

# Cross-Strait Relations: Skepticism Abounds

Alan D. Romberg

Whether the issue is internal splits within Taiwan's two major political parties or Beijing's view of the parties and their leaders, the predominating mood today is skepticism. Not only have Tsai Ing-wen's poll numbers continued to drop, she also faces increasing pressure from the Mainland. And although Wu Den-yih successfully assumed chairmanship of the badly riven Kuomintang (KMT), his reversion to Ma Ying-jeou's carefully crafted cross-Strait policy has contributed to PRC doubts about the depth of his commitment to "one China." Finally, while strengthening ties with Taiwan, even the United States has shown some frustration with both Taipei and Beijing about the need to do more to promote cross-Strait dialogue.

## Beijing Tightens the Net—Slowly

After blocking Taiwan's effort to send an "observer" to the May 2017 World Health Assembly (WHA),<sup>1</sup> Beijing upped the ante in its campaign against Tsai Ing-wen and her DPP administration, including but going beyond issues of international space.<sup>2</sup>

Regarding WHA, with the departure of China-friendly WHO Director-General Margaret Chan in mid-2017,<sup>3</sup> China's support for her successor was clearly related to the new DG's pledge to handle the Taiwan issue, including at WHA, in accordance with the "one China" principle.<sup>4</sup>

The Mainland also applied pressure on Taiwan's diplomatic relations, finally allowing Panama to switch from Taipei to Beijing after deflecting it for several years.<sup>5</sup> In the process, Panama's recognition of "one China" of which Taiwan is an "inalienable part," and its severance of all diplomatic and official "relations or exchanges" with Taiwan featured prominently.<sup>6</sup> As PRC foreign minister Wang Yi noted, this agreement demonstrated that the "one China" principle is the fundamental premise and political basis on which the two countries could establish diplomatic ties.

Although Beijing did not proceed immediately to steal more of Taiwan's 20 remaining diplomatic partners, nonetheless more such actions were anticipated. Meanwhile, despite PRC denials that it was responsible,<sup>7</sup> several of Taiwan's trade offices in non-diplomatic partner countries suddenly were forced to move or change their names to eliminate any reference to the "Republic of China" or "Taiwan."<sup>8</sup>

There was also some sabre-rattling. Although presented as routine "far-sea flight training,"<sup>9</sup> when four PLA military aircraft flew adjacent to Taiwan's ADIZ within two weeks in late July<sup>10</sup> and another penetrated the ADIZ in mid-August,<sup>11</sup> one clear purpose was to send a message to Taiwan. On a related note, this followed an early July round-

trip transit of the Taiwan Strait by the PRC's only operational aircraft carrier battle group.

Moreover, Xi Jinping's "six any's" (六個任何) remarks on the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the PLA had obvious meaning for the island.

We absolutely will not permit any person, any organization, any political party, at any time, in any form, to separate any piece of Chinese territory from China. No one should expect us to swallow the bitter fruit of damage to our sovereignty, security and development interests.<sup>12</sup>

It would be unduly alarmist to suggest that Beijing is considering near-term use of force against Taiwan. It is not unreasonable, however, to suggest that the Mainland seeks to remind everyone that the goal of unification is unchanging and that not only formal independence but also perpetuating the current situation to the point of consolidating "peaceful separation" of Taiwan would be intolerable.

Indeed, recent Mainland discussion of future cross-Strait relations has (re)introduced the notion of timetables.<sup>13</sup> On the first anniversary of Tsai's presidency, the *Global Times* editorialized that Tsai's failure to "complete the answer sheet" about "one China" was a delaying tactic to consolidate DPP rule and buy time to move toward independence.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, "it is now time to set a timeline for Tsai to complete the answer sheet."

Nonetheless, for several months the spotlight continued to concentrate on defining the "nature" of cross-Strait relations, with CCP Politburo Standing Committee member Yu Zhengsheng underscoring the necessity to do this not only in words but through "concrete action" (实际行动).<sup>15</sup>

But in late July, a prominent PRC Taiwan expert argued that Beijing should start studying a 30-year reunification timeline. Asserting that this was a question that could no longer be evaded,<sup>16</sup> he said unification was a "requirement" (必然要求) of the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation" (中華民族偉大復興).

Several weeks later this expert published an opinion piece laying out his argument to a broader audience in *Global Times*.<sup>17</sup> As before, he reasoned that not only public opinion in the Mainland but "the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation pushes us to set a timetable for reunification." He acknowledged there were divergent views regarding the connection between rejuvenation and reunification and about a timetable. (Moreover, some officials argued the connection is positive, affording Taiwan greater opportunities to share development opportunities.<sup>18</sup>) But he argued that, while past proposals to apply a time limit had been put off due to "strategic considerations," now unification and rejuvenation of the Chinese nation are "organically connected" and "conditions for the Mainland to set the timetable are now mature."

Perhaps revealing a principal near-term impetus for his proposal, the author concluded by linking his position to the current situation in Taiwan.

Under the One China principle, the mainland could be patient with Taiwan, but if the DPP government accelerates its provocative activities,<sup>19</sup> the mainland will for sure speed up its efforts to realize the complete unification of China and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

In light of this comment, one might speculate that Zhou's goal was actually to goad Tsai into action.<sup>20</sup> Whether it was or not, the comment did reflect a growing consensus on the Mainland that Tsai and the DPP will not accept the fundamental principle of the "two sides belonging to one China." As a consequence of this consensus, Beijing was reported to have moved from a "period of observation" (觀察期) to a "period of evaluation" (評價期),<sup>21</sup> seizing the initiative and squeezing Taipei harder, focusing even more than before on separating the island's government from the people.

Attention to "cultural independence" has risen on the Mainland's list of concerns about "soft independence."<sup>22</sup> Recently, Beijing has focused its attacks on efforts it sees as promoting a separate "Taiwanese nationality" (台灣國族性), splitting conceptions of China as a "state" (國家) and as a "nation" (民族). Of special concern were proposals to revise history textbooks to treat "Chinese" history as part of "East Asian" history, separate from Taiwan history and without any connection to the Cairo Declaration about "returning Taiwan to China." Similarly, Beijing has assailed Taipei's "diversification of national language"<sup>23</sup> and promotion of minority cultures as a path by which the Tsai administration is systematically and strategically pursuing desinicization to promote "real Taiwan independence" (真台獨) based on "Taiwan-centric consciousness" (台灣主體性) and identification with a distinct "Taiwan nation (台灣民族) different from the "Chinese nation" (中華民族).<sup>24</sup>

## It's Not Your Father's KMT

At the same time Beijing has been upping the ante with Tsai and the DPP, a certain testiness has entered into Mainland interaction with the KMT in the wake of Wu Den-yih's election as party chairman in May.

Wu's election did not come about because he was universally loved. Rather, it was because he represented a credible—perhaps the only—opportunity to unify a very divided party and win back local offices in 2018 and maybe even national office in 2020. A critical element in Wu's success was abandonment of the more extreme positions of his predecessor Hung Hsiu-chu, such as "one China, same interpretation" (一中同表) and of her determination to negotiate a peace accord. Instead, Wu returned to Ma Ying-jeou's mantra of "one China, respective interpretations" (一中各表) and Ma's "three noes" (三不) policy: no unification, no independence, no use of force. Because of this "retreat" from Hung's positions, even though Wu has stated many times that he endorses "one China" and is strongly opposed to "Taiwan independence," even writing it into the party platform, some people in the Mainland suspect that, with his Taiwanese roots, Wu's commitment may not be absolute. Referencing the KMT and DPP party colors, some describe him as a man with "Blue skin but Green bones" (藍皮綠骨).

Hence, from the time of Wu's election as party chair there have been indications of less than total Mainland confidence that he will be a stalwart defender of the "1992 Consensus" and all it implies. This was evident in the use of the non-honorific form of address (你 rather than 您) by Xi Jinping in his letter of congratulations in May<sup>25</sup> as well as in early "background" comments by relevant PRC officials about how Wu's "setting aside" the Xi-Hung November 2016 meeting conclusions "gave them a chill" (冒冷汗).<sup>26</sup>

Moreover, this grumbling was evident at the time of Wu's August ascension to KMT leadership. Not only did Xi fail to send Wu a congratulatory note,<sup>27</sup> but the TAO issued what could only be interpreted as a conditional statement of willingness to work with the KMT "on the basis of the common political foundation" of the 2005 Hu Jintao-Lien Chan joint vision on adhering to the "1992 Consensus" and opposing "Taiwan independence."<sup>28</sup>

But the hard reality is that Hung's position was not only unacceptable to KMT members beyond a certain cohort of "dark Blue" adherents; it was generally rejected by the Taiwan electorate and destined to perpetuate the KMT's minority position in Taiwan politics.

Consequently, Wu has had to walk a tightrope between making clear to Beijing his commitment to the "1992 Consensus" on one side, and, on the other, demonstrating to Taiwan voters his empathy with their strong opposition to unification and their ambiguous feelings about negotiating a peace agreement.<sup>29</sup>

Some PRC scholars view Wu's approach as simply "another form of the special state-to-state theory advocated by Lee Teng-hui."<sup>30</sup> Others understand that Taiwan's political reality imposes real constraints on Wu and have argued that the Mainland shouldn't demand he do things he cannot do.<sup>31</sup>

In any event, unless it is willing to use force against Taiwan—highly unlikely for now—in order to keep pressure on Tsai while she is in office, and perhaps to force her out of office at the earliest possible opportunity, Beijing has no obvious alternative to treating the KMT as the only viable political opposition force in Taiwan.

## Much depends on Tsai's—and the DPP's—performance

Whether Wu's approach will bring voters back into the KMT fold remains to be seen. Disaffection with the DPP<sup>32</sup> does not automatically translate into support for the KMT. But to the extent that views regarding Tsai Ing-wen and the DPP matter in the voting booth, the news for the incumbents is not encouraging.

Despite a brief uptick in her polls in July following passage of the pension reform bill, there is a persisting sense of the public discontent with Tsai's governance. One late August poll showed her satisfaction rating dropping to 24 percent, the second lowest level since her inauguration, with dissatisfaction commensurately rising to 58 percent.<sup>33</sup> As in previous polls, a significant problem people see is Tsai's leadership style, but the DPP as a whole got poor grades not only for its performance and trustworthiness but also regarding whether it even understands public opinion.<sup>34</sup>

Of particular note is the fact that “neutral” (中立) respondents are becoming increasingly dissatisfied as are young people. A sharp drop in support among a younger cohort (20–29 years of age),<sup>35</sup> so critical to Tsai’s election in 2016,<sup>36</sup> is obviously a warning sign.

According to one analyst, Tsai’s continuing top-down, centralized leadership style in approaching domestic reform is largely to blame.<sup>37</sup> However, her hands-on approach to reform programs has become a well-established pattern, manifested among other ways by having cabinet ministers frequently report directly to her rather than through the premier.<sup>38</sup> Although this practice is consistent with Tsai’s having retained party leadership in an effort to maximize coordination, at least some people believe it has serious drawbacks.

Whether the replacement of Premier Lin Chuan with rising DPP star Lai Ching-te<sup>39</sup> will lead to a change in this pattern, and whether it will improve public perception of the effectiveness of the administration’s policies, remains to be seen.<sup>40</sup> But Tsai knows she needs something to reverse her fortunes and this appears to be a bold step in that direction.

Lai is generally viewed as a moderate in his attitude toward cross-Strait relations as reflected in his “be friendly to China, love Taiwan” (親中愛台) policy. Despite his outspoken advocacy of Taiwan independence, initial indications are that Beijing will focus on the DPP’s Mainland policy from here on out, not Lai’s history.<sup>41</sup>

Polls show varying appraisals of Tsai’s current cross-Strait policy. There is clearly a general desire to calm things down and reestablish more-productive relations with the Mainland. However, views differ with respect to whether Tsai has fulfilled her commitment to maintain the status quo, government-sponsored polls indicate the public believes she has,<sup>42</sup> while other polls disagree.<sup>43</sup>

In its initial response to Panama’s switch, Taipei said it would reevaluate cross-Strait relations and would not rule out any possibility, including potentially changing its approach to the status quo.<sup>44</sup> This was a caution both to Beijing not to take things too far and to others who might consider toeing Beijing’s line. But the reality is that the government does not want to roil cross-Strait waters or lose the benefits of pragmatic relations with other countries.<sup>45</sup> So while it will try to maintain as many diplomatic partners as possible, Taipei is preparing for further defections and has stressed that “substantial” and “economic” relations are even more important than formal diplomatic ties.<sup>46</sup> Meanwhile, it will maintain its existing cross-Strait policy.<sup>47</sup>

In August, Tsai called for a “new model of cross-Strait interactions” (兩岸互動的新模式).<sup>48</sup> But Mainland commentators have responded skeptically, arguing that the issue is the need not for a new model but for the creation of cross-Strait trust that can only come through properly addressing the common political foundation. As one scholar argued, the model used during the Ma administration is not outmoded, it just needs the right key to reopen it.<sup>49</sup>

Very few experts on either side expect any important developments before the mid-October CCP 19<sup>th</sup> Party Congress. After that, expectations vary, with the preponderance of expert opinion in the Mainland being that there will be no dramatic change, but that what change there is will be in the direction of continuing to tighten up. In that regard, there is some chatter about “clarifying” the Anti-Secession Law to address specific variants of “soft independence.”<sup>50</sup>

While Taiwan experts hope a way forward can be found, overall they tend to hold a pessimistic view.

## The U.S. role

President Tsai Ing-wen’s desire to strengthen ties with the United States<sup>51</sup> has been reciprocated by Washington in various ways.

- Defense Secretary James Mattis said at the Singapore Shangri-La Dialogue in June that the U.S. would continue to abide by its commitments to Taiwan consistent with the requirements of the Taiwan Relations Act, the first time Taiwan has been mentioned by a U.S. delegation to that forum since its inception in 2002.<sup>52</sup>
- In the wake of Panama’s switch from Taipei to Beijing, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson reaffirmed the long-standing American “one China” policy.<sup>53</sup>
- The acting deputy assistant secretary of state responsible for Taiwan and PRC affairs paid an unusual (though not unprecedented) visit to Taiwan in mid-June.<sup>54</sup>
- The Trump administration sent notifications to Congress regarding its intention to sell \$1.4 billion in weapons systems to Taiwan.<sup>55</sup>
- AIT Chairman James Moriarty indicated that “very senior” U.S. officials would visit Taiwan in coming months.<sup>56</sup>
- Congress took various actions to support enhanced civilian<sup>57</sup> and military exchanges with Taiwan, including possible Taiwan port calls by the U.S. Navy<sup>58</sup>

Predictably, Beijing voiced strong objections to all of this. PRC Ambassador to the United States Cui Tiankai charged that “especially arms sales to Taiwan” not only violate the three joint U.S.-PRC communiqués and undermine China’s sovereignty and core interests, but they run counter to the “spirit” of the April 2017 Mar-a-Lago summit.<sup>59</sup> He also complained about inconsistency in the U.S. approach to China.

The United States cannot ask China to cooperate on the Korean Peninsula on one hand, while continuously taking actions that harm Chinese interests on the other.<sup>60</sup>

Though most observers believe USN port calls to Taiwan will never come to pass, many PRC commentators expressed concern, predicting potentially dire consequences.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, rumors emerged of U.S. plans to re-provision ships in Taiwan waters.<sup>62</sup>

Despite PRC complaints, the U.S. continues to praise Tsai for attempting to reach out to the Mainland within the bounds of her political constraints. However, AIT chairman James Moriarty elaborated that the U.S. still urges “both sides” to show creativity and flexibility and indicated that, while the U.S. may not know everything Taiwan is doing in this regard, Taipei’s efforts are “not totally sufficient.”<sup>63</sup>

On the military side of the relationship, Taiwan is now pushing more formally than before for provision of F-35 aircraft despite discouragement from U.S. officials,<sup>64</sup> who favor less-glitzy systems necessary to meet more urgent needs.<sup>65</sup> And although U.S.-Taiwan economic ties have been robust, problems remain, even beyond beef and pork.<sup>66</sup> (Ironically, Taiwan worries about U.S. trade action against the Mainland, fearing that any American retaliation could harm Taiwan if there were a finding of forced technology transfers or PRC intellectual property theft.<sup>67</sup>)

---

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Alan D. Romberg, “Cross-Strait Relations: Marking Time,” *China Leadership Monitor*, no. 53, May 25, 2017,

[http://www.hoover.org/sites/default/files/research/docs/clm\\_53ar.pdf](http://www.hoover.org/sites/default/files/research/docs/clm_53ar.pdf), pp. 4–6.

<sup>2</sup> Scarlett Chai and Lilian Wu, “Taiwan suffers new setback in trying to attend ILO conference,” China News Agency (hereafter abbreviated CNA), June 3, 2017, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201706030010.aspx>. Preemptively Beijing also made clear it would oppose Taipei joining a “curtailed” Transpacific Partnership (TPP), saying adherence to the “one China” principle was a prerequisite (前提) for Taiwan’s participation in regional economic cooperation arrangements. (Taiwan Affairs Office Press Briefing, June 28, 2017,

[http://www.gwytb.gov.cn/xwfbh/201706/t20170628\\_11809826.htm](http://www.gwytb.gov.cn/xwfbh/201706/t20170628_11809826.htm).)

<sup>3</sup> Chan asserted that Beijing never pressured her on Taiwan’s participation. “I communicated with the Beijing government and gained approval to invite Taiwan as a non-voting observer only after it recognises the ‘one China’ policy.” (Kimmy Chung, “Beijing never pressured me in office, former WHO chief Margaret Chan says,” *South China Morning Post* (hereafter abbreviated *SCMP*), July 7, 2017, <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/politics/article/2101770/beijing-never-pressured-me-office-former-who-chief-margaret>.)

<sup>4</sup> Yin Chun-chieh, “New WHO General Secretary: Will handle Taiwan issue according to ‘one China’ principle” (WHO新秘書長：一中原則處理涉台議題), CNA, May 25, 2017, <http://www.cna.com.tw/news/acn/201705250022-1.aspx>.

<sup>5</sup> “Panama establishes ties with China, ditches Taiwan in win for Beijing,” Reuters, June 12, 2017, <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/06/12/panama-establishes-ties-with-china-ditches-taiwan-in-win-for-beijing.html>.

- 
- <sup>6</sup> “China, Panama establish diplomatic ties,” Xinhua, June 13, 2017, [http://china.org.cn/china/Off\\_the\\_Wire/2017-06/13/content\\_41017149.htm](http://china.org.cn/china/Off_the_Wire/2017-06/13/content_41017149.htm).
- <sup>7</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs press conference, June 27, 2017, [http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/xwfw\\_665399/s2510\\_665401/t1473592.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/t1473592.shtml).
- <sup>8</sup> Justin Su, Liu Kuan-ting and Lilian Wu, “Trade missions under pressure from China to change names: official,” CNA, June 14, 2017, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201706140013.aspx>. Those involved were Dubai, Nigeria, Bahrain, Ecuador and Jordan.
- <sup>9</sup> Ben Blanchard, “After Taiwan alarm, China says air force drills were routine,” Reuters, August 31, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-taiwan/after-taiwan-alarm-china-says-air-force-drills-were-routine-idUSKCN1BB121>.
- <sup>10</sup> “MND: M’land’s bombers fly past airspace near Taiwan four times in two weeks,” *United Daily News* (hereafter abbreviated *UDN*), translated by KMT News Network, July 26, 2017, <http://www1.kmt.org.tw/english/page.aspx?type=article&mnum=112&anum=19569>.
- <sup>11</sup> Lu Hsin-hui and Y.F. Low, “Chinese aircraft enters Taiwan’s ADIZ: MND,” CNA, August 15, 2017, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201708150011.aspx>.
- <sup>12</sup> 我们绝不允许任何人任何组织，任何政党，在任何时候，以任何形式，把任何一块中国领土从中国分裂出去，谁都不要指望我们会吞下损害我国主权，安全，发展利益的苦果 (from “Xi Jinping: Speech at conference celebrating the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the PLA” [习近平：在庆祝中国人民解放军建军90周年大会上的讲话], Xinhua, August 1, 2017, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2017-08/01/c\\_1121416045.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2017-08/01/c_1121416045.htm).)
- <sup>13</sup> Deng Xiaoping had indirectly spoken of a unification timetable and Jiang Zemin had made known he favored one. But in recent years, it has not been part of the Mainland’s overt consideration. That it is beginning to resurface reflects not only frustration with the current DPP administration’s position but also concern with the trend of public opinion in Taiwan toward greater “Taiwanese” identity and opposition to unification.
- <sup>14</sup> “CCP Global Times urges timeline for answer sheet to cross-Strait questionnaire,” *China Times*, translated by KMT News Network, May 22, 2017, <http://www1.kmt.org.tw/english/page.aspx?type=article&mnum=112&anum=19227>.
- <sup>15</sup> Chen Fei, Liu Huan and Xu Xueyi, “Yu Zhengsheng meets with personages from various circles on both sides of the Strait who are attending the ninth Strait Forum” (俞正声会见出席第九届海峡论坛两岸各界人士), Xinhua, June 17, 2017, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2017-06/17/c\\_1121162233.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2017-06/17/c_1121162233.htm).
- <sup>16</sup> Lai Chin-hung, “30 years? Zhou Zhihuai: Need a timetable for unification of the two sides of the Strait” (30年? 周志懷：兩岸統一 應有時間表), *UDN*, July 26, 2017, <https://udn.com/news/story/7331/2604480>.
- <sup>17</sup> Zhou Zhihuai, “Timetable needed for unification of Taiwan,” *Global Times*, August 13, 2017, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1061100.shtml>.
- <sup>18</sup> Wang Yu-yan, “Zhang Zhijun: Willing to share opportunities with Taiwan compatriots” (張志軍：願與台灣同胞分享陸機遇), *UDN*, August 31, 2017, <https://udn.com/news/story/7331/2673781>.
- <sup>19</sup> Tsai’s call for a new model of cross-Strait interaction was accompanied by a call for mutual goodwill. In response, a TAO-sponsored website published an article debunking Tsai’s assertion of “goodwill” and listing 13 measures of the Tsai government aimed at



“desinicizing” Taiwan. (“TAO Criticizes President Tsai's proposal of new interaction model between two sides” [台提互動新模式 陸國台辦媒體撰文批評], CNA, August 10, 2017, <http://www.cna.com.tw/news/acn/201708100366-1.aspx>.)

<sup>20</sup> Readers might recall that it was not so long ago that Zhou was positive about the prospects for a new consensus, urging renewed dialogue and creation of authoritative channels between Tsai and the Mainland. (Romberg, “The Bull in the China Shop,” *China Leadership Monitor*, no. 52, February 14, 2017, p. 4.)

<sup>21</sup> Lan Hsiao-wei, “Having confirmed that Tsai rejects one China, the Mainland turns from defense to offense” (確認蔡拒一中 陸反守為攻), *China Times*, July 27, 2017, <http://www.chinatimes.com/newspapers/20170727000382-260108>.

<sup>22</sup> Li Chong-wei, “TAO website: The Tsai administration’s ‘cultural independence 2.0’ must not be underestimated” (國台辦旗下網站：蔡當局「文化台獨2.0」不可小覷), *UDN*, August 18, 2017, <https://udn.com/news/story/7331/2649678>.

<sup>23</sup> “Guoyu” (国语) or “national language” was explicitly promoted by the KMT to create a continuing link with the Mainland.

<sup>24</sup> Wang Ping, “The story behind the Taiwan administration’s vigorously pushing ‘diversification of national language’” (台当局力推“国家语言多元化”的背后), *People’s Daily*, August 22, 2017, [http://paper.people.com.cn/rmrbhwb/html/2017-08/22/content\\_1799574.htm](http://paper.people.com.cn/rmrbhwb/html/2017-08/22/content_1799574.htm).

<sup>25</sup> Shih Hsiao-kuang, “Wu stresses ‘1992 consensus’ in Xi reply,” *Taipei Times*, May 22, 2017, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2017/05/22/2003671071>.

<sup>26</sup> Kao Ta-mei, “Wu Den-yih’s inconsistent stand on one China gives Beijing a chill, ‘one China, respective interpretations’ previously squeezed into the 1992 Consensus has become an alternative ‘two states theory’” (吳敦義一中髮夾彎 讓北京冒冷汗, 一中各表塞在九二共識之前 成了另類「兩國論」), *Wealth Magazine*, No. 530, June 5, 2017, [http://www.wealth.com.tw/article\\_in.aspx?nid=10929](http://www.wealth.com.tw/article_in.aspx?nid=10929).

<sup>27</sup> Luo Yin-ch’ung and Tsai Hao-hsiang, “Wu irritates Xi, KMT-CCP relations are tense” (吳惹毛習 國共關係走鋼索), *China Times*, August 22, 2017, <http://www.chinatimes.com/newspapers/20170822000362-260102>. Beijing sources indicated Xi was upset that Wu had elaborated on “one China, respective interpretations” in his reply to Xi’s congratulatory message in May and had made no mention of opposition to Taiwan independence.

KMT officials sought to downplay the lack of a message as the product of a tacit agreement that it was unnecessary in light of the congratulations Xi sent in May. (“KMT explains Beijing’s lack of congratulatory message on Wu’s swearing-in,” *China Times*, translated by KMT News Network, August 22, 2017, <http://www1.kmt.org.tw/english/page.aspx?type=article&mnum=112&anum=19695>.)

<sup>28</sup> “TAO: Willing, on the basis of the existing common political foundation, to uphold the peaceful development of cross-Strait relations and peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait with the KMT” (國台辦：愿与国民党在既有共同政治基础上 维护两岸关系和平发展与台海和平稳定), *Xinhua*, August 20, 2017, [http://www.gwytb.gov.cn/wyly/201708/t20170820\\_11832987.htm](http://www.gwytb.gov.cn/wyly/201708/t20170820_11832987.htm). The text of the “joint vision” was in the April 29, 2005, press statement following the meeting between then-KMT Chairman Lien Chan and then-CCP General Secretary Hu Jintao. It is available in

Chinese at <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2005-04-29/19065787389s.shtml> and in English translation at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/4498791.stm>.

<sup>29</sup> Typical is Wu's interview with a Hong Kong-based journal in June (Chiang Hsun and Yuan Wei-ching, "Exclusive interview: KMT chairman-elect Wu Den-yih, the prospect of cross-Strait relations and the presidential election" [獨家專訪：國民黨主席當選人吳敦義兩岸關係與總統選舉願景], *Yazhou Zhoukan*, Volume 31, No. 23, June 23, 2017, [http://www.yzzk.com/cfm/content\\_archive.cfm?id=1496288482363&docissue=2017-23](http://www.yzzk.com/cfm/content_archive.cfm?id=1496288482363&docissue=2017-23).)

<sup>30</sup> Lawrence Chung, "KMT pulls pro-unification plank from party platform," *SCMP*, August 21, 2017, <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/policies-politics/article/2107662/kmt-pulls-pro-unification-plank-party-platform>.

<sup>31</sup> Yang Chia-hsin, "Is the Mainland dissatisfied with Wu Den-yih? Mainland scholar Li Zhenguang: Don't be too harsh in a difficult time" (大陸對吳敦義不滿? 陸學者李振廣：艱難時刻不應太苛刻), *China Times*, August 19, 2017, <http://www.chinatimes.com/realtimenews/20170819003044-260409>.

<sup>32</sup> Latest polling by the National Chengchi University's Election Study Center shows identification with the DPP at its lowest level since 2010 (23.9 percent), only slightly higher than identification with the KMT (22.5 percent). (Important Political Attitude Trend Distribution, July 31, 2017, <http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/course/news.php?Sn=165>.)

<sup>33</sup> TVBS, "Cell phone poll regarding the questions of cabinet reorganization and nuclear power" (內閣改組與核電議題手機民調), August 24, 2017, [http://cc.tvbs.com.tw/portal/file/poll\\_center/2017/20170824/b25a84c3d7e6a0bd39f1aa91d78b2fd2.pdf](http://cc.tvbs.com.tw/portal/file/poll_center/2017/20170824/b25a84c3d7e6a0bd39f1aa91d78b2fd2.pdf). The pro-Green Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation also showed Tsai's approval rating at the lowest point since her inauguration. (Sophia Yeh and Elizabeth Hsu, "President's rating hits new low, Taipei mayor liked by 70%: poll," *CNA*, August 14, 2017, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201708140021.aspx>.)

<sup>34</sup> TVBS, "DPP party image survey after one year in office" (民進黨執政周年政黨形象調查), June 2, 2017, [http://cc.tvbs.com.tw/portal/file/poll\\_center/2017/20170612/714e3b29d1f9dadd5fedb610d87b6179.pdf](http://cc.tvbs.com.tw/portal/file/poll_center/2017/20170612/714e3b29d1f9dadd5fedb610d87b6179.pdf).

<sup>35</sup> "DPP poll shows more than 50% dissatisfaction from youths," *China Times* translated by KMT News Network, May 22, 2017, <http://www1.kmt.org.tw/english/page.aspx?type=article&mnum=112&anum=19228>.

<sup>36</sup> "China Times Survey: Nationwide, Ko Wen-je beats Tsai Ing-wen and Wu Deng-yi [sic]," translated by KMT News Network, July 10, 2017, <http://www1.kmt.org.tw/english/page.aspx?type=article&mnum=112&anum=19493>.

<sup>37</sup> Lin Yung-fu, "Tsai's prestige drops to a new low, scholar: It is the result of her top-down, centralized leadership" (蔡聲望創新低 學者：由上而下集權領導所致), *China Times*, August 14, 2017, <http://www.chinatimes.com/realtimenews/20170814003239-260407>.

<sup>38</sup> Chung Li-hua, "Cabinet reshuffle likely after bill's passage: sources," *Taipei Times*, August 28, 2017, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2017/08/28/2003677322>.

<sup>39</sup> Elizabeth Hsu, "Tsai outlines policy focus for newly-appointed premier (update)," *CNA*, September 5, 2017, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201709050021.aspx>.

<sup>40</sup> One poll taken after Lai's appointment showed a slim majority supporting him but no improvement in Tsai's own favorability rating. (Wang Cheng-ning, "Over half support

Lai as premier, especially young people” [逾半民眾挺賴揆 愈年輕愈挺], *China Times*, September 7, 2017, <http://www.chinatimes.com/newspapers/20170907000345-260118>.)

<sup>41</sup> Ch'en Chun-shuo, “On Lai's taking office, Zhang Zhijun: Will watch his Mainland policy with interest as the point of departure” (賴揆就任

張志軍：重視關注他的大陸政策出發點), *China Times*, September 8, 2017, <http://www.chinatimes.com/realtimenews/20170908005644-260409>.

In the course of commenting, Zhang introduced an unusual phrase: “one China, one country” (一個中國、一個國家). Its future use will merit attention.

<sup>42</sup> Yeh Yi-che, “Are President Tsai's polling numbers down? MAC makes public its own poll defending the boss” (蔡總統民調低? 陸委會公布自家民調護主), NEWTALK, June 5, 2017, <https://newtalk.tw/news/view/2017-06-05/88500>.

<sup>43</sup> The poll MAC was rebutting above is at [http://www.my-formosa.com/DOC\\_118285.htm](http://www.my-formosa.com/DOC_118285.htm).

<sup>44</sup> “Taiwan says it will rethink cross-Strait policy, ‘considering all options,’” *China Post*, June 14, 2017, <http://www.chinapost.com.tw/taiwan/china-taiwan-relations/2017/06/14/498697/taiwan-says.htm>.

<sup>45</sup> Even with Panama, although Taipei still says it is “too early” to discuss establishment of new representative offices, it argues that its FTA with Panama remains in effect. (Elaine Hou and Y.F. Low, “Time not right to discuss exchanging offices with Panama: MOFA,” CNA, August 17, 2017, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201708170022.aspx>.)

<sup>46</sup> Elaine Hou and Scarlett Cai, “Taiwan aims to retain ‘substantial’ relations with other nations: Lin,” CNA, June 24, 2017, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201706240012.aspx>.

<sup>47</sup> Miao Tzung-han and Kuan-lin Liu, “Taiwan to maintain existing cross-Strait policy: MAC,” CNA, September 7, 2017, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/acs/201709070028.aspx>.

<sup>48</sup> “President Tsai's remarks at 2017 Asia-Pacific Security Dialogue,” Office of the President, Republic of China (Taiwan), August 8, 2017,

<http://english.president.gov.tw/News/5186>. The Chinese-language text is at <http://www.president.gov.tw/News/21527>.

<sup>49</sup> “Mainland scholars: Cross-Strait relations only lack the key to unlock the door, why do we need a new model?” (大陸學者：兩岸只缺開門鑰匙 何必新模式), *UDN*, August 9, 2017, [https://udn.com/news/story/9263/2631433?from=udn-catelistnews\\_ch2](https://udn.com/news/story/9263/2631433?from=udn-catelistnews_ch2).

<sup>50</sup> Ch'en Chun-shuo, “China closely examining Anti-Secession Law, specifying the work of eliminating Taiwan independence” (陸細化反分裂法 明確去台獨工程), *China Times*, September 3, 2017, <http://www.chinatimes.com/newspapers/20170903000488-260301>

<sup>51</sup> “President Tsai's remarks at 2017 Asia-Pacific Security Dialogue,” see endnote 48.

<sup>52</sup> Minnie Chan, “Mattis outrages Beijing with explicit commitment to defend Taiwan,” *SCMP*, June 3, 2017, <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2096762/james-mattis-outrages-chinas-military-delegation-taiwan>.

<sup>53</sup> “Tillerson: U.S. committed to ‘one China’ policy, also Taiwan,” Reuters, June 14, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-china-tillerson-idUSKBN19529H>.

<sup>54</sup> Chung Ch'en-fang, “Beijing increases pressure on Taiwan as U.S.-Taiwan relations are gradually warming up” (北京加大對台壓迫之際美台關係緩步升溫), *Voice of America*, July 19, 2017, <https://www.voacantonese.com/a/us-taiwan-20170718/3950147.html>.

<sup>55</sup> Liu Zhen, “What arms is Taiwan actually getting for its US\$1.4 billion?” *SCMP*, June 30, 2017, <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2100793/what-arms-taiwan-actually-getting-its-us14-billion>.

<sup>56</sup> Tsao Yu-fen, “Restraints on Taiwan-U.S. high-level exchanges will be eased, Moriarty: Very senior American officials will visit Taiwan” (台美高層交流鬆綁 莫健: 美國極資深官員將訪台), *Liberty Times*, July 14, 2017, <http://news.ltn.com.tw/news/politics/breakingnews/2131306>.

<sup>57</sup> Wendy Lee, “U.S. House subcommittee unanimously passes Taiwan Travel Act,” *Taiwan News*, June 16, 2017, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3189436>.

<sup>58</sup> Rita Cheng and Elaine Hou, “U.S. House passes act backing closer military ties with Taiwan,” July 15, 2017, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201707150010.aspx>.

<sup>59</sup> “U.S. arms sales to Taiwan, new sanctions hurt mutual confidence: Chinese ambassador,” *Xinhua*, June 29, 2017, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-06/30/c\\_136406825.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-06/30/c_136406825.htm).

Interestingly, the often strident *Global Times* played down the notification, noting F-35s were not in the package. (“US arms sales to Taiwan is more of a political than military issue,” *Global Times* (editorial), June 30, 2017, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1054340.shtml>.) Similarly, a prominent PRC military affairs media commentator, while repeating standard complaints about the unacceptability of any sales as supporting the creation of “one China, one Taiwan” or “two Chinas,” nonetheless highlighted the moderate size of the package (中等規模), the fact that the items were primarily defensive in nature (偏于防御性装备为主), and that advanced weapons such as the F-35 were not included. (Nie Hongjie, “Yin Zhuo: The Taiwan question will become more and more visible in Sino-American relations” [尹卓: 台湾问题将在中美关系中能见度越来越高], *China.com*, July 1, 2017, [http://military.china.com/important/11132797/20170701/30880818\\_all.html](http://military.china.com/important/11132797/20170701/30880818_all.html).)

<sup>60</sup> 美方更不能一方面要求中国在朝鲜半岛上合作，另一方面又不断采取行动，损害中方利益 (“Ambassador Cui Tiankai answers questions from Chinese and foreign reporters regarding PRC-U.S. relations and other issues” [崔天凯大使就中美关系等问题回答中外记者提问], PRC Embassy, June 30, 2017, <http://www.china-embassy.org/chn/zmgx/t1474380.htm>.)

<sup>61</sup> “PLA lieutenant general makes a startling statement: If American naval vessel makes a port call in Taiwan, it will compel us to take action against Taiwan” (解放军中将语出惊人: 美舰泊台就是逼我对台动手), commentary by former Nanjing Military Region deputy commander Wang Hongguang, *CCTV Global Watch*, July 22, 2017, <http://www.focustt.com/2017/0722/42196.shtml>.

<sup>62</sup> Aaron Tu and Jake Chung, “US ships might resupply in Taiwanese waters: report,” *Taipei Times*, September 9, 2017, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2017/09/09/2003678087>.

<sup>63</sup> Rita Cheng and Elizabeth Hsu, “Lack of cross-Strait dialogue a concern: AIT chairman,” *CNA*, July 13, 2017, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201707140012.aspx>.

<sup>64</sup> Nadia Tsao and Jonathan Chin, “Taiwan to submit letter of request to US for fighters,” *Taipei Times*, August 17, 2017, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2017/08/17/2003676658>.

<sup>65</sup> Rita Cheng and Christie Chen, “Taiwan’s defense advantages declining: Pentagon report,” CNA, June 7, 2017, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip1/201706070025.aspx>.

<sup>66</sup> Don Shapiro “AmCham Taipei’s 2017 Taiwan White Paper,” June 9, 2017, <https://topics.amcham.com.tw/2017/06/amcham-taipeis-2017-taiwan-white-paper>. The Chamber noted that none of the 80 issues raised in last year’s White Paper had been resolved.

<sup>67</sup> Liao Yu-yang and Elizabeth Hsu, “Taiwan concerned by U.S. plan for unfair trade probe against China,” CNA, August 13, 2017, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aeco/201708130010.aspx>.