

White Papers of the Chinese Government (2000-2004)

Information Office of the State Council of
the People's Republic of China



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The One-China Principle and the Taiwan Issue^{*}

(February 2000)

Foreword

- I. The Basis for One China, *de Facto* and *de Jure*
- II. The One-China Principle — the Basis and Prerequisite for Achieving Peaceful Reunification
- III. The Chinese Government — Staunch Champion for the One-China Principle
- IV. Several Questions Involving the One-China Principle in the Cross-Straits Relations
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Conclusion

^{*}This white paper is jointly issued by the Taiwan Affairs Office and the Information Office of the State Council.

Foreword

On October 1, 1949, the Chinese people won a great victory in the new democratic revolution and founded the People's Republic of China (PRC). The Kuomintang (KMT) ruling clique retreated from the mainland to entrench in China's Taiwan Province in confrontation with the Central Government with the support of foreign forces. This is the origin of the Taiwan issue.

Settlement of the Taiwan issue and realization of the complete reunification of China embodies the fundamental interests of the Chinese nation. The Chinese government has worked persistently toward this goal in the past 50 years. From 1979, the Chinese government has striven for the peaceful reunification of China in the form of "one country, two systems" with the greatest sincerity and the utmost effort. Economic and cultural exchanges and people-to-people contacts between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits have made rapid progress since the end of 1987. Unfortunately, from the 1990s, Lee Teng-hui, the leader of the Taiwan authorities, has progressively betrayed the One-China Principle, striving to promote a separatist policy with "two Chinas" at the core, going so far as to openly describe the cross-Straits relations as "state to state relations, or at least special state to state relations." This action has seriously damaged the basis for peaceful reunification of the two sides, harmed the fundamental interests of the entire Chinese nation including the Taiwan compatriots, and jeopardized peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. The Chinese government has consistently adhered to the One-China Principle and resolutely opposed any attempt to separate Taiwan from China. The struggle between the Chinese government and the separatist forces headed by Lee Teng-hui finds its concentrated expression in the question of whether to persevere in the One China Principle or to create "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan."

In August 1993, we issued a white paper entitled *The Taiwan Question and Reunification of China*, which systematically expounds the fact concerning

Taiwan as an inalienable part of China, the origin of the Taiwan issue and the Chinese government's basic principles and related policies regarding resolution of the Taiwan question. We deem it necessary here to further explain to the international community the Chinese government's position and policy on the One-China Principle.

I. The Basis for One China, *de Facto* and *de Jure*

The One-China Principle has been evolved in the course of the Chinese people's just struggle to safeguard China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and its basis, both *de facto* and *de jure*, is unshakable.

Taiwan is an inalienable part of China. All the facts and laws about Taiwan prove that Taiwan is an inalienable part of Chinese territory. In April 1895, through a war of aggression against China, Japan forced the Qing government to sign the unequal Treaty of Shimonoseki, and forcibly occupied Taiwan. In July 1937, Japan launched an all-out war of aggression against China. In December 1941, the Chinese government issued the Proclamation of China's Declaration of War Against Japan, announcing to the world that all treaties, agreements and contracts concerning Sino-Japanese relations, including the Treaty of Shimonoseki, had been abrogated, and that China would recover Taiwan. In December 1943, the Cairo Declaration was issued by the Chinese, U.S. and British governments, stipulating that Japan should return to China all the territories it had stolen from the Chinese, including Northeast China, Taiwan and the Penghu Archipelago. The Potsdam Proclamation signed by China, the United States and Britain in 1945 (later adhered to by the Soviet Union) stipulated that "The terms of the Cairo Declaration shall be carried out." In August of that year, Japan declared surrender and promised in its instrument of surrender that it would faithfully fulfil the obligations laid down in the Potsdam Proclamation. On October 25, 1945, the Chinese government recovered Taiwan and the Penghu Archipelago, resuming the exercise of sovereignty over Taiwan.

On October 1, 1949, the Central People's Government of the PRC was proclaimed, replacing the government of the Republic of China to become the only legal government of the whole of China and its sole legal representative in the international arena, thereby bringing the historical status of the Republic of China to an end. This is a replacement of the old regime by a new one in a situation where the main bodies of the same international laws have not changed

and China's sovereignty and inherent territory have not changed there from, and so the government of the PRC naturally should fully enjoy and exercise China's sovereignty, including its sovereignty over Taiwan.

Since the KMT ruling clique retreated to Taiwan, although its regime has continued to use the designations "Republic of China" and "government of the Republic of China," it has long since completely forfeited its right to exercise state sovereignty on behalf to China and, in reality, has always remained only a local authority in Chinese territory.

The formulation of the One-China Principle and its basic meaning.

On the day of its founding, the Central People's Government of the PRC declared to governments of all countries in the world, "This government is the sole legal government representing the entire people of the People's Republic of China. It is ready to establish diplomatic relations with all foreign governments and are willing to abide by the principles of equality, mutual benefit and mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty." Shortly afterwards, the Central People's Government telegraphed the United Nations, announcing that the KMT authorities had "lost all basis, both *de jure* and *de facto*, to represent the Chinese people," and therefore had no right to represent China at all. One principle governing New China's establishment of diplomatic relations with a foreign country is that it recognizes the government of the PRC as the sole legitimate government representing the whole of China, severs or refrain from establishing diplomatic relations with the Taiwan authorities.

These propositions of the Chinese government met with obstruction by the U.S. government. On January 5, 1950, the U.S. President Truman issued a statement, saying that the U.S. and other Allied countries recognized China's exercise of sovereignty over Taiwan Island in the four years since 1945. However, after the start of the Korean War in June 1950, to isolate and contain China, the U.S. government not only sent troops to occupy Taiwan, but it also dished out such fallacies as "the status of Taiwan has yet to be determined" and later, step by step, lobbied for "dual recognition" among the international community in order to create "two Chinas." Naturally, the Chinese government resolutely opposed this, insisting that there is only one China in the world, Taiwan is a part of China and the government of the PRC is the sole legal government representing the whole of China. China has evolved the One-China Principle precisely in the course of the endeavor to develop normal diplomatic relations with other countries and the struggle to safeguard state sovereignty and territorial integrity. The above propositions constitute the basic meaning of the One-

China Principle, the crucial point being to safeguard China's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

During the 30 or 40 years after 1949, although the Taiwan authorities did not recognize the legitimate status of the government of the PRC as the representative of the whole of China, they did insist that Taiwan is a part of China and that there is only one China, and opposed "two Chinas" and "Taiwan independence." This shows that for a long time there has been a common understanding among the Chinese on both sides of the Taiwan Straits on the fundamental question that there is only one China and Taiwan is a part of Chinese territory. As far back as October 1958, when the People's Liberation Army (PLA) was engaged in the battle to bombard Jinmen, Chairman Mao Zedong declared to the Taiwan authorities, "There is only one China, not two, in the world. You agree with us on this point, as indicated in your leaders' proclamations." In January 1979, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) issued a Message to Taiwan Compatriots, pointing out that "the Taiwan authorities have always stood firm on the one China position and opposed the independence of Taiwan. This is our common stand and our basis for cooperation."

The Chinese government's solemn and reasonable stand for the One-China Principle has gained the understanding and support of more and more countries and international organizations, and the One-China Principle has been gradually accepted by the international community at large. In October 1971, the United Nations General Assembly adopted at its 26th session Resolution 2758, which expelled the representatives of the Taiwan authorities and restored the seat and all the lawful rights of the government of the PRC in the United Nations. In September 1972, China and Japan signed a Joint Statement, announcing establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, and that Japan recognizes the government of the PRC as the only legitimate government of China, fully understands and respects the Chinese government's position that Taiwan is an inalienable part of the territory of the PRC, and promises to adhere to the position as prescribed in Article 8 of the Potsdam Proclamation. In December 1978, China and the U.S. issued a Joint Communiqué on the establishment of diplomatic relations, in which the U.S. "recognizes the government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of China" and "acknowledges the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is a part of China." Up to now, 161 countries have established diplomatic relations with the PRC; they all acknowledge the One-China Principle and promise to handle their relations with Taiwan within the one-China framework.

II. The One-China Principle — the Basis and Prerequisite for Achieving Peaceful Reunification

The One-China Principle is the foundation stone for the Chinese government's policy on Taiwan. On Comrade Deng Xiaoping's initiative, the Chinese government has, since 1979, adopted the policy of peaceful reunification and gradually evolved the scientific concept of "one country, two systems." On this basis, China established the basic principle of "peaceful reunification, and one country, two systems." The key points of this basic principle and the relevant policies are: China will do its best to achieve peaceful reunification, but will not commit itself to rule out the use of force; will actively promote people-to-people contacts and economic and cultural exchanges between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits, and start direct trade, postal, air and shipping services as soon as possible; achieve reunification through peaceful negotiations and, on the premise of the One-China Principle, any matter can be negotiated. After reunification, the policy of "one country, two systems" will be practiced, with the main body of China (China mainland) continuing with its socialist system, and Taiwan maintaining its capitalist system for a long period of time to come. After reunification, Taiwan will enjoy a high degree of autonomy, and the Central Government will not send troops or administrative personnel to be stationed in Taiwan. Resolution of the Taiwan issue is an internal affair of China, which should be achieved by the Chinese themselves, and there is no call for aid by foreign forces. The afore-mentioned principles and policies embody the basic stand and spirit of adhering to the One-China Principle, and fully respect Taiwan compatriots' wish to govern and administer Taiwan by themselves. In January 1995, President Jiang Zemin put forward eight propositions on the development of relations between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits and the promotion of peaceful reunification of China, explicitly pointing out: "Adhering to the One-China Principle is the basis and prerequisite for peaceful reunification."

Only by adhering to the One-China Principle can peaceful reunification be achieved. The Taiwan issue is one left over by the Chinese civil war. As yet, the state of hostility between the two sides of the Straits had not formally ended. To safeguard China's sovereignty and territorial integrity and realize the reunification of the two sides of the Straits, the Chinese government has the right to resort to any necessary means. Peaceful means would be favorable to the common development of the societies on both sides of the Straits, and to

the harmony and unity of the compatriots across the Straits. Peaceful means is therefore the best means. The Chinese government's declaration in 1979 on implementing the principle of peaceful reunification was based on the premise that the Taiwan authorities at that time upheld the principle that there is only one China in the world and Taiwan is a part of China. Meanwhile, the Chinese government took into account the fact that the U.S. government, which for many years had supported the Taiwan authorities, had accepted that there is only one China in the world, Taiwan is a part of China and the government of the PRC is the only legal government of China, and saw this acknowledgement as being beneficial to the peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue. While carrying out the policy of peaceful reunification, the Chinese government always makes it clear that the means used to solve the Taiwan issue is matter of China's internal affairs, and China is under no obligation to commit itself to rule out the use of force. This is by no means directed against Taiwan compatriots, but against the scheme to create an "independent Taiwan" and against the foreign forces interfering with the reunification of China, and is intended as a necessary safeguard for the striving for peaceful reunification. Resort to force would only be the last choice made under compelled circumstances.

As for Taiwan, upholding the principle of one China indicates that it acknowledges that China's sovereignty and territory are inalienable. In this way, both sides of the Taiwan Straits will have a common basis and premise and may find ways to solve their political differences and realize peaceful reunification through consultation on an equal footing. If Taiwan denies the One-China Principle and tries to separate Taiwan from the territory of China, the premise and basis for peaceful reunification will cease to exist.

As for the United States, if it promises to follow a one-China policy, it should earnestly implement the three communiqués between the Chinese and U.S. governments and fulfil the series of promises it has made. It should maintain only cultural, commercial and other non-governmental relations with Taiwan; oppose "Taiwan independence," "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan" and not to stand in the way of the reunification of China. Acting otherwise will destroy the external conditions necessary for the Chinese government to strive for peaceful reunification.

As for countries in the Asia-Pacific region and other regions in the world, the situation across the Taiwan Straits has always been closely linked with the stability of the Asia-Pacific region. Adherence to the policy of one China by countries concerned will be beneficial to peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific

region and favorable for China to develop friendly relations with other countries, and therefore conforms to the interests of the Asia-Pacific region and other countries in the world.

The Chinese government is actively and sincerely striving for peaceful reunification. To achieve peaceful reunification, the Chinese government has appealed time and again for cross-Straits negotiations on the basis of equality and the One-China Principle. Taking Taiwan's political reality into full account and out of consideration for the Taiwan authorities' request for the negotiations to be held on an equal footing, we have put forward one proposal after another, such as that the negotiations should be held between the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Chinese KMT on a reciprocal basis and that the talks between the two parties may include representatives from all parties and mass organizations of Taiwan and we have never spoken of negotiations between the "central and local authorities." The Chinese government has also proposed that dialogues may start first, including political dialogues, which may gradually move on to procedural consultations for political talks to solve the name, the topics for discussion and the forms of official talks before political talks are held. Political talks may be carried out step by step. First, negotiations should be held and an agreement reached on an official end to the state of hostility between the two sides under the principle of one China so as to jointly safeguard China's sovereignty and territorial integrity and work out plans for the development of the future inter-Straits relations. In January 1998, to seek and expand the political basis for relations between the two sides, the Chinese government explicitly proposed to the Taiwan side that before the realization of reunification and in handling affairs concerning inter-Straits relations, especially during the talks between the two sides, the One-China Principle should be upheld, namely that there is only one China in the world, Taiwan is a part of China and China's sovereignty and territorial integrity is not to be separated. The Chinese government hopes that on the basis of the One-China Principle, the two sides will hold consultations on an equal footing and discuss national reunification together.

To strive for peaceful reunification, the Chinese government has adopted a series of positive policies and measures to promote the comprehensive development of cross-Straits relations. From the end of 1987, when the state of isolation between the two sides was terminated, to the end of 1999, the number of Taiwan compatriots coming to the mainland of China for visiting their relatives, sightseeing or exchanges reached 16 million by turnstile count. The

total indirect trade volume between the two sides of the Straits has exceeded US\$ 160 billion; the agreed capital to be invested by Taiwan business people in the mainland has exceeded US\$ 44 billion, of which US\$ 24 billion has been actually used. Great progress has been made in the exchange of mail and telecommunications across the Straits; and some progress has been made in the exchange of air and shipping services too. The NPC and its Standing Committee, the State Council, and local governments have worked out a sequence of laws and regulations to safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Taiwan compatriots. To properly solve the concrete issues arising from the people-to-people contacts between the two sides through consultations, in November 1992 the mainland's Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits and Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation reached the common understanding during talks on routine affairs that each of the two organizations should express verbally that "both sides of the Taiwan Straits adhere to the One-China Principle." On this basis, the leaders of these two organizations successfully held the "Wang Daohan-Koo Chen-fu talks" and signed several agreements on protecting the legitimate rights and interests of the compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Straits in April 1993. In October 1998, the leaders of the two organizations met in Shanghai, starting political dialogue across the Straits. The talks between the two organizations were carried out on an equal footing. Practice has proved that on the basis of the One-China Principle, it is entirely possible to find a proper way for holding talks, based on equality, between the two sides. Since Hong Kong and Macao's return to China, people-to-people contacts and exchanges between Hong Kong and Taiwan and between Macao and Taiwan have continued and developed on the basis of the One-China Principle.

III. The Chinese Government — Staunch Champion for the One-China Principle

Separatist forces in Taiwan are bent on violating the One-China Principle. In 1988, after Lee Teng-hui became the leader of the Taiwan authorities, he publicly stated time and again that the basic policy of the Taiwan authorities was that "there is only one China, not two," and "we have always maintained that China should be reunited, and we adhere to the principle of 'one China.'"

However, since the early 1990s, Lee Teng-hui has gradually deviated

from the One-China Principle, trumpeting “two governments,” “two reciprocal political entities,” “Taiwan is already a state with independent sovereignty,” and “At the present stage the Republic of China is on Taiwan and the People’s Republic of China is on the mainland.” Moreover, he went back on his words, saying that “I have never said that there is only one China.” In addition, he has connived at and provided support for the separatists who advocate “Taiwan independence” and their activities, thus helping the rapid development of the “Taiwan independence” forces and the spread of the “Taiwan independence” ideology. Under the direction of Lee Teng-hui, the Taiwan authorities have adopted a series of measures toward actual separation. In matters of Taiwan’s form of government, the Taiwan authorities are seeking to transform Taiwan into an “independent political entity” through a “constitutional reform,” so as to suit the needs of creating “two Chinas.” In foreign relations, the Taiwan authorities have spared no effort to carry out the activities for “expanding the international space of survival,” with the aim of creating “two Chinas.” Since 1993, for seven years running, the Taiwan authorities have maneuvered for participation in the United Nations. In military affairs, the Taiwan authorities have bought large quantities of advanced weapons from foreign countries and sought to join the Theater Missile Defense System (TMDS), in an attempt to establish a military alliance of a disguised form with the United States and Japan. In ideology and culture, the Taiwan authorities have endeavored to obliterate the Chinese awareness of Taiwan compatriots, especially young people, and their identification with the motherland, in order to create misunderstanding of the motherland among Taiwan compatriots and estrange them from her, thus cutting off the ideological and cultural ties between the compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Straits.

Since 1999, Lee Teng-hui has stepped up his separatist activities. In May, he published the book *The Road to Democracy*, which advocates the division of China into seven regions, each enjoying “full autonomy.” On July 9, he went so far as to publicly distort the inter-Straits relations as “state-to-state relations, or at least special state-to-state relations,” in an attempt to fundamentally change the status of Taiwan as a part of China, sabotage the relations between both sides of the Taiwan Straits, especially the basis for cross-Straits political dialogues and negotiations, and wreck the foundation for peaceful reunification. Lee Teng-hui has become the general representative of Taiwan’s separatist forces, a saboteur of the stability of the Taiwan Straits, a stumbling-block preventing the development of relations between China and the United States, and

a troublemaker for the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region.

The Chinese government firmly defends the One-China Principle.

The Chinese government and people have always maintained sharp vigilance and fought resolutely against the secessionist activities of the Taiwan separatists, represented by Lee Teng-hui.

After Lee Teng-hui's "private" visit to the United States in June 1995, the Chinese government has waged a resolute struggle against separation and against "Taiwan independence," and made strong protests and representations to the U.S. government for openly allowing Lee Teng-hui to visit the U.S., violating its promises made in the three Sino-U.S. joint communiqués, and seriously prejudicing China's sovereignty. This struggle has shown the Chinese government and people's firm resolve and ability to safeguard state sovereignty and territorial integrity, and exerted an important and far-reaching influence. Compatriots in Taiwan have further realized the serious harm "Taiwan independence" can cause. Lee Teng-hui has received a heavy blow for his separatist activities in the international community, so that some of the "Taiwan independence" protagonists have had to abandon certain extremist propositions aimed at division. The international community has further realized the necessity of upholding a one-China policy. The U.S. government has explicitly undertaken not to support "Taiwan independence," not to support "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan," and not to support Taiwan joining any international organization whose membership is restricted to sovereign states.

The Chinese government and people have fought more unrelentingly after Lee Teng-hui cooked up his "two states" theory. The relevant department of the Chinese government has clearly stated that the attempt of the Taiwan separatists to implement the "two states" theory in "legal" form was an even more serious and dangerous step toward division and a grave provocation against peaceful reunification. Were the attempt to succeed, it would be impossible for China to achieve peaceful reunification. The struggle against this attempt has grown in momentum with Chinese both at home and abroad condemning the "two states" theory with one voice. Most countries in the world have reaffirmed their position of upholding the One-China Policy. The U.S. government has also reasserted its adherence to the One-China Policy and its commitment to the "Three Non-supports" for Taiwan. Finally, the Taiwan authorities have been compelled to announce that they will not amend their "constitution" and "laws" according to the "two states" theory.

Nevertheless, separatists in Taiwan are still attempting to detach Taiwan