

# Issues of Concern to Taiwan Supporters

## 1. UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE PEOPLE OF TAIWAN

Taiwan today is one of the most vibrant, young democracies in the world. Any important issue, such as the future of Taiwan, should be determined by the people of Taiwan through a democratic mechanism, such as a referendum, and without any military intimidation or coercion from China.

While polls state that more than 80% of Taiwan's people support the cross-Taiwan Strait status quo, it is important for American policymakers to understand that (1) the status quo today is (de facto) "independence" since China does not exercise any control over Taiwan. (2) China's 1500 ballistic missiles targeted at Taiwan pose a psychological terror over the people of Taiwan and heavily influence poll results.

In the meantime, the two major political parties in Taiwan have a substantially different outlook for Taiwan's future and corresponding China policy. The ruling Chinese nationalist administration adopts a China-friendly policy with unification as its eventual goal while the opposition Democratic Progressive Party takes a more cautious approach and insists on maintaining and furthering Taiwan's independent status. The future of Taiwan should not be decided by any single political leader in Taiwan, nor by Washington or by Beijing.

Current U.S. policy is that any resolution of cross-Taiwan Strait relations must be (1) peaceful and (2) have the express consent of the people of Taiwan. ***We insist that only the people of Taiwan have the right to determine Taiwan's future. We request that your office issue an extension of remarks expressing support for the right of self-determination for the people of Taiwan.***

## 2. TAIWAN'S INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION

Taiwan is recognized only by some 20 minor countries and is not a member of any major international organization, including the United Nations and the World Health Organization. Taiwan's international isolation is the result of China's relentless pressure. Taiwan's first-time participation in the weeklong World Health Assembly meeting last May was applauded as a breakthrough, in reality it was a mere one-time invitation by the WHO permitted by China.

Taiwan's international participation should not be contingent upon China's whims. The right of the people of Taiwan to participate in the international arena and to contribute to the international community should not be at the mercy of Beijing. Since 1997, both Houses passed legislation supporting Taiwan's WHO bid. We urge you to support greater international participation of Taiwan.

## 3. TAIWAN'S CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY

Taiwan today is widely praised for its democratic achievements; yet, it is a relatively young democracy with ample room for improvement in the consolidation of democracy and justice. During Chinese envoy Mr. Yun-lin Chen's visit to Taiwan in the fall of 2008, a large confrontation between the public and the police took place—arguably the most serious clash in recent decades. It prompted Freedom House, Amnesty International and others to express concern. There have also been signs of erosion of judicial independence, as the current government has launched a massive investigation campaign into officials from the previous administration and is keeping former president Chen in indefinite detention on alleged corruption charges.

Taiwan is going through a crucial transition period from authoritarianism to democracy. In view of the election in 2008 of the Chinese Nationalist government which was the perpetrator of Taiwan's authoritarian past, it is important that the government does not renege on its democratic pledges and continues efforts to consolidate democratic reforms.

#### **4. TAIWAN'S SAFETY AND SECURITY**

China has close to 1,500 ballistic missiles targeted at Taiwan today. The number of missiles is increasing by 50 to 100 every year. They not only threaten Taiwan but also compromise the stability in the region. These missiles hold the 23 million people of Taiwan at gunpoint and pose a psychological terror. The Cuban missile crisis in the 1960s held the American people hostage for 13 days. Yet, every day the people of Taiwan live under this Chinese military threat.

A recent Pentagon report on China's military power, which was mandated by Congress, for the very first time warned that Taiwan is losing its air superiority to China. In his Senate confirmation hearing, the Director of National Intelligence, Adm. Dennis Blair, stated that the cross-Strait military balance is tilting further towards China. The 1979 Taiwan Relations Act (PL 96-8) commits the U.S. to Taiwan's security and regional stability. We support the U.S. sale of advanced weapons and advocate the need for the highest level of military exchange between Taiwan and the U.S.

#### **5. CONGRESSIONAL TAIWAN CAUCUS**

The Congressional Taiwan Caucus today has 134 members. To join, please contact Jonathan Katz at Congressman Robert Wexler's office at (202) 225-3001. The Senate Taiwan Caucus has 25 members. To join, please contact Melissa Pitts at Senator Robert Menendez's office at (202) 224-4744.

*FAPA is a worldwide grassroots organization that seeks support for Taiwan's democracy, security and international participation and promotes international recognition of Taiwan's sovereignty and independence.*