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A historic victory

Madame President Tsai Ing-wen

The overwhelming 16 January 2016 victory by Dr. Tsai Ing-wen represents a momentous change in the political landscape in Taiwan. Not only will she be the country's first female president, but for the first time in the country's history will both executive and legislative power be held by the democratic opposition of the DPP, which was founded only 30 years ago, when Taiwan was still languishing under the Kuomintang's martial law.

Since then, the people of Taiwan have worked hard to push for a full transition to democracy, now culminating in the election of Dr. Tsai Ing-wen as president of the country. While there are still many vestiges of the repressive legacy of the Kuomintang's one-party rule – particular in the judicial system and in the lack of transitional justice – Dr. Tsai now will have a sufficient majority in the legislature to push for much-needed reforms.

Photo: TaipeiTimes



**Tsai Ing-wen and VP-elect Chen Chien-jen (R)
at Tsai's victory speech on 16 January 2016**

As the inauguration of the new president doesn't take place until 20 May 2016, there is also a relatively lengthy transition period during which executive power is still held by the outgoing KMT government of President Ma Ying-jeou, but the new Legislative Yuan (see below) already started its new session with a DPP majority on 1 February 2016.

On the following pages we will go into some of the reasons for the change in political landscape, and also examine some of the implications for both domestic policies and for Taiwan's international relations.

Reasons for the political shift

Dr. Tsai Ing-wen did not only win the presidency with an overwhelming margin (56.2% versus 31% for Mr. Eric Chu of the KMT), the DPP also won 68 seats out of 113 in the Legislative Yuan (more on that below). Particularly significant was the turnout of young voters (74%) as compared to 66.3% for the population as a whole.

Dr. Tsai and her party were able to project a moderate image, and were able to convince the voters that the DPP would pursue economic, social and educational policies that were much closer to mainstream public opinion than those of the outgoing KMT.

The voters took issue with the lack of good governance and lack of transparency during the eight years rule of the Kuomintang under President Ma Ying-jeou. The voters also rejected the China-leaning policies of President Ma. It was not an “anti-China” vote *per sé*, but a rejection of policies that made Taiwan overly dependent on China, and that presented a *drift towards / unification with China* as the inevitable choice for Taiwan's future.

How is this changing the political landscape

Over the past two decades there has been a strong increase in the ***Taiwanese*** identity (as opposed to the Chinese identity imposed by Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists during the decades since 1949). In particular the young voters in Taiwan perceive themselves as “Taiwanese only”, and have little affinity for Chinese “mainland” heritage brought over by the Chinese Nationalists.

In particular young people in Taiwan also ask why their country is treated differently by the United States and other Western countries. They are arguably proud of their society and democracy, and ask why Taiwan is still kept in political isolation, and is not allowed to be a member of international organizations like the UN and WHO.

The successive Sunflower Movement of March/April 2014, the local elections in November 2014, and the historic elections of January 2016 have now brought about a new political landscape in Taiwan, where we see a much more self-confident populace, which

wants to see economic, social and political reforms domestically, but also wants to see greater acceptance of Taiwan internationally.

The populace is also less willing to accept the old Chinese Nationalist Kuomintang narrative regarding Taiwan's relations with China, and is eager to try to find new and innovative ways to gain a fuller presence for Taiwan in the international community.

A landslide in the Legislative Yuan

The DPP wins 68 seats

While Dr. Tsai Ing-wen's victory in the presidential race was more or less a foregone conclusion (most opinion polls before the election had given her a double-digit lead over her closest rival, KMT Chairman Eric Chu), the DPP victory in the Legislative Yuan was beyond all expectations.

Photo: Legislative Yuan

The DPP itself and most observers had cautiously predicted a narrow win, with the most optimistic analysts giving the DPP a few seats beyond the magic 50% of 113 seats, 57 seats. However, the party surprised itself by getting 68 seats, with almost all of Southern Taiwan going "green", while in Northern Taiwan most counties were also predominantly green, with only Taipei City, and Hualien and Taitung, the thinly populated counties along the East Coast, remaining relatively pro-Kuomintang strongholds.

However, in one of the most attention-grabbing campaigns of the election, the DPP's Hsiao Bi-khim won a victory in Hualien County, after a tough battle in a traditionally KMT stronghold.



**The DPP's Bikhim Hsiao
wins in Hualien**

In the district races the DPP won 50 of the 74 seats, and received 18 of the 34 proportional seats, for a total of 68 seats, and increase from 40 seats in 2012

The Kuomintang drops from 64 to 35 seats

The Chinese Nationalist Kuomintang party on the other hand dropped from 64 seats to 35 seats, 24 district seats and only 11 proportional seats, reducing its representation to almost half of what it was before.

Even in Sinbei City (formerly Taipei County), where Mr. Eric Chu serves as county magistrate, his party received only two out of twelve seats, with the DPP winning nine seats, and the tenth seat going to NPP chairman Huang Kuo-chang. Long-time KMT Legislator Chang Ching-chung, whose “30-second session” ramming through the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement with China in 2014 helped spark the Sunflower movement, lost his seat to a young DPP candidate Chiang Yung-chang.

Even Kuomintang heavyweight former Taipei mayor Hau Lung-bin, who served as vice-chairman of the KMT and who ran for a legislative seat in Keelung, was defeated by a young and up-and-coming DPP candidate Tsai Shih-ying.

Former Legislative Speaker Wang Jin-pyng, who had served as Speaker since 1999, did retain his membership in the new legislature as he had been put in the number one spot on the KMT’s proportional list, but had to step down from his powerful position, as the DPP now has the majority, and elected former DPP vice presidential candidate (2012) Su Jia-chyuan as Speaker of the legislature.

Third parties: the NPP success story

Among the third parties in the Legislative Yuan there was also a significant shake-up: Presidential candidate James Soong’s strategy of running for the presidency in order to safeguard his People’s First Party’s seats in the Legislative Yuan partially succeeded: the PFP was able to maintain three seats in the legislature, but is not going to play a power-broker role, as the DPP itself gained a major majority.

The second smaller party that did have seats in the legislature until now – former President Lee Teng-hui’s Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU) – only received 2.5% of the party list vote, did not meet the 5% minimum requirement, and therefore does not have any seats in the legislature.

However, the most spectacular success among the third parties went to the newly formed New Power Party (NPP), which won all three districts where it fielded regional legislative candidates, and crossing the 5-percentage-point threshold to be awarded two legislator-at-large seats.

The most stunning victories were won by the NPP's Huang Kuo-chang in Sinbei City, **Chthonic** Heavy Metal Band leader Freddy Lim in Taipei City, and Ms. Hung Tzu-yung in Taichung City. All three ran in districts that were regarded as traditional KMT strongholds and won.

Photo: Taiwan Communiqué

Prof. Huang had become well-known as a leading figure in the 2014 Sunflower Movement, while Mr. Lim had gained name recognition not only for his musical talents, but also for his political activism in previous years, including his chairmanship of Amnesty International, Taiwan (see *Taiwan Communiqué* no. 154, pp. 7-9).

Ms. Hung Tzu-yung has also become a household figure in Taiwan since the Summer of 2013, when her younger brother died of maltreatment in military custody, after he had been arrested for accidentally bringing his cell phone on the military base one week before his discharge. She became the spokesperson for the family, criticizing the systemic wrongs in the military bureaucracy and the justice system. In early August 2013, the case brought some 250,000 people into the streets of Taipei in the **Citizen1985 Movement**, which organized a major protest against injustice and wrongdoings in the military.



**Ms. Hung Tzu-yung:
New Power Party winner
in Taichung**

A greener and younger legislature

Overall the new Legislative Yuan is thus much “greener” and younger than ever before. While in the late 1980s, the “perpetual legislature” – which had been holding its seats since the 1947 elections in China – had an *average* age of 89 years, the average age of the new legislature dropped to below 50, with the youngest member, the DPP's Ms. Lu Sun-ling from Sinbei City, a mere 28 years old.

The new legislature has more new members than ever before, and also more women: a total of 43. It can thus be expected that it will be much more willing to explore new ground than its predecessors. To be sure, a few old Kuomintang partisan diehards do remain, but they are very much in a minority, and will have a hard time pushing their outdated views in the legislature.

The legislature also does have new leadership. As the Kuomintang lost its majority, it was not able to perpetuate Mr. Wang Chin-pyng in the position of Speaker of the

Legislative Yuan. On 1 February 2016, the first day of the new legislative session, the newly-elected legislators elected the DPP's Su Jia-chyuan as their new Speaker.

Mr. Su is a well-known figure: he is a former minister of the interior and was Dr. Tsai's running mate in her first bid for the presidency in 2012. In a bid to be a much more bipartisan figure than his predecessor was, Mr. Su announced right after his election that he would step down from all of his DPP positions, and focus on being a leader of the legislature who stood above the political parties.

Photo: Taipei Times



Newly-elected Speaker Su Jia-chyuan
acknowledging congratulations

What will be on the legislative agenda?

Right after the new session of the legislature started, there were intense debates on what would be the priorities of the new legislature. A brief overview of the main topics:

- * **Presidential Transition Bill.** This bill is intended to regulate the transition from an old to a new administration in the case of a transition of political power. Many people feel that such legislation is necessary, in particular in view of the very long period between the date of the election (mid-January) and the Constitutionally-mandated date of the inauguration of the new president (20 May).
- * **Cross Strait Agreements Monitoring Bill.** This legislation is intended to lay out a transparent and democratic process for approval of cross-Strait legislation. It was a key demand of the Sunflower Movement in March-April 2014, when it occupied the Legislative Yuan in protest against the railroading of the cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement by KMT legislators.
- * **Legislative Reform Bill.** This legislation is intended to streamline the procedures in the Legislative Yuan, which – under the control of the Kuomintang since the late 1940s – has become dysfunctional in many ways. The DPP is proposing a number of measures to make the process more open and transparent

There are also ideas to change the way the legislature interacts with the Executive Branch: at present the Prime Minister is required to appear for interpellations at the legislature, but – unlike in many Western democracies – there cannot be a vote of no-confidence, as the Prime Minister is appointed by the President, and solely accountable to the President.

Copyright: Taipei Times

* **Political Party Assets**

Bill. The issue of the Kuomintang's ill-gotten assets has been around for many decades: it refers to the many assets the party owns (it is reportedly the richest political party in the world), acquired in the years after World War II – when it appropriated property and land from the former Japanese colonial government. The bill is intended to level the political playing field between the parties by returning these assets to the central government.



President Ma Ying-jeou: "Can I play just a little longer? Please? Just a little longer?"

The first plenary session of the new legislature was held on Friday, 19 February 2016, and actually went very well: the new Speaker, Mr. Su Jia-chyuan, led in observing a moment of silence for the victims of the Tainan earthquake of February 6th, and the session then got off to a good start by approving the first reading of some 100 draft bills which were referred to their respective committees for review and deliberation.

However, the Kuomintang blocked several DPP versions of the Political Party Assets Bill, as it felt that this legislation was “too much aimed at one party.” There was also considerable discussion on the Presidential Transition Bill, with Kuomintang legislators arguing that the draft bill would unnecessarily constrain the incumbent President's powers.

A third disagreement erupted between the DPP and its ally, the New Power Party: in its draft of the Cross-Strait Monitoring Bill, the DPP was planning to refer to the “Taiwan Area” and “Mainland Area” in order to adhere to the Constitutional framework. However,

Mr. Huang Kuo-chang of the NPP argued that this would set Taiwan back some 20 years, and stated that the Constitutional framework referred to the sovereignty invested by the Constitution in the Taiwanese people.

A window of opportunity

Leaving the “1992 Consensus” behind

In the run-up to the January 2016 elections, the term “1992 consensus” has been bandied around with a religious fervor befitting the Middle Ages. In particular the administration of outgoing President Ma Ying-jeou has persisted in emphasizing that the only way cross-strait stability could be maintained was through adherence to the “1992 consensus.”

Copyright: Taipei Times



The Kuomintang with the latest “One China” imperial edict from China

As is well-known the “consensus” states that there is “one China”, but that the two sides may have different interpretations as to what it means. A closer examination of the interpretation of President Ma and his Chinese Nationalists shows that it is rather far removed from reality. It holds that “one China” is the old “Republic of China” of Chiang Kai-shek, and “the mainland” is part of *their* China.

However, the People’s Republic of China’s definition is very different: Beijing insists on the “one China” **principle** (negating any different interpretations) according to which Taiwan has always been an “inalienable” part of China throughout its history. A closer examination of Taiwan’s history of course shows this is equally at odds with reality.

In spite of these very different and contradicting interpretations, the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) and the Chinese Communist Party have used this vague construct to push

Taiwan onto a slippery slope toward unification. And it is very clear that Beijing's ultimate objective is unification. It would be naive for Western observers to think otherwise.

The "1992 Consensus" thus does not constitute a very firm basis for future cross-Strait relations: It may have brought a *temporary* semblance of peace and quiet across the Taiwan Strait, as Ma's policies have given the PRC the erroneous impression that Taiwan was moving into its orbit. But it certainly is not a firm basis for a sustainable, long-term, peace and stability.

It is thus essential to look for a *new paradigm* that could lay the foundation for a more sustainable, long-term stability. So, what would constitute a firm basis? For one: acceptance by Beijing that Taiwan is a free and democratic nation and that in such a democracy changes of political power are to be expected.

Furthermore, it should be clear to any observer that a closer association of Taiwan with China would not only be detrimental to freedom and democracy in Taiwan (just look at Hong Kong), but also to peace and stability in the region. In particular, Japan would get very nervous.

Tsai Ing-wen's Liberty Times interview

In an attempt to further elaborate on her position on the matter, Dr. Tsai Ing-wen gave an interview to the **Liberty Times** on 21 January 2016. Here we present a transcript of the main points from the interview:

Reporter Tzou Jiing-wen: *Many people believe that cross-strait relations will be the DPP's biggest challenge. In the past, the Ma administration's cross-strait policies used the '1992 consensus' as a political foundation. You have proposed to 'maintain the status quo'. In the future, how do you plan to acquire the understanding of China, in order to truly maintain the status quo?*

President-elect and DPP Chairperson Tsai Ing-wen: *The results of this election have shown that my position to 'maintain the status quo' represents mainstream public opinion. Maintaining peace in the Taiwan Strait and the stable development of cross-strait relations are the common expectations held by both sides. However, this is not a one-sided responsibility. Both sides of the strait need to work hard in order to build a consistent, predictable, and sustainable cross-Strait relationship.*

During the press conference on election night, I said the future foundation for cross-strait relations will be based on the existing ROC constitutional order, the results of cross-strait negotiations, interactions and exchanges, as well as democratic principles and the will of the Taiwanese people.

As president-elect, I reaffirm that after the new administration takes office on May 20, it will transcend partisan politics, respect the will and consensus of the Taiwanese people, and be mindful of the public interest, in maintaining cross-strait peace and stability, based on the ROC constitutional order.

Photo: Taipei Times

In 1992, SEF and ARATS engaged in discussions and negotiations based on the political mindset of mutual understanding and the need to set aside differences and seek common ground. They achieved several common understandings and acknowledgements. I understand and respect this historical fact.



President-elect Tsai Ing-wen on election night

I also believe that both sides of the Strait should cherish and protect the accumulated status quo and outcomes that have been the result of more than 20 years of exchanges and negotiations between the two sides since 1992. On the basis of this basic fact and existing political foundation, we should continue to move forward on the peace, stability, and development of cross-strait relations.

Reporter Tzou: *You just spoke about this ‘political foundation’. What are the contents of this ‘political foundation’? What are the differences with the Ma administration?*

President-elect Tsai: *The ‘existing political foundation’ that I spoke about has several key elements. The first is that the SEF-ARATS discussions of 1992 are a historical fact and both sides had a common acknowledgment to set aside differences and seek common ground. The second is the Republic of China’s existing constitutional order. The third is the accumulated results of the more than 20 years of cross-Strait negotiations, exchanges, and interactions. The fourth is Taiwan’s democratic principles and the will of the Taiwanese people.*

Taiwan is a democratic society. Public opinion and democracy are the two pillars of the government's approach to managing cross-Strait policy. If the government deviates from public will and democracy, then it will be difficult to maintain a stable and sustainable relationship and it could even lose the confidence of the people.

We are committed to adhering to public opinion, respecting democratic principles, and guaranteeing the right of the Taiwanese people to determine their own future. This is the biggest difference we have between the new government and the Ma administration.

Towards a more sustainable cross-Strait relation

Thus, instead of religiously clinging to terms dating from the distant past, leaders in Taipei, Washington and Beijing should look toward the future and envision what a positive relationship could look like.

First, it is essential to understand that from Taiwan's perspective there is a new "status quo." Since Taiwan made its momentous transition to democracy in the late 1980s and early 1990s, it has further consolidated its democracy, and Taiwanese chafe against the fact that their nation remains dangling in political isolation. They believe that as a new democracy, they deserve to be accepted as an equal in the international community.

In particular for the young generation, the present restrictions and — often self-imposed — inhibitions are a thing of the past. They want to determine their own future, and see the formulations and structures imposed by the history of the Chinese Civil War, or communiqués concluded by other nations without any consultation with the people of Taiwan, as anachronisms belonging to a previous age.

This new "status quo" is also characterized by a strong sense of participatory democracy. Transparency, democratic procedures and adequate checks-and-balances are key concepts. Input from citizens will be loud and clear, and it will not be possible anymore for a government to push key decisions through the legislature without ample debate.

So, what is the new paradigm? *Mutual-acceptance-as-friendly-neighbors* would be a main element in the equation. Yes, Taiwan and China do have a special historic relationship, but Taiwan has developed its own identity and character. Just like Americans have developed their own national character, and do not perceive themselves members of the British Empire anymore.

Such mutual acceptance should eventually lead to normalization of relations and sustainable, long-term peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. This new reality can

only grow and prosper if Taiwan is given a chance to find its own role as a full and equal member of the international community, and as an equal partner in its relations with China.

A recalibration of policy towards Taiwan needed

*By Gerrit van der Wees, editor of Taiwan Communiqué. This article was first published in the **Taipei Times** on 22 February 2016. Reprinted with permission.*

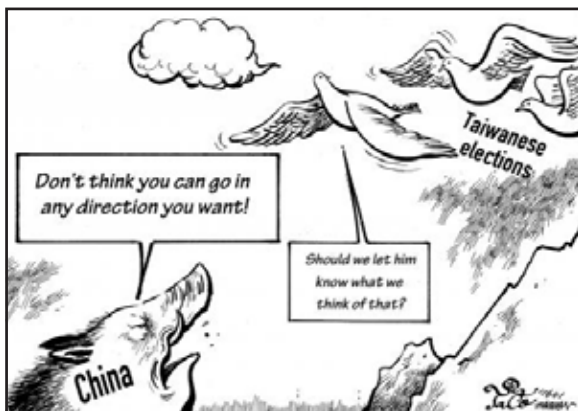
On 11 Feb. 2016, the US House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific held a hearing on the future of US-Taiwan relations after the momentous Jan. 16 presidential and legislative elections, which saw Tsai Ing-wen elected president and gave the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) a majority in the Legislative Yuan.

Copyright: Taipei Times

While both the administration of US President Barack Obama and members of US Congress lauded Taiwan's vibrant democracy and expressed support for enhancing relations with the democracy, there was still a lot of bureaucratic inertia, too much caution and a lack of real vision for future relations.

What is needed in Washington — and in European capitals — is a recalibration of existing policies regarding Taiwan, so it can focus on

how to take advantage of this window of opportunity to bring relations to a new level.



**China: Don't think you can go any direction you want!
Taiwanese election doves: Should we let him know what we think of that?**

A few key items: While we need to continue to emphasize “peace and stability” across the Taiwan Strait, it needs to acknowledge that the artificial cross-Strait calm of the past seven to eight years does **not** entail a stable “status quo.” That artificial calm was premised on Taiwan drifting closer into China's orbit and on the underlying assumption that unification with China was the inevitable choice for Taiwan's future.

In the elections, the people of Taiwan decided that is **not** how they see their future. There is therefore a need for a new formula for sustainable, long-term peaceful coexistence between the two sides.

Tsai's incoming government has outlined some of the contours of such a formula. It is essential that the US and Western Europe welcome and stimulate the development of such a new formula.

Also, China needs to be much more aware of the basic fact that cross-strait relations entail taking into account Taiwan's democratic voice. Beijing cannot just meet with old Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) standard bearers and believe that this will bring Taiwan into their fold. Facing this reality will hopefully move Beijing toward being content with being peaceful sovereign neighbors.

Strengthening and normalizing bilateral relations: Current US policy toward Taiwan is based on the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, but much of its implementation is based on outdated guidelines drafted in 1979 and 1980, when the US shifted diplomatic recognition from Chiang Kai-shek's Republic of China to the People's Republic of China.

These self-imposed restrictions should be relegated to history, and the US and western Europe should gradually move toward normalization of relations with Taiwan. For instance, it is highly peculiar that the five top political leaders of a democratic nation — the president, vice president, prime minister, foreign minister and minister of national defense — cannot travel to Washington, London, Berlin or Paris, while these capitals receive regular visits and have interactions with repressive leaders who are not democratically elected.

Last, but not least: *Membership in international organizations.* To many of Taiwan's young generation, one of the most infuriating anomalies is Taiwan's exclusion from international organizations. They see their nation as a responsible and forward-looking member of the international community, and chafe at unfair restrictions imposed on them by other nations.

The international community thus needs to find new and more constructive ways of bringing Taiwan in from the cold. The US and Europe need to be much more proactive and imaginative in getting international organizations, such as the UN and the WHO, to accept Taiwan as a full and equal member.

Report from Washington

DAS Susan Thornton testifies

On 11 February 2016, the Asia & Pacific Subcommittee of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs held a hearing on **The Future of US-Taiwan Relations**, which was chaired by subcommittee chairman Matt Salmon (R-AZ).

The main witness was Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian & Pacific Affairs Susan Thornton. Here are a few quotes from Ms. Thornton's official testimony:

The story of Taiwan is, of course, an impressive one. The people on Taiwan have built a prosperous, free, and orderly society with strong institutions, worthy of emulation and envy.

Last month's free and fair elections were yet another victory for Taiwan's vibrant democracy. These elections not only represent Taiwan's third peaceful transition of presidential power and the first transfer of power in its legislature, but will also lead to the inauguration of Taiwan's first female president.

In this Administration, we have worked to strengthen and deepen the bonds between the people of the United States and Taiwan and to build a comprehensive, durable, and mutually

beneficial partnership. As one of Taiwan's strongest partners, we are working side-by-side to increase our mutual economic prosperity, tackle global challenges, and ensure effective security to support continued stability and dynamism for Taiwan and the region.

She extensively discussed Taiwan's trade and investment relations with the United States, and also expressed support for Taiwan's membership in the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP). She then focused on Taiwan's membership in international organizations, and said:

The United States remains committed to supporting Taiwan's confidence and dignity through increased participation in the international community and



**Deputy Assistant Secretary
Susan Thornton**

enhanced security. We continue to support Taiwan's membership in organizations that do not require statehood and to urge meaningful participation in those that do.

At a time when pressure to squeeze Taiwan out of international organizations is growing, we are finding new ways for Taiwan to earn the dignity and respect that its contributions to global challenges merit.

She then mentioned that the US and Taiwan had set up a *Global Cooperation and Training Framework*, or GCTF – a vehicle for the United States to help showcase Taiwan's strengths and expertise by addressing global and regional concerns. The idea is simple: the United States and Taiwan conduct training programs for experts from throughout the region to assist them with building their own capacities to tackle issues where Taiwan has proven experience and advantages. These include, but are not limited to, women's rights, democratization, global health, and energy security. At the same time, we remain just as committed to Taiwan's meaningful participation in organizations like Interpol, ICAO, WHO, and UNFCCC. We will match Taiwan's growth and innovation with equally innovative approaches to the relationship that highlight Taiwan's contributions to the global community.

She then discussed the ongoing defense and security cooperation between the US and Taiwan, stating *inter alia* that ... *Our efforts at supporting Taiwan's self-defense capabilities extend beyond arms sales. We support Taiwan's capacity-building efforts through visits, maintenance programs, and exchanges. Over the last few years, we have nearly doubled the number of our annual security cooperation events, further enabling Taiwan to strengthen its self-defense capabilities.*

In closing her prepared statement, she said:

During the current transition period, we remain in close contact with the present administration and the incoming administration to encourage both parties to work constructively to ensure a smooth transition and continue to promote peace and stability in the region. We look forward to working with Taiwan's new president and leaders from all parties to further strengthen the unofficial relationship between the United States and the people on Taiwan.

In conclusion, we have developed a vital partnership with Taiwan that is filled with many opportunities for cooperation in the future. We are committed to ensuring that this relationship, built upon the strong foundation of the Taiwan Relations Act, will continue to thrive as we find new innovative ways to deepen our unofficial ties. Taiwan has earned a great deal of respect in the international community, and we

will continue to showcase the strengths and benefits of Taiwan's role and contributions in global efforts. The innovative spirit, democratic dynamism, and courageous vision of the people on Taiwan make us proud to be their friend and partner.

In the Q&A session, several members of Congress raised important issues. A brief rundown:

- * Congressman **Matt Salmon (R-AZ)**, the chair of the subcommittee, asked Mrs. Thornton why in a recent statement to the Chinese government in Beijing, Secretary of State John Kerry had only mentioned the three Communiqués and not the Taiwan Relations Act. DAS Thornton attributed this to an omission, emphasized that the TRA was a cornerstone of US relations, and that President Obama did mention the TRA in his meeting with Chinese President Xi Jin-ping.

In response to a question by Congressman Salmon on recent reports of life-fire military drills by China, apparently aimed at the newly-elected government of President Tsai Ing-wen, Ms. Thornton stated that the U.S. has called on China to show restraint and flexibility in working with Taiwan's new administration under Tsai Ing-wen's Democratic Progressive Party, which takes office in May. She mentioned that right after the elections, the US government had sent Deputy Secretary of State Tony Blinken to Beijing to relay the very strong US desire for cross-Straits stability.

- * Congressman **Ed Royce (R-CA)**, the chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, expressed his concern about the lack of regularity in US arms sales to Taiwan, urged US support for Taiwan's development of indigenous submarines, and also expressed support for Taiwan's inclusion in the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP).
- * Congressman **Gerald Connolly (D-VA)** also expressed support of Taiwan into the TPP and other international organizations. In addition he expressed his amazement that it has now been more than 15 years since Taiwan requested US assistance in obtaining new diesel submarines, and that in the meantime little has happened. He indicated this raises questions on whether the US was abiding by the provisions of the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, which codifies that the US will supply Taiwan with defensive military equipment.
- * Congressman **Steve Chabot (R-OH)** also expressed his deep concern about the delay in US decisionmaking on military equipment that Taiwan needs. He then focused on the need for the US to relax its outdated restrictions on high-level visits from Taiwan,

particularly since Taiwan has now developed into a full-fledged democracy. He said these restrictions were both insulting and counterproductive.

- * Subcommittee chairman **Matt Salmon (R-AZ)** closed the session by expressing concern about cross-Strait stability because of China's "steady stream" of threats. Salmon said: *"In a time when Taiwan's security is not assured from coercion or potential attacks, I urge our Administration to continue to support Taiwan. We must prioritize Taiwan's active and meaningful participation on the global stage, ensure its self-defense capabilities are sufficient and ensure that its economy continues to grow vibrantly."*

Project2049 report on US' Taiwan policy

On 1 February 2016 the Project2049 Institute, based in Arlington VA, published a new report titled **The United States and Future Policy Options in the Taiwan Strait**, authored by researchers Mark Stokes and Sabrina Tsai, who are respectively executive director and research associate at the Project2049 Institute.

The monograph first presents an excellent overview of the history of cross-Strait relations and US policy towards Taiwan. It then analyzes the forces driving the future of Taiwan, and its importance to the international community, and concludes with an examination of four alternative US policy options towards Taiwan.

The four schools of thought outlined in the report are: 1) the current "maintenance of the status quo" approach of formal diplomatic ties with the PRC and unofficial relations with Taiwan; 2) the "accommodation with Beijing / abandon Taiwan" approach advocated in some academic circles. The report rejects this approach altogether; 3) the "normalization of relations with Taiwan" approach, advocated by those who argue that a new and democratic Taiwan deserves its place as a full and equal member of the international family of nations, and 4) a "One China, two governments" approach that would gradually extend equal legitimacy to both sides, but that would remain within a "broadened" One China policy framework.

In its Executive Summary, the report outlines why there is an urgent need for a rethinking of US policy:

The zero sum framework of formal diplomatic relations with one side and informal ties with the other may have been appropriate in 1979, when both governments were authoritarian. However, with each passing election on Taiwan and consolidation of popular sovereignty, U.S. cross-Strait policy may be increasingly difficult to sustain.

Viewing the U.S. One China policy in a zero sum light, Washington extends legitimacy to an authoritarian CCP state while denying equal legitimacy to a Taiwan that has evolved into a vibrant democracy. Under these circumstances, advocates of the fourth school of thought argue for a U.S. policy that reflects the most accurate representation of the status quo in the Taiwan Strait as possible.

This monograph assesses risks associated with continued U.S. agnosticism, as well as opportunities that could be leveraged for a more balanced approach to dealing with both sides of the Taiwan Strait. U.S. policy created the conditions within which Taiwan transformed from an authoritarian party-state to a representative democracy.

However, U.S. cross-Strait policy has not adjusted to reflect this fundamental transformation. Consequently, this study offers: 1) a general overview of the history of cross-Strait relations and U.S. policy; 2) an analysis of the forces driving the future of Taiwan and its value to the international community; and; 3) an outline of alternative U.S. policy options in the Taiwan Strait.

The monograph concludes that a more objective representation of the status quo in the Taiwan Strait may better serve long-term U.S. interests. Resolution of cross-Strait differences is constrained without broad acknowledgement — if not recognition — of Taiwan's legitimacy within the international community.

In Memoriam

Dr. David G. Gelzer (1919-2016)

On 23 January 2016, the Reverend Dr. David Gelzer passed away at a nursing home in Rydal, north of Philadelphia in Pennsylvania. He was 96 years old. From 1975 to early 1984, Reverend Gelzer and his wife Elizabeth served at the Tainan Theological Seminary.

Gelzer was born in Vevey, Switzerland on 7 October 1919, and grew up in Basel. At the age of 17 he and his family emigrated to the United States, and he received degrees from the University of Dubuque and Yale Divinity School. In 1949 he married his wife Elizabeth, and in 1952 they were commissioned by the Presbyterian Church of the USA as missionaries.

Their missionary work took them to the African country of Cameroun for thirteen years, where he established a theological college, taught Church History and Reformation Theology, and worked with several churches and tribes. In 1974 he was made a *Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur* for his work in Cameroun.

In 1975 the couple was sent to Taiwan, where David taught at the Tainan Theological College and served as the editor of the English edition of the **Taiwan Church News**, which became an important pipeline to get information about the government's repressive practices out of the country despite government barriers imposed under a strict Martial Law.

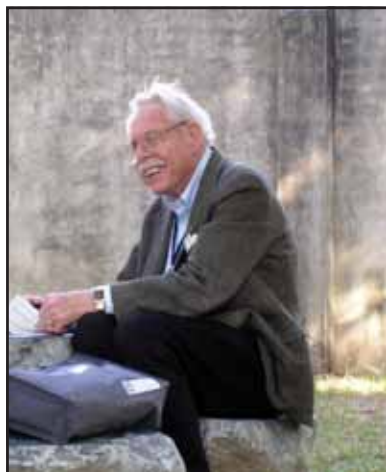
Photo: Taiwan Communiqué

On 1 February 1984, the Kuomintang authorities expelled the couple from Taiwan. Dr. Gelzer told the **Taiwan Communiqué** at the time that the military and police authorities involved did not tell him the reason for the expulsion. He assumed that his work with the Taiwan Church News was the major reason.

The couple was subsequently sent to Vanuatu in the Pacific, where they served a number of years before retiring in Swarthmore, PA. For many decades, Dr. Gelzer was also active in the oecumenical movement, World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the World Council of Churches in Geneva.

After Taiwan's momentous transition to democracy in the late 1980s/early 1990s, Dr. Gelzer and his wife were invited back to Taiwan several times: in 1994 he received an honorary doctorate from Tainan Theological College, and in 2003 he and many other former missionaries and human right workers were invited by the **Taiwan Foundation for Democracy** to be recognized for their work in support of Taiwan's democracy. For an account, see *A Journey of Remembrance and Appreciation* in **Taiwan Communiqué** no. 106, January 2004.

As time went on, both became increasingly frail, and Elizabeth Gelzer passed away in September 2013. Gelzer himself continued to be active in church work and kept a keen interest in developments in Taiwan. He must have enjoyed seeing the results of the Taiwan presidential and legislative elections on 16 January 2016, just one week before his passing.



Rev. David Gelzer in Tainan in December 2003

Dr. Gelzer is survived by two daughters, Charlotte and Rebekah, and two sons, Christian and Stuart and their families. A memorial service was held on 20 February 2016 at the Swarthmore Presbyterian Church.

Book Review

Green Island, by Shawna Yang Ryan

Reviewed by Gerrit van der Wees

In *Green Island*, novelist Shawna Yang Ryan describes the story of a Taiwanese family, starting with the birth of the main character, the daughter of a Dr. Tsai, on the eve of February 28, 1947 (228), when a series of events led to a large-scale massacre by Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist troops of native Taiwanese civic leaders, students and intellectuals.

This is a very intense book, that lets the reader look deep into the tortured soul of a family that was deeply affected by the 228 events in 1947, the beginning of 38 years of martial law. It artfully weaves the family history into actual events during the troubling decades leading up to Taiwan's momentous democratization in the late 1980s / early 1990s.

The 228 massacre is little known and even less understood outside Taiwan, but within the country it has constituted a deep divide between the native Taiwanese (some 85% of the island's population) and the Chinese mainlanders who came over with Chiang Kai-shek.

Indeed, during the 38 years of martial law (1949-1987) the repressive Chinese Nationalist rulers prohibited any discussion of the 1947 events. It wasn't until after the transition to democracy in 1989-1992 that people started to freely talk about that dark episode in the country's history, and that it was possible to do research on the period. However, until today, no real *truth and reconciliation process* has taken place, and most of the archives of the military and secret police remain closed.

The father of the main character, Dr. Tsai, is a medical doctor in Taipei, and in early March 1947, when the protests against the corruption and mismanagement of the incoming Chinese Nationalists unfold, he attends a town hall meeting with the repressive Chinese governor Chen Yi, where he speaks out for democracy and good governance.

A few days later, after the mass killings have started, he is arrested and disappears. The family has no idea whether he is still alive, and move in with relatives in a rural area near Taichung. For ten years, they don't hear from him, but then he reappears, a broken man.

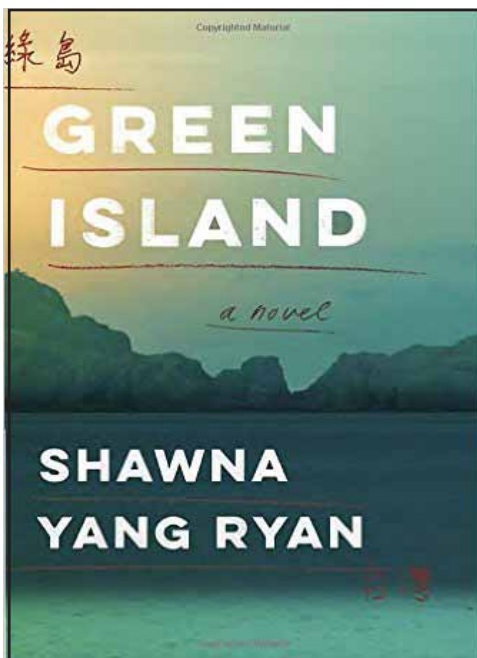
We do learn that after a horrendous experience at the hands of young and illiterate Chinese Nationalist soldiers from rural China, he ends up in prison in Green Island, off the East Coast of Taiwan, which for many decades housed a detention center for political prisoners.

The absence of the father left a major gap in the family during those ten years, but his return forces the family to deal with the emotional problems brought about by the pain and anguish inflicted on the father and the family as well. The book tells how the different individuals in the family each deal with this in their own way. As the author stated in an interview with the New York Times, it is a story of compromise, survival, and belonging (*Shawna Yang Ryan on the 1947 incident that shaped Taiwan's identity*, *New York Times*, 23 January 2016)..

The main character tries to escape the dark spell by marrying a bright young physicist, Mr. Wei Lin, who has just been appointed a professor at the University of California at Berkeley. But even in faraway United States the shadow of 228 reaches them: her husband is active in Taiwan's independence movement and befriends an important activist, Mr. Jin Bao, who had recently escaped from Taiwan.

The extensive campus spying network, maintained by the Kuomintang government in those years, did eventually catch up with the main character and her husband. Some time later, Mr. Jin Bao is assassinated.

His story is loosely modeled after two real-life personalities: professor Peng Ming-min, who escaped from Taiwan in 1970 and became a main driver for Taiwan's democracy movement while in exile in the US, and Mr. Henry Liu, a novelist who wrote a critical



biography of the President Chiang Ching-kuo, and was assassinated in October 1984 by the KMT's secret police in collusion with the Bamboo Union triad.

As said before, the book artfully weaves the family's arduous story into actual events that highlight Taiwan's recent history. It is a testimony to the survival and endurance of the Taiwanese people during those dark decades, and at the same time it helps outsiders understand the strong feeling of Taiwanese identity and belonging that was forged as a result. A must read.

The full title of the book is **Green Island, a Novel**. By Shawna Yang Ryan, a Taiwanese American who grew up in California and now teaches creative writing at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. Published by Alfred A. Knopf, New York, February 2016.

A farewell to our readers

Riding into the sunset

Finally, we would like to bid farewell to the readers, because we will be retiring from the editorship of **Taiwan Communiqué**. It has been a long journey: We started the **Communiqué** back in 1980 – the year after the Kaohsiung Incident — in order to focus international attention on the lack of human rights and democracy in Taiwan.

So we have worked on Taiwan issues for a total of 35 years: the first 25 years working in evenings and weekends publishing our Taiwan Communiqué, while holding a daytime aerospace policy job with the Dutch government, and from 1994 through 2000 as Science & Technology Attaché at the Embassy in Washington.

Then in 2005 I was able to take early retirement from the Dutch government, and started working full-time on Taiwan issues here in Washington. The year 2015 thus marks the 10th year at FAPA. We were very fortunate to be able to



The editors

work for Taiwan's human rights and democratic movement in these three-and-a-half decades, and to have the opportunity to witness Taiwan's transition from an authoritarian regime to a democracy.

The election victory by Dr. Tsai Ing-wen and the DPP in Taiwan in a sense provided a good impetus for us to move on: it was the culmination of many years of hard work by so many people in the Taiwanese community around the world, and gave us and others a sense of accomplishment: the goal of a full transition to democracy had been achieved! My wife Mei-chin and I decided that it is a good time for us to step down and have the younger generation take over.

We published a total of 155 issues. The full list of back issues can be found on www.taiwandc.org/twcom/. It is not known yet when and how the Communiqué will be continued, so *stay tuned!*

Best regards,

Gerrit & Mei-chin van der Wees
Washington DC, 1 March 2016

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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

Internet homepages: www.fapa.org and www.taiwandc.org

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