

## **Our Cross-Strait Policy Vision -**

### **Peace, Reciprocity, Fraternal States**

For today's Taiwan China is an extremely complex and quite emotional issue. On the one hand the two sides are embroiled in an inextricable sovereignty dispute, China constitutes a military threat for Taiwan, and also isolates the island diplomatically. But for many Taiwanese, China also means business opportunities. Precisely because cross-strait relations involve so many different facets, Taiwan needs to address many aspects that are hard to reconcile when formulating policy toward China. It also has to face challenges and misgivings at home from those who hold different views.

If we ponder the economic, political, diplomatic and military aspects of cross-strait relations, we can understand that only because the two sides are far from having a normal relationship, they do have such complicated disputes. In order to solve the numerous controversies and disputes between Taiwan and China, we need to make “cross-strait normalization” our vision for cross-strait relations and hammer out policies toward that goal.

Taiwan Brain Trust (TBT) believes that relations between Taiwan and China should use the concept of “fraternal states” as a new foundation. While heading toward the main goal of cross-strait normalization, Taiwan should also uphold several important core values and seek to find the best ways to solve its conflicts with China by conducting exchanges, communications and dialogue with China in line with these values. These core values include:

- Peaceful dialogue
- Mutual respect
- Reciprocal exchanges
- Common interest
- National consensus

After the then autocratic Nationalist (Kuomintang or KMT) government lifted martial law and terminated the *Temporary Provisions Effective During the Period of National Mobilization for Suppression of the Communist Rebellion*, Taiwan gradually adopted an opening policy toward China. But the successive presidents, ranging from Lee Teng-hui and Chen Shui-bian to incumbent Ma Ying-jeou, faced different scenarios and therefore adopted different national security and cross-strait policies which also yielded different outcomes. While different governments carry out different policies, any cross-strait policy builds on the outcome of the previous

government's policy. While the Ma government most prides itself on direct cross-strait flights and Chinese tourist arrivals, the foundations for these achievements were laid in negotiations during the previous Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) era. Should the DPP return to power in the future, it will also be forced to take over the "existing foundations" for cross-strait relations that the Ma government created with its actions and achievements. When formulating China policy, these existing foundations will constitute a status quo that a future DPP government won't be able to shun.

Presently the goal of China's Taiwan policy is to achieve unification between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait under a one country, two systems framework. Its strategy is to demand that Taiwan accept the one China principle and to conduct economic, commercial and cultural exchanges on a party-to-party basis to reach the interim goal of "using the economy and society to push for unification." Regarding the sovereignty issue, China continues to enshrine the one China principle further into law, leading the international community to generally believe that Taiwan is a part of China. On the military front, China is reinforcing targeted military deployments so that it has the power to quickly solve the Taiwan question should the use of military force become necessary.

Taiwan needs to thoroughly examine the current cross-strait situation and find ways to solve the problems that plague the Ma government's current China policy. These problems include:

- A decisionmaking style that sets policy direction based on personal preferences while failing to adopt efficient, prior political and economic impact assessment regarding any opening policy.
- Acceptance of the 1992 Consensus and the one China principle has entrapped Taiwan as a part of China, a trap from which it will be difficult to extricate itself. As a result China has turned the Taiwan issue into a matter of domestic politics.
- The government itself believes it is necessary to rely on China and has exhibited overdependence in its policy, which causes Taiwan to gradually lose its autonomy.
- The government is not willing to consider opinions that see things in a different light. As a result policy deliberation has its blind spots, and also ignores Taiwan's existing democratic mechanisms.
- The government has adopted an international strategy that only knows China and fails to consider in earnest that Taiwan ought to upgrade and strengthen relations with the major countries.

We need to understand our past trial and error mishaps, analyze the international

situation in which Taiwan finds itself as well as our own conditions and capabilities to explore the opportunities and threats that we encounter when facing China. Or else we won't be able to hammer out a feasible, effective China policy that serves Taiwan's national interest and allows cross-strait relations to gradually march toward normality. Regarding future China policy TBT has the following position:

- Making the concept of “fraternal states” the guiding vision for normalizing ties in the future
- Pursuing peaceful, reciprocal, and concrete negotiations
- Accepting and honoring current agreements, but conducting necessary reviews.
- Seeking greater common interest and room for cooperation