that Beijing suggests, and it may not be the definition that some would have in Taiwan.”*

When asked what US policy towards Taiwan is, State Department Spokesmen these days generally recite a mantra along the following lines: *“We have a One China policy in accordance with the Three Communiqués and the Taiwan Relations Act.”*

While the Kelly quote makes the very essential distinction between the US “One China” **policy** and the PRC’s “One China” **principle** (a distinction often lost on many policymakers – and many in the news media — in Washington), the State Department’s mantra glosses over some essential differences among the Communiqués themselves, and between the Communiqués as a group and the Taiwan Relations Act.

Also, over time, additional elements have been added, making the policy increasingly anachronistic. In order to recapture the essence of the difference between the original policy and the present unwieldy concoction, one needs to go back the basics — to the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the present policy came into being.

At that time, there were two governments claiming to be the real government of China: the Kuomintang authorities in Taipei, who had come over from China after its 1949 defeat, and Mao Tse-tung’s Communist PRC government, which had won the Civil War in 1949 (which had raged off and on from 1924 onwards).

The Nixon/Kissinger opening to China resulted in a shift of recognition “as government of China” from the KMT authorities to the CCP authorities. “One China” in those days thus meant that we only recognized one government as the government of China, and not two.

On Taiwan’s status, the basic position taken by the US and other Western nations was that these nations “acknowledged” or “took note” of the Chinese position, but did not take that position themselves. It was emphasized time and again by US officials and officials of other nations that the issue needed to be “resolved peacefully”, and some added: “with the consent/assent” of the people on the island.

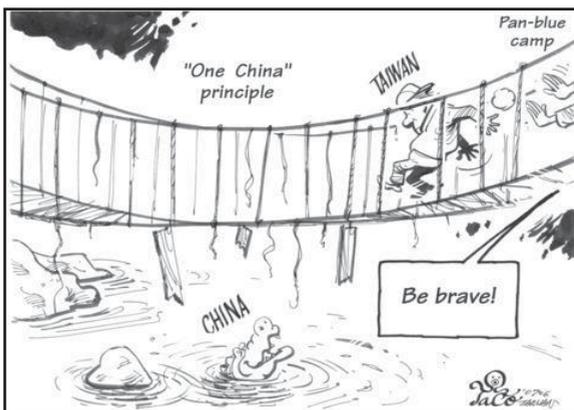
This position taken by the US and Western Europe was an extension of the decisions of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, when Japan ceded sovereignty over Taiwan. At the time, most representatives emphasized that the future status of the island needed to be

determined “in accord with the Purposes and Principles as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.” In 1951-52, this clearly meant self-determination and independence.

Thus, from 1979 through the mid-1990s, US policy towards Taiwan was indeed based on the Three Communiqués and the Taiwan Relations Act, but was captured by one phrase: “peaceful resolution.” The US was agnostic to the future status of the island: it neither supported nor opposed independence, and neither supported nor opposed unification. It was simply insisting on a peaceful process.

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However, in the mid-1990s a shift took place, which culminated in President Clinton’s “Three Noes” during his June 1998 visit to China: *No support for a one-China, one-Taiwan or a two-China policy. No support for Taiwan independence, and no support Taiwanese membership in organizations that require statehood.*



**Taiwan being edged on by the pan-blue camp to cross the dilapidated "One China" principle bridge.**

Needless to say this constituted a dramatic shift as compared to the previous policy. Congress went on record as strongly disagreeing with Mr. Clinton: on July 10<sup>th</sup>, 1998, the Senate passed the Resolution 107 (Lott, Torricelli) by a vote of 92-0, while on July 20<sup>th</sup> 1998, the House passed Resolution 301 by an overwhelming vote of 390 to one (1). In a major editorial, the **Washington Post** commented: “Mr. Clinton’s statements are ...what China wants to hear”, and that it did constitute a change of policy, “...and not for the better.” (*Siding with the dictators*”, Washington Post, 2 July 1998).

Still, in spite of Congressional opposition and strong criticism in the news media, Mr. Clinton’s statement became part and parcel of the US policy mantra, and remain so to this day.

We thus have a confusing policy, subject to a variety of interpretations. And even the basic premise – that it has contributed to peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait – must

be questioned: if it had been successful in doing so, why then is the Taiwan Strait still such a major flashpoint. If it was a “successful” policy, wouldn’t the problem have been resolved by now?

The most important issue though, is that the situation on the ground has changed: “Taiwan” has changed from being ruled by an authoritarian regime claiming sovereignty over China, to a free and democratic nation ruled by a democratic government elected by the people on the island.

Through an unfortunate fluke in its history – occupation by the Chinese Nationalists after World War II — the people of the island still see the future of their country being held hostage by a Civil War in which they had no part.

Taiwan is now a free and democratic nation, and if our basic principles of human rights and democracy are worth their salt, then the US and Europe need to ensure that the people on the island are truly free to determine their own future. Support for the island’s referendum to enter the UN under the name “Taiwan” would be a good start.

If the US and Western Europe allows Goliath China to dictate its terms on the “David of the Far East” Taiwan (quote from the Haaretz, Jerusalem), then they are acquiescing in the perpetuation of coercive *realpolitik* over basic principles.

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## **Taiwan’s elections heating up**

Important elections are coming up in Taiwan in early 2008. On 12 January elections will be held for the new Legislative Yuan, which will have 113 seats instead of the 225 of the present legislature. On 22 March voters will go to the polls to elect a new president, who will take office on 20 May 2008. On the following pages we present some observations and insights.

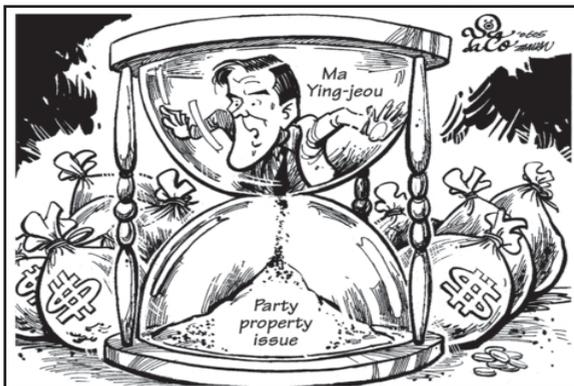
### ***Legislative elections: all politics is local***

The upcoming legislative election on 12 January 2008 will be the first election since the 2005 restructuring of the Legislative Yuan, when it was decided to halve the number of seats from 225 to 113 and to change from a multi-seat districts system to a single-seat system similar to the one in the UK.

Of the 113 seats, 73 will be for single seat districts, six are reserved for aborigine representatives, while the remaining 34 “at-large seats” will be apportioned to the various parties on the basis of the percentage of the votes they receive in the party ballot (a lower threshold of 5% applies here).

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The internal nomination processes for both the district and the at-large seats has been going on within the four main parties since May 2007. The competition for the “at-large” seats is especially heated, since nomination for a “safe” seat generally guarantees the candidate a position, while the district seats have to be vigorously fought over until the last minute.



**The issue of return of the Kuomintang's stolen assets will be one of the referendums to be held in January.**

In the beginning of November 2007, both parties announced their candidates for the at-large seats. On November 10th, the Kuomintang announced a list of 34 candidates, mostly incumbent legislators, such as legislative Speaker Wang Jin-pyng, who headed the list. However, there were also surprises: one was the inclusion within the 18 “safe” seats of KMT legislator Chiu Yi, who was arrested and sentenced to 14 months imprisonment for inciting violent demonstrations in front of the Kaohsiung District Court following the 2004 presidential elections.

The other surprise was the exclusion from the list of Dr. Chi-hsien “Steve” Chan, a key aide to Mr. Ma Ying-jeou. Dr. Chan served as dean of the Chi Mei Medical Center in Tainan, where President Chen and Vice-President Lu were treated after the botched assassination attempt on 19 March 2004. Some elements in the KMT apparently held it against Dr. Chan that his Institute treated the wounded President and Vice-President.

The DPP kicked off its legislative campaign on 17 November with a large-scale rally in Kaohsiung. It intends to hold a total of 50 rallies around the country, one in each district where the DPP does have a candidate. The rally drew DPP heavyweights such as President Chen, DPP presidential candidate Frank Hsieh, former DPP Chairman Yu Shyi-kun, and Kaohsiung mayor Chen Chu, who had just won a court appeal confirming her victory in last year’s mayoral elections.

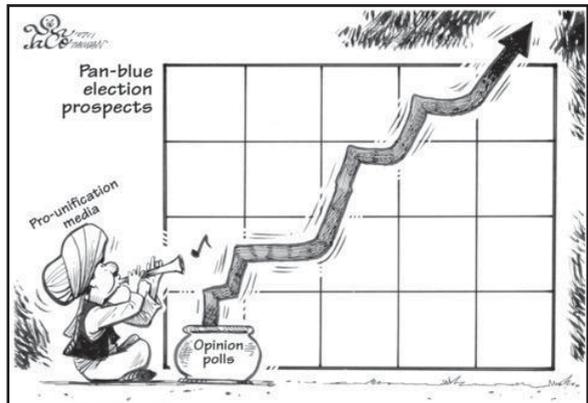
In the meantime, the smaller parties do have a tough time: the single-seat system make it much harder for them to win “district” seats, so they are focusing on winning enough seats in the “at large” election. On 19 November, the Taiwan Solidarity Union – plagued by severe internal battles and defections to the DPP – announced its candidates, indicating it would need at least 10% of the vote to garner 4 at large seats. In the present 225 seat legislature, the TSU has 12 seats.

## *Presidential elections: Hsieh and Ma battling it out*

In the meantime, the two presidential candidates – the DPP’s Frank Hsieh and the KMT’s Ma Ying-jeou – and their respective running mates Su Tseng-chang and Vincent Siew – are battling it out at the national level. The main issues continue to be national identity, the island’s future, and Taiwan’s relations with China.

Mr. Hsieh emphasizes identification with — and allegiance to — “Taiwan”, while Mr. Ma (who was born in Hong Kong and whose family came to the island in 1949 with Chiang Kai-shek) clings to the concept that the “Republic of China” represents China. Ma supports “eventual unification” with the PRC under the “One China” heading, and favors opening up to China economically, especially through the “Three Links.” However, both emphasize that Taiwan is a sovereign nation (albeit under different names) and favor membership in international organizations such as the United Nations.

Getting a good feel for how the race is really going is difficult in view of the fact that opinion polls by the “pan-blue” media such as the **China Times** or **United Daily News** generally grossly under-represent the support for the “pan-green” parties – DPP and associated TSU. An example is a recent poll published in the *China Times* in the third week of November: it gave Mr. Ma an edge over Mr. Hsieh, 39 to 22%.



**Opinion polls in the pan-blue media**

**Taiwan Communiqué comment:** Experience from past elections shows that in such cases the so-called “1.85 factor” has to be applied: multiply the percentage given to a DPP candidate in a “pan-blue” poll by 1.85 and one gets the real number: in the present case that would mean that with  $1.85 \times 22 = 40.7\%$  Mr. Frank Hsieh would win over Mr. Ma with a margin of between 1 and 2%.

## Referendum: in “single step” or “two steps”?

In the upcoming elections, there will be two sets of referendums: the 12 January 2008 legislative elections will be accompanied by two referendums, one sponsored by the DPP on the topic of retrieving the stolen assets amassed by the Kuomintang during its four decades of martial law, and one sponsored by the KMT giving the legislature the power to investigate high officials such as the president for corruption.

The 22 March 2008 presidential election will also be accompanied by two referendums, one sponsored by the DPP asking the voters if they support Taiwan’s membership in the United Nations under the name “Taiwan”; a second one sponsored by the Kuomintang, asking if voters support “returning” to the UN under the name “Republic of China.”

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During the past few months, the two UN referendums have been going through the required procedures: a first stage in which at least 0.5% of eligible voters (approx. 82,500 signatories) must sign a petition — this threshold was achieved by both referendums in August 2007, after which the independent Referendum Review Commission gave the green light for the following phase. At present the



The Central Election Commission's "One-step-voting" wagon being blocked by local pan-blue donkeys.

two referendums are going through this second phase in which signatures of at least 5% of the voters (approx. 825,000 signatories) must be collected before the respective referendum can be put on the ballot. By mid-November the DPP referendum had

achieved some 2.7 million signatures, while the Kuomintang referendum garnered approximately 1.5 million.

By mid-November the discussion on the substance of the referendums also became overshadowed by the *procedure* at the ballot box: on 16 November 2007 the Central Election Commission – an impartial body in charge of conducting the elections – decided to follow a “single step” procedure by which voters would get the ballots for the legislative election and the ballots for the two referendums at the same time, and drop them in different boxes. It argued that this would be the most simple and streamlined procedure. A decision on the procedure for the ballots in the presidential election would be made after mid January on the basis of the experience in the legislative elections.

However, eighteen Kuomintang heads of cities and counties announced that they refused to follow this procedure, and would follow a “two step” procedure instead, whereby the voters would have to go to different tables or even different locations to collect the referendum ballots and vote. The refusal of the local offices to implement the procedures agreed to by the CEC led to a vicious tug-of-war between the DPP government and the KMT local offices, with the central government threatening legal action against any officials who were defying the rules established by the CEC. The controversy was still ongoing as this issue of *Taiwan Communiqué* went to press.

The DPP emphasizes that the single-step process guarantees a secret ballot, involves lowest costs and would enhance the speed and convenience of the voting process. It is also concerned that separate tables or locations for the referendum vote would enable KMT followers to harass voters, derail the referendum process, and draw attention away from the original issues.

Under Taiwan law, a turnout of 50% of the *registered* voters is necessary for a referendum to be valid. In the 2004 presidential elections, the referendum on Taiwan’s defense against China’s missiles just barely missed this threshold, and – in spite of the fact that some 95% of the voters voted in favor – was declared invalid.

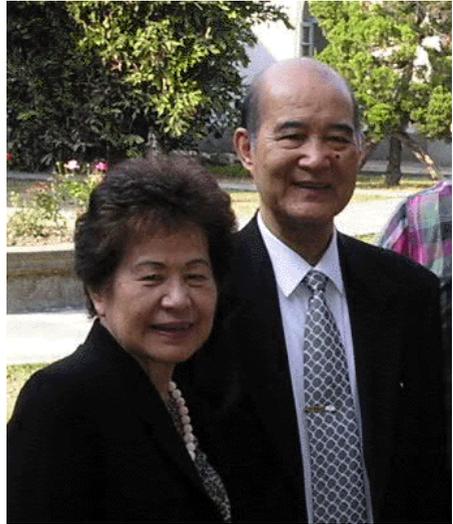
## The Presbyterian Church commemorates *1977 Human Rights Declaration*

In early December 2007, the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan is commemorating “A Declaration on Human Rights” it issued in 1977. The document called on then-President Carter to “*uphold the principles of human rights while pursuing the “normalisation of relationships with Communist China” and to insist on guaranteeing the security, independence, and freedom of the people of Taiwan.*”

Photo: Taiwan Communiqué

The document was part of a series of statements made by the Church in the 1970s, which included the “*Statement on our national fate*” on 19 December 1971 and “*Our appeal*” on 18 November 1975. The Church was the only institution in Taiwan at the time that had the courage to express support for human rights, democracy and Taiwan’s self-determination.

The Kuomintang government of Chiang Kai-shek still enforced martial law at the time, and did not tolerate such dissent: it stepped up its restrictions on the activities of the church, and expelled foreign missionaries who assisted in the drafting of these statements.



**Rev. and Mrs. Kao Chun-ming at the  
Tainan Theological Seminary**

Reverend Kao Chun-ming, who served as Secretary-General of the Presbyterian Church at the time, will attend the commemorations. In 1980, he was arrested by the KMT authorities for helping to shelter Mr. Shih Ming-teh, a key figure in organizing the December 1979 Kaohsiung Human Rights Day celebration, which led to the arrest and imprisonment of virtually all leaders of the *tangwai* democratic opposition. This *tangwai* (“outside-the-party”) eventually grew into the Democratic Progressive Party, which became the ruling party in 2000.

Below we present the full text of the 1977 declaration:

### **A Declaration on Human Rights**

*To the President of the United States of America, to all countries concerned, and to the Christian churches throughout the world:*

*Our church confesses that Jesus Christ is the Lord of all mankind and believes that human rights and a land in which each of us has a stake are gifts bestowed by God. Therefore we make this declaration, set in the context of the present crisis threatening the seventeen million people of Taiwan.*

*Ever since President Carter's inauguration as President of the United States of America he has consistently adopted "Human Rights" as a principle of his diplomacy. This is an epoch-making event in the history of foreign policy.*

*We therefore request President Carter to continue to uphold the principles of human rights while pursuing the "normalisation of relationships with Communist China" and to insist on guaranteeing the security, independence, and freedom of the people of Taiwan.*

*As we face the possibility of an invasion by Communist China we hold firmly to our faith and to the principles underlying the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We insist that the future of Taiwan shall be determined by the seventeen million people who live there. We appeal to the countries concerned—especially to the people of government of the United States of America—and to Christian churches throughout the world to take effective steps to support our cause.*

*In order to achieve our goal of independence and freedom for the people of Taiwan in this critical international situation, we urge our government to face reality and to take effective measures whereby Taiwan may become a new and independent country.*

*We beseech God that Taiwan and all the rest of the world may become a place where "Mercy and truth will meet together; righteousness and peace will embrace. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven." (Psalms 85:10-11)*

*H.E. Chao, Moderator of the General Assembly*

*H.K. Weng, Deputy Moderator of the General Assembly*

*(Acting in the absence of the Moderator)*

*C.M. Kao, Secretary-General*

# Report from Washington

## *First Transatlantic Dialogue held in Washington*

On 2 October 2007, members of the United States Congress and parliamentarians from Europe and Taiwan joined on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC for the first-ever “Taiwan Transatlantic Dialogue.” The purpose of the meeting was to exchange views between Members of the U.S. Congress, the European Parliament and Taiwan’s Legislative Yuan on issues affecting U.S.-Europe-Taiwan relations.

Photo: Chiaojung Wang

The meeting was attended by European parliamentarians Bastiaan Belder (NL) and Graham Watson (UK), as well as eight members of the US Congress, including Foreign Affairs Committee ranking member Ileana Ros Lehtinen (R-FL), Tom Tancredo (R-CO) and Madeleine Bordallo (D-Guam). Taiwan was represented by Legislative Yuan members Mr. George Liu (TSU – who was recently appointed to represent Taiwan in Sweden), Mr. Min-jen Chen (DPP), and Dr. Parris Chang



**Participants in the Transatlantic Dialogue**

Shu-chen, new Taiwan representative to Ireland.

Participants concluded that they will continue to explore ways to positively enhance and strengthen U.S. and European relations and cooperation with the government and people of Taiwan.

Participants also noted that the U.S. and Europe’s policy regarding cross-Strait relations calls for a peaceful resolution of the dispute between the two sides, and, because Taiwan is a democracy, a resolution that has the full consent of the people of Taiwan. To this end, participants encourage the People’s Republic of China (PRC) to reestablish direct dialogue with Taiwan’s elected leadership as soon as possible.

Noting that Taiwan serves as a beacon for others in the region seeking democratic and economic progress, participants expressed hope that the PRC will work toward these objectives as it assumes a more active role in the Asia-Pacific region and the world.

They also concluded that joint efforts in support of Taiwan's participation in international organizations such as the UN and the WHO should be undertaken, as well as joint efforts to promote democracy in Asia.

### ***Taiwan high-level visits resolution introduced in the Senate***

On Tuesday 02 October 2007, the two co-chairs of the Senate Taiwan Caucus, Senator Tim Johnson (D-SD) and Trent Lott (R-MS) introduced Senate Concurrent Resolution SCR-48, calling on the Bush Administration to allow high level visits and contacts between the United States and the democratically-elected officials of Taiwan.

The resolution is the Senate equivalent of House Resolution HCR-136, which passed the House by a unanimous vote on 30 July 2007. It argues that the present guidelines for contacts with Taiwan are outdated in light of Taiwan's momentous transition to democracy.

The present DPP government represents a democratic Taiwan, as opposed to the old Kuomintang regime, which maintained that it represented China until 1991. This new situation on the ground calls for a new and fresh approach, which supports democracy in the region.

The resolution states that lifting these restrictions will help bring a friend and ally of the United States out of its isolation, and will be beneficial to peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. It also states that — in consideration of the major economic, security, and political interests shared by the United States and Taiwan — it is to the benefit of the United States for United States officials to meet and communicate directly with the democratically-elected officials of Taiwan, including the President.



**Senator Tim Johnson**

The resolution also argues that — since the Taiwan Strait is one of the world's flashpoints in the world — it is essential that United States policymakers directly communicate with the leaders of Taiwan.

## *House passes resolution on sale of F-16s to Taiwan*

On Tuesday, 02 October 2007, the US House of Representatives passed, by a unanimous vote, House Resolution HR-676, urging the administration of US President George W. Bush to allow the sale of advanced F-16C/D fighter aircraft to Taiwan to proceed, despite State Department efforts to obstruct the sale. The measure was sponsored by both Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Tom Lantos (D-CA), a Democrat, and the ranking Republican, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL).

The bill reiterates US commitments under the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) of 1979 to supply the nation with defensive weapons, states that it “shall continue to be the policy of the United States” to make available to Taiwan arms sufficient to defend itself, and that Washington must make arms sales decisions “based solely” on “the legitimate defense needs of Taiwan,” and not on political considerations.

Mr. Lantos voiced his strong support for the measure. “Under the Taiwan Relations Act we are committed to help Taiwan defend itself,” he said. “Taiwan’s democratically-elected leader has made the decision to purchase additional F-16s to defend themselves, and the administration must respond positively to this very legitimate request.”

Mrs. Ros-Lehtinen, in a prepared statement, warned that China’s military build-up, documented in a Pentagon report in May 2007, “poses a long-term threat to Taiwan and ultimately to the US military presence in Asia.” She added that “Taiwan’s national legislature recently demonstrated a renewed commitment to safeguarding the island’s national security” by passing this year’s defense budget with the F-16 funds included.

“However, despite the requirements of the TRA and what Taiwanese officials have described as an ‘urgent and legitimate’ need to upgrade its ageing air force by buying newer version F-16s, the Bush administration has not responded to Taiwan’s clear interest in receiving price and availability data for these aircraft,” she said.

Congressman Tom Tancredo, a strong Taiwan supporter, chastised Bush for sending “mixed messages” to Taiwan and for violating an inauguration pledge to oppose tyranny and oppression. “I am beginning to think that perhaps when President Bush made his famous inaugural pronouncement, he should have added an addendum: Offer not available in Taiwan. These kinds of insincere promises and glaring inconsistencies are both disappointing and dangerous. They prompt our friends to question our reliability as an ally — and our enemies to doubt our resolve,” he said.

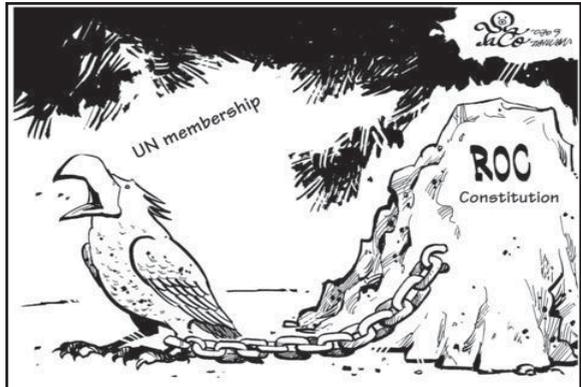
Taiwan-born congressman David Wu (D-OR), also a committee member, voiced strong support for the measure. “For over fifty years, the United States and Taiwan have fostered a close relationship, which has been of mutual political, economic, cultural and strategic advantage. I believe that the United States should continue to support the legitimate defense needs of Taiwan,” he said in a prepared statement.

### ***"Taiwan into the UN" resolution introduced in the House***

On 8 November 2007, nineteen members of the US House of Representatives, led by Congressman Scott Garrett (R-NJ) introduced a resolution supporting full United Nations membership for Taiwan under the name “Taiwan.”

The resolution, HCR 250, concludes: Whereas the United States has supported Taiwan’s participation in international organizations including the World Health Organization: *Now, therefore, be it Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of the Congress that— (1) Taiwan and its 23,000,000 people deserve membership in the United Nations; and (2) the United States should fulfill the commitment it made in the 1994*

*Taiwan Policy Review to more actively support Taiwan's membership in appropriate international organizations.*



**Taiwan's UN membership eagle still chained to anachronistic "ROC Constitution" rock.**

On 15 September 2007 Congressman Garrett, an outspoken supporter of Taiwan, addressed a Taiwanese-American crowd of several thousand that had gathered on Dag Hammarskjold plaza in front of the UN. He urged the United Nations to support full membership for Taiwan, and urged the United States to support the March 2008 referendum to enter the UN under the name "Taiwan."

In light of the fact that the referendum that will coincide with Taiwan’s presidential elections, support from the U.S Congress for Taiwan’s membership in the United Nations

comes very timely. When this issue of *Taiwan Communiqué* went to press, the resolution enjoyed the co-sponsorship of 32 Representatives.

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## Book review

### *Why Taiwan?* by Alan M. Wachman

*Reviewed by Prof. Don Rodgers, Austin College, Texas*

Alan Wachman, author of *Taiwan: National Identity and Democratization* (1994), offers a well-researched and intriguing look at the enduring rivalry between China and Taiwan. Wachman addresses the compelling questions of why China places such great importance on the Taiwan question and why Beijing has move toward a harder line on the issue in recent years.

Wachman frames the questions on page 29 when he writes, “In what way does Taiwan’s ‘independence’ threaten the PRC? Why is that threat perceived in the PRC as sufficiently grave that the use of military force is seen by the central leadership as a rational option? It has not always emphasized its capacity to use military force to threaten or harm Taiwan and does not do so uniformly in other territorial disputes.”

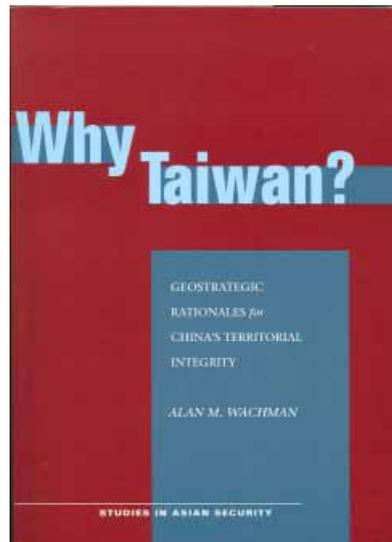
Wachman makes the important point that China, whether under the Qing, Kuomintang, or PRC government, has not been consistent in staking a claim to Taiwan as an integral part of its territory. In fact, the various Chinese governments typically treated Taiwan with indifference and at times even referred to Taiwan as a separate country.

For example, Wachman cites several statements from Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek in which they equate Taiwan’s situation to Korea and Vietnam, and expressed support for the island’s independence from Japan. In those years the CCP also did not regard Taiwan as Chinese territory and often promoted Taiwanese self-determination and creation of an independent Taiwanese state, *vide* Mao Tse-tung’s interview with Edgar Snow in 1937.

However, around 1942 the positions shifted, and in the last years of World War II, the KMT started to “consciously fabricate” its claim to Taiwan when the KMT leaders were attempting to create new policies in response to a potential shift in

the balance of power in Asia. The CCP – in their life-and-death struggle with the KMT for power over China — followed suit, and also started to lay claim to Taiwan. Thus, Wachman argues, “it is apparent that the nationalist argument about China’s original and perpetual sovereignty over Taiwan and Taiwan’s place in Chinese history advanced by both the KMT and the CCP since the early 1940s is a concoction” (pg. 99).

It is quite common to view China’s claim to Taiwan as principally an expression of greater Chinese nationalism. As Wachman writes, “Taiwan is often represented as if its sole value to Beijing stems from the identity ascribed to it as an undifferentiated ‘part of China,’ rather than as a particular part embedded in a geographical context that has specific physical aspects” (pg. 32). Wachman posits that although the PRC often frames its claim to Taiwan in the form of a historical narrative emphasizing a cultural and territorial bond between China and Taiwan, the more important reason for Beijing’s stance is geostrategic, i.e. competition with the US and Japan for influence and dominance in the region.



As discussed above, China’s interest in or claim to Taiwan has waxed and waned over time. In reviewing the history of Taiwan’s relationship with China since the 17<sup>th</sup> century Wachman points out that the Chinese have demonstrated the greatest concern about Taiwan when foreign powers sought to bring Taiwan into their sphere of influence and use it a bridgehead to influence their relations with China.

And while Chinese leaders from the Qing to the present have presented Taiwan as important to China’s security they seldom saw Taiwan as a full part of China. Or as Wachman eloquently states, “The notion of Taiwan as instrumental to the security of China coexists with views of the island as peripheral to the Chinese heartland” (pg. 156). In this sense, the issue should not be perceived strictly as a bilateral China-Taiwan issue (or certainly not as an “internal” issue) but rather as one that hinges on China’s relations with other countries that China perceives as competitors or adversaries.

Rather than perceiving the PRC's desire to possess Taiwan as end goal that will make the country "complete", Wachman argues that we should instead see its desire to possess Taiwan as a means to its greater geostrategic ambitions. That is, the leadership in Beijing sees possession of Taiwan as essential not only to its security and self-defense but also to its ability to strengthen its position in the Pacific and across the globe.

Taiwan's ever-increasing desire to express its sovereignty along with its ties with the United States and Japan thus do present a barrier to China's ability to expand its international power and presence. China's relationship with or claim to Taiwan should therefore be understood in the context of China's relations with other regional or global powers.

In addition to presenting a compelling analysis of the history of relations between China and Taiwan and of Beijing's current behavior, Wachman's work has significant policy implications. If one views Taiwan's move toward formal independence primarily through the lens of China's imagined geography or nationalism then it is fairly easy to accept that Taiwan poses no threat to the PRC. Wachman argues that Taiwan is hardly capable of bringing about the PRC's demise and states, "Taiwan's people seek the dignity of sovereignty and the assurance that so long as they do no harm to the PRC, Beijing will regard the island with neighborly comity" (pg. 163).

Thus, it is common to hear proponents of more explicit moves toward Taiwan's independence express confidence that Beijing will not resort to military force to control Taiwan, or to see U.S. policy makers accept the general notion of China's peaceful rise with Taiwan independence presenting an exceptional issue based on Chinese nationalism.

Yet, if one views the issue through the lens of Beijing's geostrategic ambitions one might come to a very different conclusion. If Beijing views Taiwan as essential to its security and even more importantly as a part of a broader geostrategic competition with the United States and Japan, the possibility that Beijing will resort to the use of force is much greater.

Therefore, in my opinion Wachman's work contains important lessons for both the Taiwanese and for the U.S. First, while the Taiwanese should not abandon their goals, they must include the geostrategic considerations into their policy calculations and take Beijing's military posturing seriously.

And in the United States, policymakers must be careful not to view increasing tensions between China and Taiwan as the outcome of a "trouble-making" government in Taiwan

(as they seem far too inclined to do), but rather as one manifestation of an intensifying geostrategic competition between China and the US and Japan.

The full title of the book is **Why Taiwan? *Geostrategic rationales for China's territorial integrity***. It was published by Stanford University Press Stanford, CA 2007.

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## **In the limelight**

In this feature of *Taiwan Communiqué*, we focus on an organization or person who made an impact on the understanding of Taiwan in the world today. This limelight is focused on former Senator Claiborne Pell, who played a crucial role in shaping the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act.

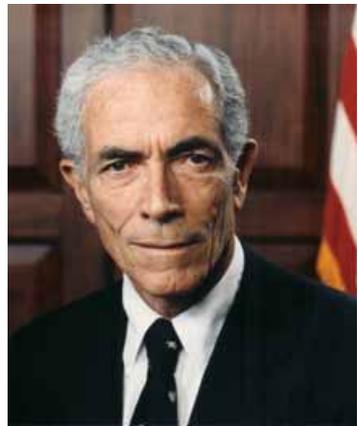
### ***Claiborne Pell, former US Senator***

*By Thomas G. Hughes, longtime Chief of Staff to Senator Pell*

In the history of Taiwan's struggle for democracy a handful of liberal, international-minded American legislators, including Senator Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island, played an important role supporting the valiant efforts of the Taiwanese people both in Taiwan and abroad.

The Americans were united by their strong objections to the authoritarian Kuomintang government which ruled Taiwan and by their belief that the Taiwanese people, like all peoples, had a right to democracy and self-determination.

Senator Pell, the scion of a wealthy Rhode Island family with a rich history in England and America, first learned of Taiwan, then known as Formosa, while serving as a young Coast Guard officer in World War II. He was among a corps of junior officers chosen for training to serve as the military government of a liberated Formosa at the end of the war, but, as history decided, no American occupa-



**Senator Claiborne Pell (D-RI)**

tion ever occurred. But his training in Formosan history and culture stayed with him and proved crucial 30 years later.

After a short career in the Foreign Service in Eastern Europe just as the Iron Curtain was descending, Pell returned to Rhode Island and became active in politics. In 1960 the state's senior senator retired and Pell joined two powerful RI politicians in seeking the Senate seat. Unlike his better known opponents, Pell used then unheard of techniques (door-to-door campaigning and television advertising) to become known. In a startling upset he won the Democratic primary and in November 1960 was elected a senator.

Photo: FAPA

In his early years Pell focused his attention on two areas: foreign policy and education. He gained a seat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and began the slow climb in seniority. He was an early questioner of the Vietnam War and often startled his senior colleagues by taking up the cause of small states which he believed were oppressed by their powerful occupiers or neighbors. Among his causes were Goa, Sikkim, East Timor and, eventually, Taiwan.



**Senator Pell in 1982 with FAPA co-founders Dr. Mark Chen and Prof. Peng Ming-min**

Taiwan citizens in the 1970's lived under martial law which banned political activity or expression by any group other than the ruling Kuomintang. More and more Taiwanese both in Taiwan and in the US chafed under the tough strictures of KMT rule and began organizing a political opposition. Gradually the jails filled with activists arrested while advocating for a change. Taiwanese in the US began approaching American politicians, seeking allies against KMT rule.

In addition to Senator Pell, three other legislators in particular took up the cause in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s: Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts and Representatives Steve Solarz of New York and Jim Leach of Iowa. Called in some circles the "*Gang of Four*", they began a steady and increasingly vocal campaign against martial law, the arrest and detention of KMT opponents, and the blacklisting of large numbers of Taiwanese living abroad and barred from returning to their homeland.

Among the many activists who met with Pell and his staff was a Taiwanese-American government meteorologist named Mark Chen (Chen Tang-shan), one of the early leaders among overseas Taiwanese advocating freedom and democracy for their homeland. Pell was especially taken with Chen's quiet and persuasive manner and turned to him regularly for advice and information. Chen was blacklisted and Pell increasingly besieged the "Republic of China" Embassy and its officials on Chen's behalf, only to be repeatedly told that Chen was a "terrorist". Pell, whose dogged persistence was a key trait in his political and legislative career, kept on pushing.

Once the ROC Ambassador Frederick Chien came to visit Pell with some small gestures intended to quiet his complaints. Pell asked "But what about Mark Chen?" Fred Chen threw up his hands and exclaimed: "Please, please, no more about Mark Chen. There is nothing I can do!"

Pell played a central role in drafting the Taiwan Relations Act and in the effort to include strong language expressing US support for human rights in Taiwan. And, though it never became US law, Pell was the author of seminal language expressing US policy that "*Taiwan's future should be settled peacefully, free of coercion and in a manner acceptable to the people on Taiwan...*"

Eventually, thanks to the courage of the Taiwan people at home and in the US with the assistance of their American champions, martial law was lifted, an opposition party was formed and legalized, political prisoners were released and blacklisted Taiwanese, including Mark Chen, were allowed to return home. The thriving democracy that is Taiwan today followed rapidly—and peacefully.

Senator Pell also had a clear vision for Taiwan's future: in a speech in 1989 he stated: "*Taiwanese independence is a question of when — not if.*"

Claiborne Pell retired from the senate in 1997. Near the end of his last term he visited Taiwan for the first time, meeting with President Lee Teng-hui and hosted at a lavish dinner by his old adversary who had become Foreign Minister, Fred Chien. Now, at 89 and suffering from Parkinson's disease, Pell lives in Newport, RI, still regularly appears at public functions and enjoys the acclaim of his former constituents. He has been honored with several decorations bestowed by President Chen Shui-bian and the now democratic government of Taiwan.

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*The goals of FAPA are: 1) to promote international support for the right of the people of Taiwan (Formosa) to establish an independent and democratic country, and to join the international community; 2) to advance the rights and interests of Taiwanese communities throughout the world; and 3) to promote peace and security for Taiwan*

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