

Cross-Strait Relations

Panel:	Session 5 (Cosmos & Violet Room)
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Panel Short Summary

Liou To-hai

The development of cross-strait relations is a credit to the wisdom of the leaders of both sides. With Deng Xiaoping's "Reform and Opening" in 1979 and Chiang Ching-kuo's lifting of martial law in 1987, interaction across the Straits began. Lee Teng-hui's "92 Consensus" was the first step in the initial formation of a mechanism for cross-strait dialogue, with the two sides formally meeting in 1993.

Under Chen Shui-bian's administration the cross-strait relationship became tense, and Hu Jintao made policy adjustments accordingly. During Lien Chan and Song Chuyun's official visit to Beijing, the leaders of the two sides held consultations to simplify the procedures for cross-strait exchanges, thereby opening up the agriculture and fishery industries and further promoting cross-strait relations.

In 2008, Ma Ying-jeou became Taiwan's new leader and utilized single-issue interactive exchanges to broaden the range of activities across the straits, thereby opening a new phase in cross-strait relations. However, Ma Ying-jeou's policies have not received the support of all Taiwanese citizens. Under international pressure the two sides signed the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA), but subsequent agreements failed to

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meet timely completion. At the same time, the China-Japan-Korea FTA and US pressure have caused Taiwanese exports to fall. Therefore, the future of cross-strait relations will face numerous variables and challenges requiring the joint efforts of the leaders on both sides.

Moon Heung-ho

There exists a four-point problem in the cross-strait relationship. First, there lies a problem in the political definition of cross-strait relations. How does one reconcile the contradiction between the "One China" principle and the reality that the two sides are separated? The views of the United States on this issue play a decisive role.

Second, a problem lies in cross-strait people-to-people exchanges. The policy differences between the DPP and KMT towards mainland China are great, but they do hold the same attitude towards non-governmental exchanges. Although the current policy of "No Unification, No Independence" is capable of maintaining the status quo, this is not a permanent solution. As to whether ECFA is conducive to the development and growth of Taiwan, the KMT believes it to be effective and is promoting it, while the DPP doubts its ability to benefit all classes within Taiwanese society.

Third, there are important differences and similarities between cross-strait relations and North-South relations. Although both the historical background and current status of the latter is different, there remain similarities. How does one explain the similarities and differences? Are they related to differences in national character, or the differences in understandings held by the leaders? These questions are worth careful consideration.

Finally, the fourth and final point deals with changes in cross-strait relations since Xi Jinping's rise to power. While he has personally experienced the changes in cross-strait relations, it remains to be seen whether he will be able to correctly sense and understand the importance of cross-strait relations.

Park Doo-bok

It can be said that cross-strait relations are now at their best state compared to the past 40 years. Ma Ying-jeou's re-election and Xi Jinping's assumption of office suggest that

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the two sides will continue to adjust policies and maintain the existing relationship, going even further in establishing a relationship of mutual trust.

Therefore, in taking a long-term view of cross-strait relations, there should not be any great changes. Even if conflicts arise in political negotiations, this should still remain the case. In this regard, Taiwan has an internal need to establish consensus on cross-strait development. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has already established party-to-party relations with the KMT government, but it should also establish a similar relationship with the DPP. This would aid in the establishment of a consensus on cross-strait negotiations within Taiwan. In recent years, the DPP has adjusted the tone of their cross-strait relations strategy. As for mainland China's problems in negotiation policy on Taiwan, they should avoid excesses and maintain a pragmatic attitude, avoid pressuring Taiwan, and push policy negotiations forward based on the establishment of mutual political trust.

Wang Xiangsui

Four words can sum up the changes in cross-strait relations. The first is "timetable." In the 1980's, Deng Xiaoping hoped to take advantage of their long mutual history to achieve unification, but did not fully take into account the variability and complexity of cross-strait issues.

The second word is "bottom line." During the Li Teng-hui, Chen Shuibian, and Jiang Zemin administrations, cross-strait relations saw the continuation of the "No Independence, No War" status for a period of time, during which both sides sought to find each other's "bottom line" amidst a tense relationship.

The next word is "consensus." During the Ma Ying-jeou, Lien Chan, and Hu Jintao administrations, consensus was reached on the anti-secession law. Cross-strait relations went from pointing the finger at each other to traveling in the same direction.

The final word is "cooperation." This refers to focusing on economic cooperation, and relying on the power of enterprise.

Finally, the future development of cross-strait relations can be summed up in two words. The first is "peace." The 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China put forth

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an explicit proposal to create the full conditions for peaceful reunification. Peace is the key for cross-strait relations. The second word is "uncertainty." Conflicts between Taiwan's two parties and the US "Pivot to East Asia" policy create many uncertainties for the future of Cross-Strait relations.

Zhou Yongsheng

The current status of cross-strait economic cooperation is remarkable. There is active cooperation in the fields of transportation, telecommunications, finance, trade, and tourism. The Xiamen Jinmen underwater cable has begun operating, both the cross-strait currency clearing pact and ECFA have been signed, and over 1.8 million mainland Chinese have traveled to Taiwan for tourism. As to future prospects for cross-strait economic cooperation, surveys show that over 70 percent of Taiwanese believe cross-strait relations to be in a good state, and mainland Chinese stating that "blood is thicker than water." Therefore, the future development of cross-strait relations rests on a strong base of popular support. However, we must also take note of a few problems that exist between the two sides.

First, the procedures mainland Chinese must go through to enter Taiwan have yet to be simplified. Next, the proportion of trade in goods needs to improve for cross-strait economic and trade cooperation to continue. Therefore, the two sides should not rush to conduct political negotiations first, but should make further efforts to expand the scope of cooperation in ECFA, completely abolish quantitative and tariff restrictions, and achieve the flow of free trade across the straits.

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