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### Taiwan Unite to Resist China!

By Chen-yuan Tung

At the end of his trip to China, Kuomintang (KMT) Vice Chairman Chiang Pin-kun told media, "What it is not convenient for the government to do, the opposition party will do. The results will still be enjoyed by all Taiwan's people." Next, KMT Chairman Lien Chan, at the invitation of Chinese Community Party (CPC) General Secretary Hu Jintao, is planning to visit China in May and hopes to promote the signing of a "cross-Strait peace agreement." We should applaud the opposition party's efforts for Taiwan's national interests to break the cross-Strait deadlock. However, if he really has the nation's interests in mind, before he goes on the visit, Lien Chan should at least meet with President Chen Shui-bian to discuss in detail a strategy for cross-Strait negotiation and interaction, so that he won't be used by China to create divisions within Taiwan and erode Taiwan's national interests.

Firstly, after March 26 when a million of Taiwan's people took to the streets in peaceful protest against China's Anti-Secession Law (ASL), China faced considerable pressure from the international community, which requested it to show some goodwill by way of compensation to Taiwan. The harm to Taiwan's interests is obvious now that China uses talks between the KMT and the CCP to create the false impression that Taiwan did not oppose the ASL, in order to dilute pressure from the international community, and lessen the concessions which they should make towards Taiwan. The small favors in the 10-point agreement between the KMT and the CCP cannot make up for the damage done, not to mention that several of these points require negotiations between the Taipei and Beijing governments before they can be implemented.

Secondly, the KMT's argument "what the government can't do, we'll help with," is likely an impetuous way of destroying the government's holistic plan for cross-Strait relations. The author believes that President Chen's willingness to accept questions and criticism from within his party in order to sign a 10-point consensus with People First Party (PFP) Chairman James Soong in late February was meant to build consensus between the pan-blue and pan-green camps before pushing forward with cross-Strait negotiations. The author also believes that the self-restraint shown by President Chen when he abstained from delivering a speech at the 326 demonstration, and did not ask legislators from his party to draft an anti-annexation law, nor hold an anti-ASL referendum was aimed at winning the approval of the international community and maintaining some room for cross-Strait interaction in the future. But until China makes appropriate concessions to Taiwan, we should not be in a hurry to restore such interaction and thereby relieve international pressure on China. As a result, the KMT delegation's actions aren't helping the government, but rather, are damaging to government plans.

In fact, including direct passenger and cargo chartered flights, Taiwan agricultural products being exported to the Chinese market and Chinese fisher laborers exporting to Taiwan, most issues of the KMT-CCP ten-point agreement requiring cross-Strait negotiations are items that the Chinese government has previously said that they were willing to discuss with Taiwan. On March 11, three days before the Chinese National People's Congress passed the ASL, China sent a missive to Taiwan, hoping to start discussions on passenger chartered flights for the tomb sweeping festival, which to date the Taiwanese government still has not replied to. That is, it is not that the Taiwanese government is not capable of doing these things, but it is that the government is waiting before it making any moves until China makes some appropriate concessions towards Taiwan.

Thirdly, as to the issue of Taiwan's participation in the World Health Assembly (WHA), China is actually responding to pressure from the United States. On March 8 and 11, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Randy Schriver and a US senior official twice severely criticized China's ASL as a mistake and requested China to show some goodwill to Taiwan to make up for the ASL. In particular, they asked the Chinese government show flexibility on the issues of cross-Strait cargo chartered flights and Taiwan's participation in the WHA. China is merely using the KMT-CCP talks to deflect US pressure and this deepens our suspicion that the KMT is being used by China to divide Taiwan.

Currently, in the face-off between China and Taiwan, only a united Taiwan can resist the threats by China. We are more than willing to see the KMT playing a certain role in the cross-Strait interaction, to remedy the limits which the government has in cross-Strait negotiations. However, continued wrangling between the government and the KMT will be China's advantage. The author calls on Lien Chan to meet with President Chen to discuss in detail cross-Strait issues before he goes to visit China, so that there can be real cooperation between the government and the opposition party to advance Taiwan's national interests and to foster a cross-Strait peace agreement.

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