IN PURSUIT OF GRADUAL STABILIZATION AND PEACE DIVIDENDS: CROSS-TAIWAN STRAIT RELATIONS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE ASIA PACIFIC*

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Taiwan Strait has always been a flash point in the region of the Asia-Pacific. Beyond a doubt, the dynamics of cross-Taiwan Strait relations (hereafter, cross-Strait relations) can have intertwined impacts on the other areas of dispute, such as the Korean Peninsula and the South China Sea, as well as on Tokyo-Beijing and Washington-Beijing relations to some extent. In an era when Taipei-Beijing relations "are entering a new, more delicate phase," it is especially interesting to observe the development of cross-Strait relations and their impacts on the Asia Pacific.

Generally speaking, cross-Strait relations after MA Ying-jeou of Kuomintang (KMT) took office on May 20, 2008 have regained some momentum to concentrate on the negotiation over and cooperation in non-political issues concerning the welfare of the people on the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. Political skirmishes and military clashes that could have been associated with the deep distrust and malign interactions between Taipei and Beijing have been better controlled. As a result, an intuitive argument about these facts is that not only both the Republic of China (hereafter, R.O.C. or Taiwan) and the People’s Republic of China (hereafter, P.R.C. or mainland China) but at least countries in the region of the Asia Pacific can also benefit from such a dramatic change that had not taken place since the political and military struggles between the R.O.C. and the P.R.C. starting in 1949.

In other words, it is very likely that the gradual stability and peace dividends brought about by the historic positive development

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of bilateral relations across the Taiwan Strait have become so salient that the dire danger in the dynamics of cross-Strait relations is, or might be, disappearing from the strategic map of the Asia Pacific little by little. In comparison with the recent situations in the Korean Peninsula and the South China Sea, the Taiwan Strait nowadays reduces the possibility of conflicts successfully and fits in with the typical patterns of contemporary international relations – accommodation and cooperation.

To further discuss this intuitive implication, this essay will first introduce the state of cross-Strait relations, with a strong focus on the progress in the unilateral or joint efforts made by Taiwan and/or mainland China to exercise self-restraint and create mechanisms of cooperation and coordination dealing with functional cross-Strait issues. This introduction will be followed by an observation of internal forces that primarily shape contemporary cross-Strait relations. This essay will then move on to delineate the gradual stability and dividends of peace resulting mainly from the betterment of cross-Strait relations, as well as touch upon some political and strategic concerns coming with such a development after May 20, 2008. On the one hand, improved relations between Taiwan and mainland China have resulted in some positive signs for greater stability of the region; but on the other hand, current cross-Strait relations might have some unintended consequences whose influence on the Asia-Pacific remains uncertain for some people.

The final part of this essay focuses on the Asia Pacific context of cross-Strait relations by dealing with the association of contemporary Taiwan-mainland China interactions and regional economic and non-traditional security issues. The main argument made here is that the management of regional economic and non-traditional security issues in the Asia Pacific at least needs universal participation and collaboration of all countries in the region.

This essay so far has not given a working definition to the “development of cross-Strait relations after May 20, 2008.” It is very easy for such an important task to be left undone while these sections focusing on the ups and downs of cross-Strait interactions are evolving. Here, “development of cross-Strait relations after May 20, 2008” is defined as the reconciliation and accommodation, either explicit or implicit, between the R.O.C. and the P.R.C. governments aimed at reducing tensions, maintaining stability, enhancing predictability, and creating prosperity through a government-authorized channel, mostly the ad hoc consultations and meetings between the Taipei-based Strait Exchange Foundation (SEF,
established in November 1990) and the Beijing-based Association of Relations across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS, established in December 1991). Generally speaking, it is a positive progress in cross-Strait interactions, but it does not contain any connotation or implication related to reunification, Taiwan independence, and future political arrangement of cross-Strait relations.

That being said, the following section will demonstrate contemporary relations between Taiwan and mainland China both from a SEF-ARATS and a low politics angles.

II. RECENT DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS-Strait RELATIONS

Since President Ma took office in May 2008, Taiwan has been successful in turning potential conflicts with mainland China into a state of less violence and more communication. The underpinning of such a success lies largely in his insistence on the “1992 Consensus” and the “no unification, no (Taiwan) independence, and no use of force” policy toward Beijing. The former, being challenged by the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in Taiwan over its “we-agree-to-disagree” nature, has become the starting point of the breakthroughs in political and economic relations across the Taiwan Strait.3 The latter, sometimes criticized of being less active or too conservative, has been of help for the restoration of stability and the maintenance of status quo of the Taiwan Strait to a certain extent. Furthermore, cross-Strait relations have been less volatile as Ma calls for “Diplomatic Truce” with mainland China in order to reduce the uncertainty or unconstructive factors in his attempt to transform cross-Strait relations into a positive circle.4

3. The “1992 Consensus” was put by SU Chi (then Chairman of Mainland Affairs Council of the R.O.C. Executive Yuan) in April 2000 to describe the agreement and disagreement in exchanges of the two sides of the Taiwan Strait since the early 1990s. Put it simply, Taiwan prefers to construe this consensus as “One China, respective interpretations,” whereas mainland China prefers to look at the “One China” part. For detailed discussion of the evolution of the “One China” policy please see Shirley A. Ken, China/Taiwan: Evolution of the “One China” Policy—Key Statements from Washington, Beijing, and Taipei Washington, DC: The Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress Report RL30341 June 24, 2011.

It is worth noting that Ma’s policies would not have worked had HU Jintao, President of the PRC and Secretary-General of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), responded to them negatively or uncooperatively. Regardless of the real intention behind the scene, mainland China under Hu’s leadership has either proclaimed its willingness to work with Taiwan to benefit the people on the two sides of the Taiwan Strait, or selectively acted in concert with Taiwan’s advocacy on cross-Strait and foreign affairs. This brings to the fact that no unilateral action of Taipei or Beijing can alter relations across the Taiwan Strait in a peaceful and constructive way – in other words, it takes two to tango.

**Tension Reduction and Functional Spillover**

Due to the lack of direct government-to-government communication channels between the top decisionmakers on the two sides of the Taiwan Strait, this sort of development of cross-Strait relations can be best understood as “gradual reduction in tension” (GRIT) on the basis of tacit understandings generated from regular exchanges carried out by both SEF and ARATS and supervised by the two governments in Taipei and Beijing, respectively. This special form of GRIT in the Taiwan Strait carried out by both KMT and CCP indicates that the two sides show sufficient willingness to transform the enduring conflict to a less adversarial manner. It suggests that the two sides are undertaking rapprochement initiatives to build mutual trust, while the transaction cost for doing this is not high and neither side are at stake for it. Furthermore, it is obvious that in many critical or sensitive issues greater self-restraint is being exerted by both sides of the Taiwan Strait. A good example of cross-Strait GRIT is Taiwan-initiated “Diplomatic Truce” that becomes implicitly acceptable and is put into practice by both Taiwan and mainland China. Struggling for diplomatic recognition has never served as a serious impact on the breakdown of cross-Strait

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relations. Breakthroughs associated with the improvement in cross-Strait relations such as Taiwan’s admission as an observer at the World Health Assembly (WHA) since May 2009, the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA), and Taiwan’s first-ever free trade agreement (FTA) negotiation with its non-diplomatic ally – Singapore, and respective FTA feasibility studies with India and New Zealand are also indicative of the increased effectiveness of GRIT in the Taiwan Strait.

Nonetheless, because of the long-lasting clashes and deep distrust between Taiwan and mainland China, it is a wishful thinking to see the two sides of the Taiwan Strait resolving these disagreements quickly after these years’ communicative interactions. In other words, although the GRIT in the Taiwan Strait seems to work, a number of pitfalls are still visible in those issues ranging from military issues – such as mainland China’s deployment of missiles targeting Taiwan and rapid military build-up against Taiwan despite improving political relations, and United States (US) arms sale to Taiwan including advanced weaponry systems – to Taiwanese non-governmental organizations’ participation and status in some international occasions and Taiwan’s participation in more specialized agencies of the United Nations (UN), in particular, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Ma’s call for “changing from mutual denial to ‘mutual non-denial’” is also ignored by leaders in Beijing.

Putting these military and political disputes aside, what has taken place so far in consistent interactions between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait also shows that, as neofunctionalism of international relations argues, there may be some momentum for the functional spillover that can come across various economic, societal, and cultural issue-areas, thus creating a certain level of integration in the non-political aspects. Beginning from the signing of Minutes of

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6. Taiwan attempted to join the WHA as an observer since 1997, but it failed largely because of the strong opposition of mainland China. Since 2009, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) has written for three consecutive years an official invitation letter issued to “Minister of Health” in “Chinese Taipei” to participate in the annual assembly of WHO, and Taiwan’s governmental representative has been able to attend the WHA in Geneva with the other state or non-state observers. It is believed that Taiwan’s continued request for the observer status with a very strong domestic consensus and support, the firm adherence expressed by major powers such as the United States and European Union, as well as the absence of mainland China’s resistance are very key to this historic breakthrough in Taiwan’s international participation.
Talks on Cross-Strait Charter Flights and the Cross-Strait Agreement on Travel by Mainland Residents to Taiwan in June 2008, functional cooperation has increased and reached the historic high. Major agreements between Taiwan and mainland China have spanned from civil aviation and tourism cooperation to postal service, food safety, crime-fighting and mutual judicial assistance, financial cooperation, inspection and quarantine of agricultural products, technological measurements and accreditation, fishing crew affairs, intellectual property right protection, medical and health, nuclear power safety, as well as economic and trade – i.e., the ECFA that helps institutionalize and facilitate cross-Strait economic and trade ties in June 2009. All these are negotiated and struck at the so-called “Chiang-Chen Talks” – meetings between CHIANG Pin-kung of SEF and CHEN Yunlin of ARATS starting on June 14, 2008. More details can be found in Table 1.

**Table 1. Chiang-Chen Talks and Their Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Dates and Places</th>
<th>Key Speakers</th>
<th>Negotiating Subjects</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Chiang-Chen Meeting</td>
<td>CHIANG Pin-kung (SEF) &amp; CHEN Yunlin (ARATS)</td>
<td>Negotiations on cross-Strait charter flights and Mainland tourists to visit Taiwan</td>
<td>1. The SEF and ARATS officially restore mechanisms for institutionalized dialogue and negotiations; 2. The two sides sign the “Minutes of Talks on Cross-Strait Charter Flights” and “Cross-Strait Agreement on Travel by Mainland Residents to Taiwan”; 3. Arrangements are made for following up on the issues negotiated between the SEF and ARATS; 4. A course is set for future cross-Strait exchanges and cooperation; 5. Dialogue and exchanges between the SEF and ARATS are strengthened; 6. CHEN Yunlin agrees to visit Taiwan at an appropriate time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Chiang-Chen Meeting</td>
<td>CHIANG Pin-kung (SEF) &amp; CHEN Yunlin (ARATS)</td>
<td>Negotiations on cross-strait air transport, sea transport, postal services, and food safety</td>
<td>1. The two sides sign the “Cross-Strait Air Transport Agreement,” “Cross-Strait Sea Transport Agreement,” “Cross-Strait Postal Service Agreement,” and “Cross-Strait Food Safety Agreement”; 2. The two sides reviewed the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Chiang-Chen Meeting</td>
<td>CHIANG Pinkung (SEF) &amp; CHEN Yunlin (ARATS)</td>
<td>1. Negotiations on cross-Strait joint crime-fighting and mutual judicial assistance, cross-Strait financial cooperation, regular cross-Strait flights and allowing mainland investment in Taiwan; 2. Arrangements for the issues that the SEF and ARATS should actively plan and prepare for in the next phase.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Chiang-Chen Meeting</td>
<td>CHIANG Pinkung (SEF) &amp; CHEN Yunlin (ARATS)</td>
<td>Negotiations on cross-Strait cooperation in inspection and quarantine of agricultural products; avoiding double taxation and improving cooperation on tax operations; cooperation in respect of standards, metrology, inspection and accreditation; and cooperation in fishing crew</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The two sides signed “Cross-Strait Crime-Fighting and Mutual Judicial Assistance Joint Agreement,” “Cross-strait Financial Cooperation Agreement,” and “Supplementary Agreement on Cross-Strait Air Transport” and reached a consensus on matters pertaining to promoting Mainland investment in Taiwan; 2. The two sides re-examined the results and progress of implementation of the six agreements the two organizations have signed since June 2008; 3. Arrangements are made for following up on the issues negotiated between the SEF and ARATS; 4. The SEF and ARATS further consented to promoting exchanges in various areas.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fifth Chiang-Chen Meeting</th>
<th>CHIANG Pin-kung (SEF) &amp; CHEN Yunlin (ARATS)</th>
<th>1. Negotiations on “Cross-Strait Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement” (ECFA) and “Cross-Strait Agreement on Intellectual Property Rights Protection and Cooperation”; 2. Arrangements for the priority issues of next stage.</th>
<th>1. The two sides signed two agreements: “Cross-Strait Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement” (ECFA) and “Cross-Strait Agreement on Intellectual Property Rights Protection and Cooperation”; 2. Re-examination of the results and progress of implementation of the twelve agreements the two organizations have signed; 3. Consensus reached on the priority issues of the next stage; 4. The two organizations further consented to promoting exchanges in various areas.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 28-30, 2010 Chongqing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Chiang-Chen Meeting</td>
<td>CHIANG Pin-kung (SEF) &amp; CHEN Yunlin (ARATS)</td>
<td>1. Negotiations on “Cross-Strait Agreement on Medical and Health Cooperation” and “Cross-Strait Agreement on Investment Protection”; 2. Arrangements for the priority issues of next stage.</td>
<td>1. The two sides signed “Cross-Strait Agreement on Medical and Health Cooperation”; 2. Staged consensus reached on the “Cross-Strait Agreement on Investment Protection”; 3. The two sides re-examined the results and progress of implementation of those agreements the two organizations have signed; 4. Establish the mechanism for re-examining the implementation of those cross-Strait agreements; 5. Consensus reached on the priority issues of the next stage; 6. The two organizations further consented to strengthening exchanges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 20-22, 2010 Taipei</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Chiang-Chen Meeting</td>
<td>CHIANG Pin-kung (SEF) &amp; CHEN Yunlin (ARATS)</td>
<td>Negotiations on “Cross-Strait Agreement on Nuclear Power Safety Cooperation” and the results of phased negotiations for “Cross-Strait Investment Protection”</td>
<td>1. The two sides signed “Cross-Strait Agreement on Nuclear Power Safety Cooperation”; 2. Joint opinions reached on “Cross-Strait Investment Protection Agreement” as well as on strengthening cross-Strait industrial cooperation; 3. The two sides re-examined the results and progress of implementation of those agreements the two organizations have signed,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More specifically, in the sphere of functional cooperation both Taiwan and mainland China create a win-win situation for the people on the two sides. For instance, the number of direct flights between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait in December 2011 has reached 558 every week, with 50 airports available. Direct cross-Strait sea links has reduced shipping time by 16 to 27 hours each voyage, saving about USD$40 million annually. Over 2.9 million Mainland resident tourists visiting Taiwan have created USD$50 billion in foreign exchange for tourism-related industries in Taiwan, as the statistics between July 2008 and November 2011 indicate. Between June 2009 and April 2011, the two sides had in a reciprocal way provided judicial documents, conducted investigations and gathered evidence, and assisted with arrest and repatriation in over 16,300 request cases, and the first eleven months of 2011 has even recorded over 12,000 request cases. A certain number of Taiwan’s and mainland China’s banks have been allowed to enter each other’s market and create regional financial branches that help their own customers with related services. At present, Taiwan and mainland China are in talks for agreements on investment protection and trade dispute resolutions in order to create a safe business environment for both sides’ businesspeople when doing business in Taiwan and/or mainland China.

Nowadays most of the attention seems to be given to the “early harvest” program of ECFA, coming into effect on January 1, 2011. The number of Taiwanese items eligible for free tariff under the “early harvest” list is now 539, and about 94.5% items on this list have enjoyed free tariff for shipment to mainland China. Major beneficiaries of Taiwan’s industries include textile, petrochemical, transportation equipment, and machinery. Taiwan’s export to
mainland China continues to expand as a result of the tariff cut under ECFA, and it is estimated that shipment of their items to mainland China is going to grow 12% to US$23.1 billion in 2012. Mainland China has 267 products imported into Taiwan are included in ECFA, with 67 of them have reached the zero tariff. Further 186 products with tariffs up to 7.5% will be reduced to zero in 2012. The remaining 14 product categories, with tariffs of over 7.5 percent will decrease to 2.5 percent in 2012 and zero in 2013.\(^7\)

ECFA has generated a significant moment for cross-Strait trade interflows. Table 2 indicates the figures of cross-Strait trade between 1998 and 2011. Generally speaking, trade volume between Taiwan and mainland China expands with the growing market of mainland China and is affected by the state of cross-Strait relations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Exports from Taiwan to Mainland China</th>
<th>Imports from Mainland China to Taiwan</th>
<th>Total Trade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>D.O.D.</td>
<td>Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>19,840.9</td>
<td>17.62</td>
<td>4,113.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>21,312.5</td>
<td>17.22</td>
<td>4,528.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>25,009.9</td>
<td>16.46</td>
<td>6,229.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>25,607.4</td>
<td>20.27</td>
<td>5,903.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>31,528.8</td>
<td>23.30</td>
<td>7,968.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>38,292.7</td>
<td>25.43</td>
<td>11,017.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>48,930.4</td>
<td>26.83</td>
<td>16,792.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>56,271.5</td>
<td>28.36</td>
<td>20,093.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>63,332.4</td>
<td>28.27</td>
<td>24,783.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>74,245.9</td>
<td>30.11</td>
<td>28,015.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>73,977.8</td>
<td>28.94</td>
<td>31,391.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>62,090.9</td>
<td>30.48</td>
<td>24,503.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>84,832.2</td>
<td>30.89</td>
<td>35,952.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 (Jan.-Aug.)</td>
<td>74,303.5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>24,945.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: DOD stands for “degree of dependence.”

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and the world economic situation. When CHEN Shui-bian of DPP won the presidential election in March 2000, there was a stagnation of cross-Strait trade interflows due to a fear of coming conflict between Taiwan and mainland China. In 2009 the figures fell as a result of the sudden economic downturns in major economies. As both the state of cross-Strait relations and the world economic situation are being controlled, cross-Strait trade tops US$120.7 billion in 2010. In the meantime, the economic degree of dependence increases incrementally, with a greater economic dependence of Taiwan on mainland China. Such a dependence results partially from a decrease in international demand over the financial crises and partially from the planned expansion of internal demand in mainland China.

Such a development in functional cooperation is not absolutely welcomed by some in Taiwan, however. The DPP under TSAI Ing-wen’s leadership criticized ECFA as “a poison coated with sugar,” as “the surrender of national sovereignty,” and “a sellout of Taiwan.”8 It also contends now and then that the KMT’s argument about ECFA is just “brain washing and unrealistic propaganda,” and that signing ECFA with mainland China “will result in the large scale of redistribution of wealth in Taiwan.”9 Media and people opposing the KMT’s management of relations with mainland China echo DPP’s policy line by calling ECFA as a conspiracy and had to be stopped,10 stress the damage of signing ECFA on Taiwan because “ECFA sees Taiwan’s status as Hong Kong, a part of China,”11 or degrade the results of the Chiang-Chen Talks as a dialogue that simply benefits “narrow elite.”12 These domestic resistances, along with the existing negative image of CCP, are a salient


11. Shun-Chin Sun, “‘Taiwan’s Sovereignty’ as the Prerequisite for the Synthesis of Taiwanese and Sinicization,” Taiwan International Studies Quarterly, 6:3 (2010) 151.

trial for the Ma administration's "engagement" cross-Strait policy. As Rosen and Wang argue, "Taiwan's leaders have political challenges at home that Beijing's officials are not constrained by."  

**Institutionalization of Cross-Strait Interactions**

With the mutually accepted consensus of 1992, Taiwan and mainland China have resumed the talks since the inauguration of Ma. The seven rounds of "Chiang-Chen Talks" are on the basis of the Koo-Wang Talks in the early 1990s when LEE Teng-hui of KMT and JIANG Zemin of CCP decided to try building more stable and constructive relations. Despite the suspension of the Koo-Wang Talks due to the sour relationship between Taipei and Beijing between 1999 and May 2008, and Koo's death in January 2005, very soon the communication channel between SEF and ARATS was re-established efficiently by the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. Then, the gradual institutionalization of cross-Strait talks and consultations has become a major factor that moves cross-Strait relations forward. On the Taiwan side, this institutionalization is stated clearly in Article 4 of the *Act Governing Relations between Peoples of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area*, which provides:

The Executive Yuan may set up or designate an institution to handle the affairs relating to any dealings between the peoples of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area.

The Mainland Affairs Council, Executive Yuan may entrust the institution referred to in the preceding paragraph or any private organization meeting the following criteria

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to handle the affairs relating to any dealings between the peoples of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area. . .

The Mainland Affairs Council, Executive Yuan or each competent authorities approved by the Executive Yuan . . ., based on the need and the nature of the affairs to be handled, entrust any accountable, professional, and experienced non-profit juristic person other than those referred to in the preceding two paragraphs on a case-by-case basis to assist the handling of the affairs relating to any dealings between the peoples of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area; if necessary, it may also be entrusted to execute agreements.

The institution or private organization referred to in the preceding two paragraphs may upon the approval of the entrusting authorities, entrust any other non-profit juristic person as referred to in the preceding paragraph to assist the handling of the affairs relating to any dealings between the peoples of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area.

On the mainland China side, there is no such an act that governs the authorization of the State Council’s Taiwan Affairs Office, but Article 4 of the ARATS Constitution specifies that ARATS can be entrusted by the party concerned to consult with the party concerned and authorized institution and people about related issues in cross-Strait interflows, and may sign negotiated documents. The political will of the CCP top leaders prompted the Taiwan Affairs Office to set up a corporation juristic person – i.e. ARATS – as an entrusted private institution to deal with cross-Strait issues on behalf of the CCP government.

Beginning from June 2008, with the delicate evolution of cross-Strait engagements, senior officials and their staff from the two sides of the Taiwan Strait can meet frequently for technical and functional discussions in the form of “business-level communication” (yewu goutong), to determine whether certain matters may be listed as topics of negotiation by the following round of the Chiang-Chen Talks. The semi-official nature of negotiations between SEF and ARATS appears effective in the sense that it is used as a institutionalized platform which can solve many issues by cross-Strait meetings at various levels ranging from deputy minister to section chief. For Taiwan and mainland China there are negotiating issues and procedures that are mutually accepted or recognized as legitimate boundaries of negotiation. Being institutionalized, the negoti-
ations conducted by SEF and ARATS may not be able to eliminate or minimize cross-Strait disputes, but they can prevent the parties involved in related negotiations from feeling surprised or frustrated by unexpected one-shot attempts made by the parties.  

Another example of deepened institutionalization of SEF-ARATS negotiations can be best represented by the establishment of the Cross-Strait Economic Cooperation Committee. To cope with the foreseeable difficulty in further economic cooperation between Taiwan and mainland China through ECFA, this Committee was founded on February 22, 2011 in a meeting in Chungli, Taiwan, as a follow-up negotiating mechanism under the ECFA framework, and Vice Minister of Economic Affairs LIANG Kuo-Hsin (Taiwan) and Vice Minister of Commerce JIANG Zengwei (mainland China) led each side’s delegation and jointly held a historic dialogue on the negotiating table. This Committee can deal with disputes that arise from investment activities between Taiwan’s and mainland China’s businesses, and it also facilitates talks on the condition and interpretation of the “early harvest” list of ECFA – a more technical part. Panels under this Committee can follow up on issues involving merchandise trade, investment protection, service access, as well as dispute settlement. To smooth the progress of industrial and customs cooperation between the two sides, the Committee set up five task forces to oversee bilateral cooperation in the following imperative areas – light-emitting diode (LED), electric vehicles, wireless cities, transportation of low temperature, and thin-film-transistor liquid-crystal displays (TFT-LCDs).

It is not easy to know the attitude of mainland Chinese people toward the institutionalization of cross-Strait negotiations, but a latest public opinion survey conducted by the Mainland Affairs Council indicated that more than 80% of the public are in support of the Ma administration’s handling of issues regarding cross-Strait exchanges via institutionalized negotiations, while interestingly about 60% of the public think that the 16 agreements already signed by SEF and ARATS since May 2008 have protected Taiwan’s interests and about 55% believe these agreements have advocated the country’s sovereignty.  

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17. The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) commissioned the China Credit Information Service to conduct a telephone survey of adults aged 20 and over in the Taiwan
dence of the public surveyed in the KMT government and with the mediocre or image of the CCP government in Taiwan's general public, but by and large the institutionalization of cross-Strait engagement has gained a wide support from the general public in Taiwan.

III. FORCES THAT PRIMARILY CHANGE CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS

Arguably, owing to the gradual recovery of cross-Strait relations after May 2008, several prominent internal dynamics have emerged to help cross-Strait relations move forward. Yet, some factors embedded with the complicated nature of cross-Strait relations seem negative and turn out to be seemingly insurmountable barriers to Taipei-Beijing relations at this point. The following paragraphs aim at introducing in brief these major internal forces leading the rapid and salient changes in relations across the Strait to the next stage, in the hope that they can serve as a foundation of better understanding of the development of cross-Strait relations in the Asia Pacific context.

Positive Forces

The first positive force is both sides' self-consciousness of undertaking cautious measures to prevent "surprises" from slowing down a variety of exchanges between Taiwan and mainland China. It is evident that both Ma and Hu have exerted great self-restraint to deal carefully with sensitive cross-Strait issues and problems, although apparently they do not have a direct, official communication channel. Their tacit understanding of GRIT not only stabilizes the Taiwan Strait but also creates an environment for which both sides can find ways to foster stronger mutual confidence incrementally.

The goodwill released from these kinds of interactions needs to be recognized and appreciated. The sixteen agreements and three memorandums of understanding signed between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait since May 2008 have nothing to do with the political and military nature and are of great help for the first step toward the enhancement of mutual understanding and trust. It is

Area, from October 22 to 24, 2011. A total of 1072 effective samples were collected, with a sampling error of 2.99% based on a 95% confidence level. See Mainland Affairs Council, the R.O.C. Executive Yuan, "MAC: Public Opinion Survey Shows High Support for the Results of the Negotiations at the Seventh Chiang-Chen Talks" www.mac.gov.tw (accessed on December 23, 2011)
reasonable that some people either in Taiwan or in mainland China
do not mean to accept these as the gestures of goodwill or even
opportunities, largely because the deep distrust toward their coun-
terpart across the Strait has not diminished. For example, some in
Taiwan view mainland China’s gestures of goodwill as the scheme
of the “united front” strategy which has been long used by the lat-
ter, and the ultimate objective of this strategy is China’s unification.
Some in mainland China would maintain that the benign patterns of
behavior of the KMT-governed Taiwan toward mainland China in
the realm of functional cooperation only shows that Taiwan wants
to make profits out of mainland China but has no intention to solve
the political issues between Taiwan and mainland China in the fore-
seeable future. Generally speaking, nevertheless, it will be too un-
realistic to expect a political engagement between the two sides
after such a long and unpleasant experience facing each other since
1949. Both leaders in Taipei and Beijing apparently know the intri-
cacy of and limit to the development of cross-Strait relations, and
the wisdom of “haste makes waste” should apply to this case be-
ond a doubt.

The second positive force resulting in the advance of cross-
Strait relations is the continued technical and functional exchanges
and people-to-people exchanges between the two sides of the Tai-
wan Strait. The effect of these exchanges has not loomed large in
politics, but these exchanges have prompted both governments in
Taipei and Beijing to consult with each other to minimize possible
problems and obstacles and contributed to further cooperation and
integration in the non-political realms. These unfolding exchanges
are beyond the scope of those in the Korean Peninsula and are
probably on the largest scale between two competing regimes in the
region of the Asia-Pacific.

The technical and functional exchanges have been introduced
in the previous section. It is also important to notice that the peo-
ple-to-people exchanges between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait
after the KMT regained power in May 2008 increase to a great ex-
tent. People of Taiwan have had no problem entering into main-
land China legally, but people of mainland China have faced
restrictions more or less imposed by the two governments across
the Strait. In 1999, after the second Koo-Wang Talk held in 1998,
about 102,000 mainland Chinese people came to Taiwan for various
purposes, and the number reached 894,065 in 2009 and 1,512,127 in
2010, with the number of mainland Chinese tourists topping 1 mil-
lion in 2010 (for details, see Table 3 and Table 4).
Table 3. The Numbers (Times) of the Entry Persons from the Mainland Area, as well as Hong Kong and Macau, from 1998 to November 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mainland Area</th>
<th></th>
<th>Hong Kong and Macau (HK/M)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Short-term Stay Entry</td>
<td>Permitted Residence</td>
<td>Short-term Stay Entry</td>
<td>Permitted Residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>86,544</td>
<td>3,698</td>
<td>317,283</td>
<td>1,323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>102,725</td>
<td>3,840</td>
<td>337,602</td>
<td>1,081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>111,334</td>
<td>5,275</td>
<td>368,678</td>
<td>1,185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>131,901</td>
<td>3,322</td>
<td>354,412</td>
<td>726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>155,872</td>
<td>5,929</td>
<td>379,864</td>
<td>535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>133,422</td>
<td>4,357</td>
<td>267,107</td>
<td>488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>132,109</td>
<td>7,030</td>
<td>346,214</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>152,181</td>
<td>8,127</td>
<td>355,453</td>
<td>592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>221,891</td>
<td>8,076</td>
<td>354,338</td>
<td>481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>226,742</td>
<td>7,997</td>
<td>411,890</td>
<td>484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>240,494</td>
<td>8,109</td>
<td>540,039</td>
<td>519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>894,065</td>
<td>28,189</td>
<td>634,121</td>
<td>568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1,512,127</td>
<td>13,499</td>
<td>700,700</td>
<td>535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 (Jan.-Nov.)</td>
<td>1,478,437</td>
<td>8,936</td>
<td>635,467</td>
<td>497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,798,402</td>
<td>136,651</td>
<td>7,378,680</td>
<td>21,628</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Immigration Agency, the R.O.C. Ministry of the Interior, "Statistic Table of the Numbers of the Entry Persons from the Mainland Area, Hong Kong and Macau, and Citizens without Registered Residence", www.immigration.gov.tw (accessed on December 27, 2011) [Chinese]

Note 1: This abridged table contains no data on the statistics of R.O.C. citizens without registered residence.

Note 2: The “short-term stay entry” category includes those who entered Taiwan for the purposes of social, professional and business exchanges, services provided by the multinational corporations, as well as the mainland Chinese and HK/M tourists and people who utilized the "Mini Three Links" since 2002.

Note 3: The “permitted residence” category of the Mainland Area includes those mainland Chinese spouses residing in Taiwan, as well as mainland Chinese people residing in Taiwan under the special projects and moving to Taiwan.

Moreover, there are a number of mainland China’s provincial governors- or party commissar-led delegations visiting Taiwan for the purpose of cultural, tourism, and economic/trade exchanges and cooperation. Between January and October of 2011, for instance, 10 such delegations arrived and engaged with related sectors and
Table 4. Statistics on Chinese Tourists Visiting Taiwan, 2002-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Tourists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>2,151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>12,768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>19,212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>54,162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>98,545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>81,904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>89,256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>599,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1,188,929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1,161,771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Jan.-Nov.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,146,357</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: Starting from June 22, 2011, Taiwan permits qualified individual mainland Chinese tourists to travel in Taiwan.

Communities in Taiwan, not to mention those led by lower level officials or party cadres. These visits, sometimes being politicized by the opposition in Taiwan, have helped establish communication and purchasing channels between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait.

Student exchanges are also a constructive force for the improvement in mutual understanding of the people on the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. For Taiwan, beginning from the academic year 2011, up to 2000 mainland Chinese students with degrees of the recognized 41 universities and colleges have been allowed to Taiwan to study in degree programs each academic year, and there are 928 of them for the first time in the higher education history of Taiwan. Between 2006 and 2011, the number of mainland Chinese short-term exchange students in Taiwan’s colleges increased rapidly from

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To avoid unnecessary concerns, it is said that the CCP cuts the number of these high level delegations to Taiwan as the 2012 presidential and legislative elections are approaching in Taiwan.
For mainland China, its higher education system involves 25,693 Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwanese students enrolling in doctoral degrees (2,881), master's degrees (3,578), and normal courses or 4-year undergraduate programs (15,677). Among them, it was estimated in 2008 that the number of Taiwanese students had reached 7,000. In addition to the enhancement of student exchanges and mutual understandings, the increased number of students going to either side to study also brings a new driving force to each other's civil societies as a bridge between Taiwan and mainland China, which is particularly beneficial for the improvement in cross-Strait relations at the societal level.

The last, but not least, major positive force has to do with the strong tie of bilateral interactions in the economic field. Economic interaction can be an important factor explaining the emergence of stability and peace between rivalries. In the case of Taiwan and mainland China, both sides of the Taiwan Strait have made salient progress in economic, trade, financial, and investment cooperation. As Richard C. Bush, III points out, for Taiwan, the Ma administration believes that “Taiwan could better assure its prosperity, dignity, and security by engaging and reassuring [mainland] China rather than provoking it,” which is associated with at least two possibilities – enhanced stability in the Taiwan Strait and thus the chance for the movement toward conflict resolution between the two sides. He further argues that

[Mainland China] is emphasizing what the two sides have in common – economic cooperation and Chinese culture – and agreed to reduce somewhat the zero-sum competition

19. “The Number of Overseas Degree and Exchange Students in Taiwan in Recent Years,” the R.O.C. Ministry of Education www.edu.tw. (accessed on December 27, 2011) [Chinese]
in the international arena. Through its policies and inter-
actions, [Mainland China] is trying to build up support for
a PRC-friendly public on Taiwan. [Mainland China] sees
the value of institutionalizing a more stable cross-Strait
relationship.²³

In other words, economic cooperation between Taiwan and
mainland China can be mutually beneficial, not only economically
but also politically. Take ECFA for example. For Taiwan, it finally
reached a free trade agreement-like deal with one of its major trading
partners, and it generally expands the share of Taiwan’s products in mainland China. It also helps draw more foreign direct
investments by making Taiwan “an attractive destination for foreign capital” with relatively unfettered trade and investment with
mainland China.²⁴ Moreover, the KMT government is able to claim
the achievements followed by ECFA, therefore strengthening the
political support for the KMT. For mainland China, ECFA can be
viewed as a tool for economic unification which may lead to politi-
cal unification in the future. So long as the political intent behind
the economic dimension of ECFA does not loom large, ECFA
should be able to continue as a principal channel that serves the
economic interest of the two sides of the Taiwan Strait.

It is also interesting to note that ECFA and its subsequent ne-
egotiations do not go all the way. Before ECFA was signed, main-
land China did release some goodwill to Taiwan at the beginning
but never gave way to Taiwan’s requests that would dampen main-
land China’s core economic interest. In 2011, the first year of
ECFA being put into practice, only joint opinions were reached on
the Cross-Strait Investment Protection Agreement, and negotia-
tions on trade in goods and trade in service have not progressed yet.
This relatively slow development worries some people who tend to
promote cross-Strait economic cooperation eagerly, and this develop-
ment might have added some degree of uncertainty to the future
of ECFA. However, what presents on the negotiating table of
ECFA may be just like a real FTA negotiation process in which

²³. Richard C. Bush, III, “China-Taiwan: Recent Economic, Political, and Military
Developments Across the Strait, and Implications for the United States,” The Brook-
This also appeared as a testimony used by the U.S.-China Economic and Security Re-
view Commission.

²⁴. Shiro Armstrong, “Taiwan’s strategy after the framework agreement with
China,” East Asia Forum: Economics, Politics, and Public Policy in East Asia and the
concessions and disputes co-exist. After the “honeymoon” period is over, the harder part of ECFA-related negotiations appears to be a temporarily insurmountable obstacle to the deepening of cross-Strait economic cooperation. This is in fact a natural and reasonable process and should not be seen as an immense setback.

Negative Forces

Despite these positive driving forces behind the improved relationship between Taiwan and mainland China, there are still at least three negative forces that may become hindrances to the development of contemporary cross-Strait relations. The first has to do with the lack of political trust between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. The value and political institution of Taiwan that underwent the waves of democratization are far different from those of mainland China that is still authoritarian under the sole leadership of the CCP. Both due to the poor understanding of each other’s political intention and strategic goals, and due to the uncertainty associate with further policy accommodation, the degree of mutual trust between Taiwan and mainland China is still low. As Taiwan remains to have a politically divided society and as leaders in mainland China still have a strong irredentist thinking and the fear of losing power if their Taiwan policy turns out unsuccessful, it is extremely difficult, untimely as well, to untie the knot quickly for the time being.

Furthermore, the opportunity of building initial trust between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait has emerged with Ma’s idea of “Diplomatic Truce” which is implicitly acknowledged and agreed by mainland China, but the very limited progress made in the diplomatic realm made people of Taiwan question the sincerity of mainland China. Meanwhile, mainland China is worried about the possibly irreversible tendency of Taiwan toward greater independence by gaining more diplomatic space and economic self-reliance as cross-Strait relations are improving. Hence, it has never given up the use of force against Taiwan in case of immediate or incremental “Taiwan independence.”

Taiwan’s continued struggle for more international space that comes with the growing “Taiwan identity,” which may not necessarily lead to Taiwan independence, also triggers some worry of mainland China. The Ma administration’s desire for greater inter-

25. For a detailed discussion, see Tse-Kang Leng, “Coping with China in Hard Times: Taiwan in Global and Domestic Aspects,” Pacific Focus 26:3 (2011) 360-384.
national participation is aimed to become a responsible stakeholder in the region and in the international community, but such a desire has been linked to the "Taiwan identity" by Beijing leaders as a possibly dangerous step that will eventually facilitate Taiwan independence, especially if the DPP regains power by beating the KMT in the presidential election.

The second internal force that has a major impact on cross-Strait relations and the Asia-Pacific concerns the KMT-DPP power struggle every four years, as well as the somewhat mysterious leadership change of the CCP roughly every decade. In Taiwan there will be a possible regime change every four years through a democratic presidential election, which further complicates dynamic relations across the Strait due to the two parties' sharp difference in the policies toward mainland China. For the KMT, it can be argued that mainland China is both "a risk and an opportunity."26 On the one hand, mainland China's desire for reunification with Taiwan and rising economic competitiveness that gradually causes an obvious struggle for market share between the two supply chains have always been the strategic concern of the KMT government. On the other hand, both Taiwan and mainland China share the same, or at least a very similar, cultural and historical background and ethnic likeness, although historically Taiwan was occupied and/or ruled by the Portuguese (in the 16th century), the Dutch (in the 17th century), the Spanish (in the 17th century), and the Japanese (1895-1945). To maintain Taiwan's capacity to act in the international arena, Taiwan needs to make good use of these niches to do more business with mainland China and strengthen its position in the economic map of the Asia Pacific. For the DPP, people of Taiwan should cast a doubt on the reliability, sincerity, and sustainability of mainland China. Mainland China is a rising power, but it is also a source of uncertainty for the region because of its non-democratic, autocratic political system and its potential social instability. To avoid this kind of uncertainty, Taiwan should first embrace the rest of the world – particularly the US, Japan, and the European Union (EU) – and enhance the economic ties with these major powers, rather than engaging mainland China as a top priority. What the KMT is doing with mainland China is losing Taiwan's identity and sovereignty and thus will marginalize Taiwan to a great extent.27


In mainland China, the leadership will change roughly once every ten years, and whether its policy toward Taiwan and the Asia Pacific is a function of the replacement of one set of leaders by another remains to be seen, owing to the mysterious political decisionmaking process of mainland China. XI Jinping, the designated successor of Hu, seems to be an adherent to MAO Zedong teachings and is more sympathetic toward the conservative or hawkish stand similar with the People’s Liberation Army. 28 This cannot be proved yet, but this leads one to an inquiry: whether the consistency in Washington-Beijing relations will remain in the not-too-distant future. Robert Sutter analyzes that, with the rising power and recent hard-liner policies of mainland China, two dominant schools of thought about such relations are the “turning sour” school and the “status quo” or “continuity” school, and that only time will tell which school has a more precise assessment. 29 Given such an uncertainty of Washington-Beijing relations, therefore, it is no surprise that a cloud still hovers over the two sides across the Strait, mainly because of the indistinctness of Xi’s US policy that has to do with his Taiwan policies as well.

The last negative force emerging in cross-Strait relations is the unsolved dilemma regarding endless struggles for sovereignty between Taiwan and mainland China. It is evident that this issue is at the core of cross-Strait relations. Even though in 1992 Taiwan reaffirmed its sovereignty over the Chinese mainland in accordance with the Constitution, it also acknowledged that it no longer exercised jurisdiction over the Chinese mainland. According to Ma, although both Taiwan and mainland China cannot recognize each other’s sovereignty because they have completely overlapping sovereignty claims, their mutual non-denial of jurisdiction can become a pragmatic reflection of the status quo. 30 In the foreseeable future, nevertheless, it appears less likely that mainland China will abdicate its territorial claim over Taiwan and try to come up with a new framework by which both Taiwan and mainland China can interact politically on an equal footing.


Now the CCP has eyed its relations with the KMT on the basis of equality and mutual respect, but in terms of government-to-government relations mainland China always sticks to the traditional concept of sovereignty and has no interest in facing the reality that in “China,” broadly defined, there are two separate governments that rule part of the territory. The CCP government, with intensified internal problems, enacted the Anti-secession Law in 2005 which contained both pacific and violent measures to achieve stability of the Taiwan Strait and the ultimate goal of national unification.31 This kind of sensitive and endless struggle for sovereignty hinders the constructive dialogue of the two sides of the Strait on how their joint efforts and agreements can be extended to the political field and also become a driving force for the Asia Pacific development in many critical areas.

IV. CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS AND MAJOR POWER POLITICS AND TERRITORIAL DISPUTES IN THE ASIA PACIFIC

The aforementioned forces that influence relations across the Taiwan Strait are endogenous, but they are of significance in the sense that they are both variables affecting cross-Strait relations and the underlying factors helping observe and analyze the Asia Pacific context of cross-Strait relations. A basic proposition of this essay is: although certain structural or political obstacles cannot be removed, the primary positive forces are of great help for the reduction in the effect of those obstacles and for the enduring stability in the Taiwan Strait.

This section focuses on some major “high politics” issues of the Asia Pacific vis-à-vis rapidly changing cross-Strait relations, and the section that follows will look at the “low politics” issues having to do with the development of cross-Strait relations in the Asia Pacific context.

It is not surprising at all if one argues that the current pace of cross-Strait relations is bringing gradual stabilization not only to both Taipei and Beijing but also to the region and the rest of the

31. “China Sends Warning to Taiwan with Anti-Secession Law,” Washington Post, March 8, 2005 www.washingtonpost.com (accessed on June 10, 2011); The Anti-Secession Law was adopted at the Third Session of the Tenth National People’s Congress on March 14, 2005, full text available at http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/20050314/eng20050314_176746.html. Given the complex consequence of the Anti-secession Law, the CCP government has seldom mentioned it in order to avoid hurting Taiwan people’s feeling.
world. Hence, the better cross-Strait relations, the greater benefits — the dividends of peace — the region of the Asia Pacific will enjoy. Intuitively, this argument should be correct. Very few observers would hold that peaceful cross-Strait relations have been the potential cause of regional instability or security concerns, mostly the tilting balance of power and the intensifying complexity and competition in the territorial disputes. Then, what if the intuitive reasoning fails to be correct and the pessimistic scenarios prevail? Since one cannot exclude this possibility, it appears worth scrutinizing the suspicious and pessimistic arguments for the purpose of figuring out whether or not improved relations across the Taiwan Strait are not as beneficial as some might have anticipated.

To better achieve the goal of this empirically analytical section, three suspicious statements about increased positive interactions between Taiwan and mainland China will be brought up in the context of the Asia Pacific. These statements do not pertain to the author and need more prudent examination in order to get rid of specious conclusions that misinterpret the state of cross-Strait relations and their impact on the “high politics” issues in the region. The first suspicious statement concerns Taiwan-US relations, which is the most important foreign relations of Taiwan. There will be a relatively lengthy analysis on this statement because the US is the most important country for Taiwan’s survival and development. The second touches upon Taiwan-Japan relations by considering Japan’s strategic position as cross-Strait relations are making a lot of progress. The last refers to the territorial disputes that involve both Taiwan and mainland China and their possible impact on the countries concerned.

Suspicious Statement 1: The improvement in cross-Strait relations will weaken Taiwan’s strategic position in the US policy toward East Asia.

This statement is based on the premises embedded with the sentiments that relations between the US and mainland China are always strategically competitive and can possibly turn into serious armed conflicts if not managed well, and that Taiwan’s strategic position has always relied principally on Taiwan’s long-term political independence of mainland China and strong military self-defense capability with the assistance of the US — Taiwan and the other US allies in the western Pacific region are in cooperation with the US to engage mainland China constructively and to deter mainland
China militarily. As a result, some criticisms can be derived from such premises, for instance,

since Ma is in office, Taiwan has become the weakest link of the US strategy in the Asia-Pacific – Taiwan’s leaning toward mainland China politically and economically has resulted in the gradual loss of Taiwan’s political independence, as well as Taiwan’s abandonment of the will of self-defense; and Taiwan may be ditched by the US that either fears large-scaled conflicts with mainland China over Taiwan or loses confidence in Taiwan carrying out the rapprochement policy toward mainland China. 32

These criticisms are not universally acceptable. Nowadays Taiwan-US relations remain robust. Some specialists who have observed the triangular relationship for a long time even make the opposite case and call for the continuity of the US policy toward Taiwan. 33 To further examine those criticisms that seem persuasive by taking into account the significance of mainland China in contemporary US foreign relations, the supporting evidence that sustains relations between Taiwan and the US and why they are crucial for the US must be discussed here.

In general, five major pillars are of great importance for sustainable and vigorous relations between Taiwan and the US. First, the sharing of such common value as democracy and freedom of speech and association; second, the economic prosperity of Taiwan and the close bonding of bilateral economic relations; third, Taiwan’s US policy and US’s Taiwan policy that remain consultative and as transparent as possible through various channels of communication; fourth, the appropriate defense capability and will of Taiwan that not only help Taiwan defend itself from external intervention and aggression but also give Taiwan more confidence to be engaged in constructive dialogues and exchanges with mainland China; and last, US strategic perceptions of mainland China that correctly spot the challenges imposed by mainland China with


ambivalent strategic goals. Now the question lies in whether these pillars are shaky or deteriorating?

It goes without saying that the first and second pillars remain very strong. The third pillar standing for frequent communication between Taipei and Washington seems functioning, but two obvious obstacles still exist – that is, the level and frequency of mutual communication have been limited due to the pressure from Beijing and the bilateral issues between Taipei and Washington, and there are a range of voices in and from Taiwan that confuse US decisionmakers about the Ma administration’s resolve of protecting Taiwan while transforming Taiwan’s relations with mainland China in a nuanced and pragmatic way.

Take for example the following four significant cases in Taiwan-US relations. First, US arms sale to Taiwan demonstrates the support and hesitation of the US at the same time. Despite the facts that US arms transfers to Taiwan remain frequent and huge, and that the assessment of the US military recognizes that the balance of forces across the Taiwan Strait has continued to tilt toward mainland China, the Barack H. Obama administration seems to be less proactive in helping Taiwan strengthen its conventional forces – F-16C/D air fighters and diesel-electric submarines in particular, while stressing the importance of military innovation and asymmetric advantage (over the People’s Liberation Army).

Second, US support for Taiwan’s international space and the peaceful settlement of the Taiwan Strait issue appear to be seen as a very positive sign of healthy Taiwan-US relations, in spite of the lack of official relations. Taiwan sharing the same value and political ideology with the US appreciates the latter’s endorsement for the “meaningful participation” of Taiwan in functional international organizations and regimes. Taiwan also values the statement of the US on the peaceful resolution of the Taiwan Strait issue. Sometimes the condition of no unilateral change in the status quo of the Taiwan Strait is emphasized by the US, which from an American perspective ensures the stability of the Taiwan Strait.

Third, continued US adherence to the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) and the spirit of the six assurance commitment is definitely indicative of the legal assurance of Taiwan’s bonding with the US in

the absence of diplomatic and defense treaties. Because of the ambiguous definition such as “a sufficient self-defense capability” and “arms of a defensive character,” both Taiwan and the US might have had somewhat different interpretations as to the fulfillment of the TRA. It is clear that the Ma administration understands why the US executive branch has to mention the TRA and its three communiqués with mainland China whenever explaining its Taiwan policy, in spite of the obvious contradictory nature of these documents, but urges US policymakers to abide by the TRA in the dynamic, probably dire as well, strategic context in which the US and mainland China are involved.  

Last, the resumption of the talks on the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) – being suspended since 2007 by the George W. Bush administration over Taiwan’s fear that the import of US beef could cause Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease – is considered a crucial economic indicator of robust and reliable Taiwan-US ties, because it shows that the US is willing to work with Taiwan to reduce the pressure of being too close economically to mainland China and to work with Taiwan for free trade-like activities. Nonetheless, the attitude of the US toward the TIFA talks has become lukewarm as Taiwan’s Legislative Yuan passed a bill in January 2010 to bar the import of US ground beef, offal and other beef parts such as skulls, brains, eyes, and spines due to the public concern that a trace amount of the US beef products containing residues of ractopamine could cause a health risk to Taiwanese consumers.

Whether a domestic political quarrel between the KMT and the DPP, the US hopes to see Taiwan implement the previous beef agreement signed in 2009 and revise the zero-tolerance policy on ractopamine by scientific standards, or the beef issue will continue to be a critical obstacle to the reinvigoration of TIFA talks. On the one hand Taiwan has to deal with its domestic legislative and regulatory issues; on the other hand Taiwan calls for the detachment of the US between the two issues because the TIFA facilitates a wide array of mutual interests of Taiwan and the US.

In addition to the four cases briefly introduced above, the accomplishment of other functional areas of Taiwan-US relations,

35. For a recent work indicating pessimistically this dynamic strategic context – that is, there may be a power struggle between the US and mainland China in Asia soon, see Aaron L. Friedberg, A Contest for Supremacy: China, America and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia New York: W. W. Norton and Company 2011.
such as the visa waiver\textsuperscript{36} and the extradition agreement, will serve as a basis for the upgrade of bilateral relations. All these have revealed the lasting support derived from the first three pillars in Taiwan-US relations.

The fourth pillar – Taiwan’s defense capability and will – seems to be weakening in part because Taiwan has not been able to compete with mainland China in massive arms build-up and in part because Taiwan’s defense modernization has been stalled by the difficulty of the Ma administration in acquiring key advanced weaponry systems from the US.\textsuperscript{37} The quantity of US arms transfers to Taiwan has been noticeable in recent years, but category-wise, the Obama administration is not willing to immediately agree on Taiwan’s moderate request for the further military buildup in the face of mainland China whose comprehensive power is on the ascent. Without the strong self-defense capability that comes mainly from quality arms sales of the US, Taiwan will have no confidence to engage and negotiate with mainland China.

More importantly, the consolidation of this pillar hinges largely upon the development of Washington-Beijing relations; that is, it cannot be independent from how the US and mainland China view each other on the strategic map. Then, it will be more difficult to accomplish stabilization in the Taiwan Strait, not to mention the spread of the peace dividends to the region.

The fifth pillar – the correct US strategic assessment of mainland China – is firm for some people and shaky for others. As argued earlier, there are at least two dominant groups of experts on the US-mainland China strategic relations, one providing a warning signal and the other a relatively cautiously optimistic prediction. What is also important to know is that the fourth and fifth pillars can be interlinked. As US Secretary of State Hillary R. Clinton once maintained at a public speech in 2011, Taiwan has been a major security and economic partner of the US in the Pacific region for many decades, and both parties have a solid and strong relation-

\textsuperscript{36} Taiwan has been put on the US visa waiver program candidate list on December 22, 2011.

\textsuperscript{37} For instance, the US remained undecided to sell the F-16 C/Ds package to Taiwan, even if both former President Chen Shui-bian and President Ma have called for such a sale continuously. According to Ma, the US does not even want Taiwan to present the letter of request for the F-16 C/Ds deal. See “President Ma Calls for F-16 C/D Sale to Taiwan,” \textit{Taiwan Today} June 27, 2011 taitwantojday.tw. (accessed on June 28, 2011)
ship.\textsuperscript{38} Yet, it is undeniable that some have argued as mainland China is on the rise, it will be “less likely to tolerate US military aid to Taiwan,” so the US should “reconsider its current strategy and contemplate broaching a conversation with [mainland] China about mutual constraint.”\textsuperscript{39} If the US misreads and is deterred by mainland China’s strategic intention and power in the region of the Asia Pacific, it is possible that the US might want to prevent Taiwan from appearing on its strategic radar screen in order to eschew a major “problem” that lies between Washington and Beijing, thus less willing to provide Taiwan with sufficient self-defensive weapons.

As a matter of fact, it is up to the US to determine what its strategic map in the Asia-Pacific will look like. The reconsideration and contemplation of the US regarding this issue should not be at the expense of time-honored and valuable Taiwan-US ties at various levels that have come into existence since the 1950s, or the security commitment offered by the US to its allies around the world will become ambivalent and dubious. Japan and South Korea will feel alarmed and begin to doubt US reliability and therefore recalculate their alignment with the US at the expense of their security and economic relations with mainland China.\textsuperscript{40}

Some interpret former US Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg’s “strategic reassurance” toward mainland China as a dual policy which the US reassures mainland China that it has no intention of containing a rising mainland China and which the US is undertaking “the most minimalist interpretation” of the TRA to keep its last commitment to Taiwan.\textsuperscript{41} If this is really the case, the fifth pillar fostering stronger Taiwan-US relations will turn incomplete, eventually affecting the fourth pillar, Taiwan’s defense capability and will.


\textsuperscript{40} Tucker and Glaser, “Should the United States Abandon Taiwan?” 32-33.

\textsuperscript{41} Blumenthal, “Rethinking U.S. Foreign Policy towards Taiwan.”
Suspicious Statement 2: The improvement in cross-Strait relations will trigger the greater concern of Japan over the Beijing-Taipei ties that may bring Japan strategic and economic disadvantages.

Japan is another major power in the Asia-Pacific that pays close attention to the development of cross-Strait relations. There is a fixed impression of Japan that Japan does not want to see closer relations across the Taiwan Strait because Japan has deep anxieties of getting involved in a Taiwan conflict on the side of the US and of facing a unified China which may threaten Japan's energy supply and geopolitical and geo-economic interests. As a result, Japan would view Taiwan as a strategically significant actor helpful for Japan, particularly in the era of mainland China's ascent. And many even think DPP, if winning the upcoming presidential election, will be more supportive to Japan in opposing mainland China at least politically and militarily.

The above-mentioned argument is based on two premises at least – first, that closer relations between Taiwan and mainland China is going to lead to ultimate unification of China; second, that a unified China will always respond to Japan in an offensive manner. It is probably too intangible to talk about whether or not a unified China will be a security concern for Japan, but it is worth explaining why closer relations across the Taiwan Strait will not be detrimental to Japan.

Let’s leave alone mainland China’s policy and attitude toward Japan – that is, treating such a policy and attitude as a constant. For the KMT government, it will never change its good-neighbor policy during Ma’s presidency, and it will not accept any offer or suggestion of mainland China that will damage the interest of Taiwan people and the stability of the region as cross-Strait relations have made progress after May 2008. A stable framework of cross-Strait relations will contribute to peace in the Asia Pacific, which meets the practical need of Taiwan, Japan, and the region as a whole. In addition, Ma has reaffirmed a few times that Taiwan endorses bilateral and multilateral arrangements, including the US-Japan security

alliance, in the Asia Pacific so long as they are beneficial to regional peace and stability. That being said, even if Japan-mainland China relations turn sour, there is no strong justified reason to accept the supposition that the improvement in cross-Strait relations will lessen Taipei’s amity and goodwill to Japan, or that recent Taipei-Beijing engagements will be harmful for Japan’s strategic and economic interests.

More specifically, no matter how Japan-mainland China relations evolve and no matter what mainland China is going to do to persuade Taiwan on its side, the Ma administration’s foreign policy course will remain independent, and its determination to support regional arrangements that are helpful for peace and stability of the Asia Pacific will be the same. What Japan should be worried about is its long strained relations with mainland China. The “history” issue,\textsuperscript{43} the East China Sea and Diaoyutai Islands (Senkaku Islands) issues,\textsuperscript{44} the strategic and military mistrust which coexists with the so-called “China threat,”\textsuperscript{45} Japan’s stance and attitude toward Taiwan (independence), as well as Japan’s hope for the United Nations Security Council seat, for example, are all distinctly perceived hindrances to the development of bilateral relations be-


tween Japan and mainland China. Hence, how can the two governments consult each other to build normal and friendly relations will be key to the validity of the argument that better cross-Strait ties will run parallel with Japan’s national interest in the Asia Pacific.

One very important question remains unanswered, that is, will both Taiwan and mainland China cooperate in the future to deal with the territorial disputes with Japan? This question will be answered in the following paragraphs, along with the analysis of the Diaoyutai Islands (Senkaku Islands) and the South China Sea dispute.

Suspicious Statement 3: The improvement in cross-Strait relations has helped mainland China concentrate on the disputed areas, in particular the Diaoyutai Islands and the South China Sea.

As mentioned, improved cross-Strait relations can bring about stability and dividends of peace for the Asia Pacific. Because of this positive development in relations between Taiwan and mainland China, it appears to be a majority view in Taiwan that the chance of diplomatic and sovereign conflicts between the two sides will remain, but a potential breakout of direct military conflict between the two sides will be very low in the short run and the foreseeable future. By the same token, in China’s National Defense in 2010 published in March 2011 in Beijing, mainland China points out that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait can have contact and exchanges on military issues “at an appropriate time” and discuss “a military security mechanism of mutual trust,” endeavoring to work together to take on measures to further stabilize cross-Strait relations and avoid repeating the unpleasant history of violent conflict between fellow countrymen – although the reality is that the military deployment of the People’s Liberation Army continues to pose an immediate and immense security challenge to Taiwan. A more cautious warning is thus that the status quo of the Taiwan Strait is changing dynamically in favor of mainland China that has “consistently maneuvered to build up leverage...and influence vis-à-vis Taiwan.”

Neighboring countries of mainland China are watching closely how this issue will be resolved by mainland China, as it can be a sign of mainland China’s attitude toward the sovereignty disputes in which it is involved. With the seeming de-escalation of military conflict in the Taiwan Strait, “theoretically” mainland China could induce the less assertive military posture of mainland China in the region of the Asia Pacific. However, the facts may have surprised some people holding this kind of optimistic thinking.

The Diaoyutai Islands is the first disputed area to be discussed here. Approximately beginning in September 2010, when a mainland Chinese fishing trawler collided with two Japanese coast guard vessels, the heated rhetoric between Japan and mainland China had reached a new high. Then there were a series of incidents in which Japan has accused mainland Chinese vessels, helicopters, and planes of illegal or reckless behavior in the “sensitive waters” of the East China Sea and the surrounding territorial waters of Japan.48 Japan claimed last October that mainland Chinese entered the surrounding waters more than a dozen times since the collision. To counter the strategic moves of mainland China on the rise, Japan has galvanized its efforts to empower its Self Defense Force with a well-built presence in the southern borders, especially those in the disputed areas with mainland China. In response, mainland China lodged protests with Japan over Japanese fishing vessels entering the “disputed waters” in the East China Sea, including that of the Diaoyutai Islands; in addition, mainland China maintains that its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) is in the East China Sea.49

In spite of these ongoing disputes, in November 2011, the Japanese government accepted the proposal of mainland China to recommence negotiations under the auspices of the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) regarding the boundary lines in the East China Sea. Self-restraint at the governmental level has been exerted in order to reduce the possibility of the escalation of conflict. However, joint explorations of the disputed waters do not seem likely in the near future.

Down south of the disputed areas between Japan and mainland China, in recent years maritime skirmishes have been sporadically

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taking place in the South China Sea between claimants. With a better financial ability and with a greater need for the preservation of strategically important natural resources in the South China Sea, most of the Southeast Asian claimants – Vietnam and Malaysia in particular – are modernizing its military force. Even so, mainland China still enjoys predominant military advantage over the other claimants, including Taiwan, and is more able to influence the first island chain with greater military projection capability.\(^{50}\)

A “core interest”,\(^{51}\) the South China Sea in mainland Chinese leaders’ mind is again invaded incrementally a few years since the signing of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea in November 2002.\(^{52}\) In addition to continued diplomatic negotiation and military presence, the gesture of mainland China in this area appears more assertive after US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s remarks at the 2010 ASEAN Regional Forum in Hanoi, where she called for a multilateral and peaceful settlement of the South China Sea territorial dispute in accordance with the UNCLOS.\(^{53}\) Her remarks were viewed by Beijing as a disguise whose real objective was to internationalize the sovereignty dispute over the South China Sea – or put a little bit differently, to back the positions of Southeast Asian countries claiming sovereignty over the disputed area.\(^{54}\)

In early 2011, mainland China even demonstrated coercion toward Southeast Asian countries adjacent to the South China Sea. For example, the People’s Liberation Army Air Force’s advance air fighters appeared and buzzed over the Filipino OV-10 plane and


52. Full text available at www.aseansec.org/13163.htm.


oil-exploration vessels over and near the Reed Bank Basin a couple of times; and reportedly the ex-Soviet Aircraft Carrier Varyag, now named the Shi Lang, as well as the newest carrier-based J-15 fighters and the J-18 vertical/short-takeoff-and-landing (VSTOL) fighters, will lead the way to help mainland China exert greater influence on the strategic calculations of countries involved in the South China Sea dispute.

It is not certain why mainland China adopted such assertive measures around the disputed islets and reefs surrounded by the East China Sea and the South China Sea in recent years. Four most likely explanations of that are: the ascent of the hawkish faction within the CCP with stronger confidence and nationalism that results mainly from the rapid growth in politico-economic influence and military capabilities; the intention of using the escalation of the Diaoyutai Islands and the South China Sea disputes as the scapegoat for the intensified domestic problems; the recent remarks of the US about the Diaoyutai Islands and the South China Sea that may have triggered the self-defensive perception and emotion of Beijing leaders; and the insecure feeling of mainland Chinese leaders about the increased scarcity of resources.

Specifically for mainland China, its “growing economic, diplomatic and military presence and influence in Asia and globally is raising concern among many countries about [mainland] China’s ultimate aims – and the threats this could present to them. These regional concerns could catalyze regional or global balancing efforts.” It is thus of great importance to contemplate and work on the condition where the pacific and stable development of cross-Strait relations, if continued in the foreseeable future, will become a showcase of Hu’s “Harmonious World.” Then such a development can apply to the other parts of the Asia Pacific where mainland China is engaging other countries in territorial disputes and/or economic competitions.


56. A most updated introduction to mainland China’s internal debate on the South China Sea can be found in Sarah Raine, “Beijing’s South China Sea Debate,” Survival 53:5 (October-November 2011) 69-88.

Lately mainland China has undertaken a more flexible approach to the South China Sea dispute.\textsuperscript{58} Having gone through a number of disagreements on a code of conduct or similar preventive diplomacy measures in the South China Sea, mainland China and ASEAN finally began in July 2011 to draft preliminary guidelines for a binding code of conduct. ASEAN member states would like to complete the drafting of the code of conduct by July 2012 to submit it to the ASEAN Summit, and mainland China expressed its goodwill to facilitate the drafting process. In October 2011, mainland China and Vietnam struck a deal to resolve the existing maritime dispute. Moreover, at the 2011 East Asia Summit mainland China pledged another RMB$10 billion in loans to the region, totaling RMB$25 billion in loans in 2010-2011.\textsuperscript{59}

Some China watchers argue that the progress in cross-Strait relations in recent years makes mainland China able to shift its strategic focus on the other sensitive areas of dispute.\textsuperscript{60} Logically, other things being equal, such a possibility does exist. To cope with this undesirable consequence, the best strategy for the parties concerned is to prevent the Taiwan Strait from becoming a dire area again, because such a decision is the outcome of the irresponsible beggar-thy-neighbor policy that will produce an unconstructive impact on them as well.

A claimant that occupies the Tungsha (Pratas Islands) and Taiping Island (Itu Aba) with its coast guards, Taiwan reiterates its sovereignty over all the South China Sea and asks the parties concerned to exert self-restraint and abide by the UN Charter and other international laws to settle these disputes in a nonviolent way, while encouraging cross-Strait relations to move forward as an example in which conflict is being transformed gradually into peace for the benefit of all people in the world. The R.O.C. Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a couple of statements that upheld the basic principles of “safeguarding sovereignty, shelving disputes [with the other relevant parties], promoting peace and reciprocity, and en-


\textsuperscript{60} See, for example, “Sovereignty Disputes over the South China Sea Erupt China Doesn’t Allow Even an Inch,” China Review News March 22, 2009 www.chinareviewnews.com. (accessed on June 20, 2011) [Chinese]
couraging joint exploration” for the resolution of the South China Sea dispute; in addition, it has emphasized once and again that it is prepared to work with other parties concerned in the region to come up with workable solutions. So far Taiwan has not been involved in any armed confrontation either with mainland China or with ASEAN member states claiming sovereignty over part or all of the disputed area for many decades. The Ma administration assures that it will maintain peace instead of creating tension as cross-Strait relations is improving.  

In the discussion of Suspicious Statement 2, a question that remains unanswered is: will both Taiwan and mainland China cooperate in the future to deal with the territorial disputes with Japan? Similarly, some would pose the question as to whether both Taiwan and mainland China will cooperate in the future to deal with the territorial disputes in the South China Sea. The answers are definitely negative.

Taiwan has overlapped jurisdiction and sovereignty claims with mainland China both in the Diaoyutai area and the South China Sea. It is now too far-fetched to argue that Taipei and Beijing will be able to sit down to talk about these issues in the foreseeable future. A key prerequisite for these overlapped claims to be settled peacefully between Taipei and Beijing is that the two governments must be able to reach consensus to conduct political (sovereignty) consultations and negotiations on an equal footing, not to mention that a very tough issue will emerge when it comes to the issue that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait must agree on the formula before such consultations and negotiations begin – whether the formula of “One China,” “One China, Two Systems,” “One China, Two Governments,” “One Country, Two Governments,” “One China, respective interpretations,” or “One China, One Taiwan.” Given the fact that both sides of the Taiwan Strait do not recognize each other’s jurisdiction and sovereignty, this prerequisite will hardly be a surmountable impediment to the outset of any political consultation or negotiation between Taiwan and mainland China.

It is natural for mainland China to wish that Taiwan can join its side to defend bilaterally these areas claimed by Japan and some Southeast Asian countries. Some observers even suspect that the Ma administration was using Track Two meetings to seek coopera-

tion with mainland China on the South China Sea issue.\(^{62}\) This allegation is highly dubious. One of the possible consequences for doing so is that the level of international intervention in these areas will become higher because of the worry regarding the next step Taiwan and mainland China would to take jointly. Additionally, it is likely that the impact of asymmetric distribution of payoff that impedes international cooperation in the Asia Pacific will be decreased by the increasing number of participating countries in negotiating an encompassing resolution to settle their disputes,\(^{63}\) thereby bringing more concerned actors to the game of territorial dispute or pushing these actors to introduce more possible third parties to it.

In current Taiwan politics, cooperating with mainland China in resolving the South China Sea sovereignty dispute will result in harsh political implications for Ma who has been criticized of losing Taiwan's sovereignty by some opposition parties. Besides, on this issue Taiwan under Ma's leadership will never lean toward any party to solve the said disputes, and it will endeavor to seek the possibility of engaging in rational, constructive, and fact-based dialogue with the other parties to the disputes. Thus, Taiwan should have no intention to cooperate with mainland China to exclude the other countries' opportunities of participating in joint exploration of resources or to safeguard the freedom of navigation in the disputed areas even if mainland China is willing to treat and negotiate with Taiwan equally.\(^{64}\) Accordingly, improved cross-Strait relations are one thing, and Taipei and Beijing working together to claim or defend the sovereignty over the disputed areas is another.

V. CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS AND ECONOMIC AND NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY ISSUES IN THE ASIA PACIFIC

The positive development of cross-Strait relations will come up with dividends of peace to the region of the Asia Pacific. The previ-

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\(^{62}\) “Scholars Advise Gov't to Be Aggressive in Spratly Islands Dispute in South China Sea,” April 18, 2011 www.chinapost.com.tw. (access on December 23, 2011)

\(^{63}\) This argument is based on Duncan Snidal, “Relative Gains and the Pattern of International Cooperation,” American Political Science Review 85:3 (1991) 701-726.

\(^{64}\) See, for example, “President Ma Meets Participants Attending International Symposium on Diaoyutai Islands,” September 2, 2011, english.president.gov.tw/Default.aspx?tabid=491&itemid=25205&rmid=2355, and “Taiwan Will not Cooperate with China on Tiaoyu/tais: Spokesman,” Focus Taiwan, Central News Agency, September 2, 2011, focustaiwan.tw/showNews/Webnews_Detail.aspx?Type=aALL&ID=201109020052. (both accessed on December 21, 2011)
ous section has concentrated on the “high politics” dividends of peace and responded analytically to some wide-spread arguments in association with the improvement in relations across the Taiwan Strait. This section examines the “low politics” dividends of peace brought by improved cross-Strait ties after May 2008. Two major issue-areas will be touched upon. The first issue is the ECFA and its impact on regional economic order. The second deals with the possibility of cross-Strait coordination and cooperation in intraregional mechanisms of the non-traditional security realm, such as counter-terrorism, food safety, environmental protection, and energy security.

_Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) and the Asia Pacific Economic Development and Integration_

Theoretically, ECFA that enhances economic and trade interflows between Taiwan and mainland China might lead to a poorer outcome for the other countries. The growth of Taiwan’s market share in mainland China and foreign direct investment from mainland China is arguably at the expense of their neighboring countries. This seems inevitable when a bilateral FTA or FTA-like arrangement is put into practice. In addition, the neighboring countries with no better access to such foreign trade do not form similar mechanisms or fail to join the said agreement or arrangement.

But to take it further, ECFA is the very first “FTA” Taiwan signed with its major trading partners. Despite the fact that the sovereignty issue has not been resolved between Taiwan and mainland China, through the ECFA Taiwan can keep its momentum of economic growth and somewhat eschew the tendency of further marginalization of regional economic liberalization and integration; and “ECFA and its enabling agreements will likely prompt both [mainland] China and Taiwan to gradually reduce [World Trade Organization (WTO)]-inconsistent measures and make the future cross-strait FTA a WTO-plus one.”

It appears that ECFA is a choice Taiwan has to take for now. The ECFA is both a boost for cross-Strait economic interflows and a stepping stone for both sides’ effort to disseminate the dividends of peace and prosperity to the rest of the region in the Asia Pacific. However, if not managed well, ECFA could also increase Taiwan’s chance of economic over-dependence on mainland China and of

domestic industries’ hollowing-out. For others, Taiwan with the practice of ECFA is “on a short leash as far as its economic integration with other East Asian countries is concerned,” despite Taiwan’s economic progress and gains.66

Interestingly enough, for mainland China as well, ECFA does not always produce positive consequences; for example, future cross-Strait relations with the gradual institutionalization of ECFA will be tough to handle if Taiwan people do not feel that this agreement really helps Taiwan’s economy in general. Furthermore, the deepening of cross-Strait economic relations may lead Taiwan people to the deliberation why mainland China is willing to develop with Taiwan an economic framework guided by ECFA but is reluctant to let Taiwan launch bilateral FTA negotiations with others. A fact that can not be denied is: when the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement, the mainland China-Japan-South Korea FTA, “ASEAN plus 1” FTAs, and so on are emergent or underway, they will seriously offset the economic and trade benefit of Taiwan gained solely from the ECFA.

By the same token, mainland China’s domestic politics can hinder the constructive development of cross-Strait economic relations that are based on ECFA. For example, if the KMT loses the presidential election in January 2012, there could be severe challenges from the hardliners of the CCP to level a reproach against those who adopt the “profit yielding” approach to deal with the KMT government. What has to be noted here is that this essay does not mean to identify and probe into the pros and cons of cross-Strait ECFA. Neither it is to argue that signing ECFA is a springboard for Taiwan to join a variety of regional multilateral economic liberalization and integration regimes. The message is the need to be cautious of ECFA’s subtle nature that interacts with domestic politics of Taiwan and mainland China.

The improvement in cross-Strait economic relations can pave the way for regional welfare by linking Taiwan, mainland China, and the rest of the Asia Pacific. More specifically, the enhancement and institutionalization of cross-Strait economic ties, prompted by ECFA and its subsequent deals, may be of help to “tap into the strength offered by the Greater China market, including Hong

Kong and Macao,” which will hopefully turn into another force for the economic cooperation and integration of the Asia Pacific.⁶⁷

Many issues that take place or will take place in ensuing cross-Strait economic interactions will also occur in the economic integration process of the Asia Pacific – e.g., whether countries concerned can use democratic means to garner popular support for free and fair trade, as well as whether the outcome of the integration leads to an open and apolitical process that benefits all people in the region of the Asia Pacific. The enhancement and institutionalization of cross-Strait economic relations and their future relationship with the other forces of the economic cooperation and integration of the Asia Pacific can be a test for the success of the Asia Pacific economic cooperation and integration. It is thus arguable that “ECFA’s impact on cross-Strait ties and East Asian regionalism remains to be seen, yet this agreement provides an important gateway to regional stability and presents a valuable example of bilateral trade liberalization with the broad framework of the multilateral trading system.”⁶⁸

It is very likely that ECFA will not offset the economic interest of the Asia Pacific countries in the economic cooperation and integration. Countries can benefit from ECFA by taking advantage of its externality for sure. For example, the Customs Cooperation Task Force of the Cross-Strait Economic Cooperation Committee has consented that ECFA’s “Early Harvest” tariff preferences “may apply to cross-Strait triangular trade by companies that are registered in Taiwan or mainland China, that take foreign orders for contract production, and that export items for which the goods listed in the application conform to the actual exported goods.”⁶⁹

In addition, ECFA may increase the joint venture of foreign countries with Taiwan to do business in mainland China. Being assisted by ECFA, Taiwan can provide know-how about doing business in mainland China, act as a risk buffer to enter mainland China’s market, or serve as a gateway to mainland China. One of

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⁶⁷ “Remarks by Vice President Vincent C. Siew at the international conference on ‘ECFA and East Asia Economic Integration’,” National Policy Foundation (Taipei) April 30, 2011.


Japan’s three largest banking groups – Mizuho Corporate Bank – researches the survival rate of Japanese businesses’ investment in mainland China and concludes that the rate of the cases where Japanese businesses invested alone was 68.4%, while the rate of the cases where Japanese businesses invested through “Japan-Taiwan Alliance” was 78%. In other words, there is a higher possibility of success if Japan’s businesses collaborate with Taiwan’s to do business in mainland China, which can be attributed mainly to Taiwanese familiarity of mainland China’s working language, culture, technology and know-how, as well as the mutual trust of Japan’s and Taiwan’s businesses.  

With ECFA coming into effect, according to the above-mentioned study, “Taiwan-Japan Alliance” will be more effective. For Japan, ECFA makes this alliance even more advantageous. For Taiwan, strategic alliance with Japan will be effective through taking advantage of several factors such as Japanese enterprises’ technological and management capabilities and branding power.

Non-traditional Security Issues

In the international community, the realistic feature of foreign policy, highlighted by self-interest, is the eternal duty of states to follow. Nevertheless, in order to deal with non-traditional security issues, states should try to identify opportunities for joint gains in the realistic world and to trigger mutually beneficial cooperation since the impacts of these issues are beyond states’ borders and cannot be solved with the resources and capabilities of any single state.

The new emerging security concern reflects the multiple channels by which Taiwan and mainland China can work with each other reciprocally rather than conflict, as indicated in Table 5. To cope with non-traditional security threats, political entities, civil society organizations and individuals all play a role in the elimination of such threats by jointly establishing a multi-layer, regime-based web necessary for the achievement of the said goal. Actors combating non-traditional security threats have shifted their major concerns from territorial sovereignty and military/economic power to food safety, disease control and prevention, transnational crime, environmental protection, and so on, in the hope that the welfare of people


will be enhanced. The sources of non-traditional security threats can be either endogenous or exogenous.

Table 5. Traditional and Non-traditional Security in Cross-Strait Relations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Traditional</th>
<th>Non-traditional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor(s)</td>
<td>Political entities</td>
<td>Political entities, civil society groups &amp; individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Concern(s)</td>
<td>Sovereignty or territorial integrity</td>
<td>Food safety, disease, crime, environment, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source(s) of Threat</td>
<td>From outside</td>
<td>Both outside &amp; inside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Military and economic power</td>
<td>Human development index that can maintain appropriate quality of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal basis</td>
<td>UN Charter, especially Article 2.7(^72)</td>
<td>Cross-Strait agreements, e.g., Joint Crime-Fighting and Judicial Mutual Assistance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Originally drawn by Wei-En Tan and revised by the author.

With the positive development of cross-Strait relations, and a practical and urgent need for functional cooperation between the two sides, the first three years of cross-Strait re-engagement has witnessed a string of joint measures strengthening food sanitation and safety (the second Chiang-Chen Talk in November 2008),\(^73\) crime-combating (the third Chiang-Chen Talk in April 2009),\(^74\) agricultural product quarantine and inspection, protection of fishing crews (the fourth Chiang-Chen Talk in December 2009),\(^75\) medical,

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\(^72\) "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII."

\(^73\) Mainland Affairs Council, the R.O.C. Executive Yuan, "The Importance of the Second Chiang-Chen Talk," October 24, 2008; Mainland Affairs Council, the R.O.C. Executive Yuan, "The Significance of the Second 'Chiang-Chen Talks': Four Agreements to Benefit Taiwan," October 27, 2008 www.mac.gov.tw.


\(^75\) Mainland Affairs Council, the R.O.C. Executive Yuan, "Explanation on the Fourth Chiang-Chen Talks: Reaching across the Taiwan Strait Advancing to the World Market," December 14, 2009 www.mac.gov.tw; Mainland Affairs Council, Executive
pharmaceutical and health cooperation (the sixth Chiang-Chen Talk in December 2010),\textsuperscript{76} as well as nuclear power safety (the seventh Chiang-Chen Talk in October 2011). On September 16, 2010, for the very first time relevant non-military departments and bureaus of Taiwan and mainland China successfully held a joint maritime search and rescue exercise in the waters between Kinmen and Xiamen. In addition to the passenger-cargo vessels, fourteen rescue vessels, three helicopters and more than four hundred people took part in the exercise.

As exchanges between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait on the basis of the "Three Links" – i.e., postal link, transport link, and business link – have become frequent, the so-called "non-traditional security measures" must be planned, coordinated, and implemented in a cooperative manner to enhance the individual's quality of life and safeguard national security exposed to the dynamic environment in the post-Cold War era where security threats exist and develop in various forms. With the signing of ECFA in 2010, it is expected that there will be the rapid transportation of both goods and people, increased population density in major and industrial cities of Taiwan and mainland China, as well as growing dependence on agricultural trade for food.

Take food safety for example. The 2008 mainland Chinese milk scandal demonstrated the seriousness and prevalence of food safety issues at both cross-Strait and international levels.\textsuperscript{77} Through institutionalized and timely negotiations, both sides have come to an agreement regarding food safety. This legal document reached a consensus on expanding cooperation to promote the sound management of the food import sources, reduce the risk of exposure to unsafe food, and ensure the health of consumers on both sides. It does not have anything to do with the long-standing sovereignty dispute between the two regimes, and it facilitates more technical exchanges to maintain food safety for the welfare of the people on the two sides of the Strait.


77. Melamine-contaminated products found their way to all corners of the world, affecting not only China, but also forty-six other countries. See Céline Marie-Elise Gossner et al., "Commentary, The Melamine Incident: Implications for International Food and Feed Safety," Environ Health Perspective 117 (December 2009) 1803-1808.
In discussing non-traditional security challenges, the best way for Taiwan and mainland China to cope with such a security threat is to seek solutions jointly. It is of vital and practical significance for both sides to establish a regularly convened mechanism to discuss and exchange views over an array of issues regarding non-traditional security. These experiences derived from such a mechanism can be disseminated to other countries affected by these issues as well.

Further, the non-traditional security issues of the two sides of the Taiwan Strait can have some positive externality not merely for the Asia Pacific but also for the whole world. It is a pity, nevertheless, that Taiwan’s participation in multilateral or bilateral cooperation mechanisms in non-traditional security issues is primarily through the frameworks of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). Although cross-Strait cooperation at the non-governmental level remains close and intimate, intergovernmental cooperation is still less possible due to the “one China” principle insisted by mainland China.

Now, leave aside cross-Strait cooperation in managing non-traditional security threats. Another issue that deserves more attention is whether or not political leaders in the Asia-Pacific can enjoy the fruits of such expanding cross-Strait cooperation by downplaying the sovereignty issue between Taipei and Beijing and highlighting the value of joint effort to better people’s quality of life with some sort of political accommodation. It will be a pity if the achievements in cross-Strait non-traditional security cooperation are greatly confined and unable to spill-over to the other areas suffered.

In the Asia Pacific, non-traditional security issues are discussed and handled by various regional mechanisms such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and APEC. Except APEC, the other mechanisms that can deal with these issues more effectively are mostly international governmental regimes whose memberships are almost strictly sovereign state-based. That is to say, nowadays cross-Strait non-traditional security cooperation only seems able to spread its positive externality through the arrangements of APEC. APEC, which is centered on economic cooperation also creates various sets of policy dialogue/coordination, experience sharing, and technical assistance on non-traditional security and social development issues. However, APEC is some-
times called a “talk shop” whose broad missions, multiple tasks and wide diversity of participating members have prevented it from working efficiently. Accordingly, in the non-traditional security field it is indeed not easy for Taiwan to find the appropriate avenue and occasion to contribute to those APEC member economies in need.

At the Track one and a half level, the Council for Security and Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) is an informal mechanism for the discussion of regional traditional and non-traditional security issues. The Indonesia-organized Workshop on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea, another time-honored mechanism of Track one and a half, also touches upon transnational cooperation in coping with non-traditional security concerns in or around the South China Sea. Regarding regional traditional issues, Taiwan can not participate as a full member because mainland China participated as a full member in December 1996, but is allowed to send scholars in the individual capacity to join some of the meetings, even though cross-Strait relations have been more relaxed and even though CSCAP is not an international governmental organization. Regarding non-traditional security issues, Taiwan has been an active participant and come up with a few proposals aimed to foster “low politics” exchanges and cooperation of certain aspects among participating members.

In a nutshell, to take advantage of the positive externality of cooperation in cross-Strait non-traditional security, regional actors, state and non-state, should strive for a commonly acceptable way to take Taiwan in. It would be odd if they stand aside and let go of the contribution in related experiences, know-how, financial resources, etc. resulting from the growing number of non-traditional security cooperation efforts between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. It is reasonable that the decision of the states in the Asia Pacific to bring Taiwan into the aforementioned mechanisms, whether with sovereign or non-sovereign requirements, may be contingent on the balance between mainland China’s attitude and those states’ self-interested calculation of how much they can gain from Taiwan’s contribution.

VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Cross-Strait relations have always been sensitive and intricate. The mode of cross-Strait relations after May 2008 have been gradually shifting away from confrontation and distrust to accommodation and confidence building. By downplaying the factors causing instability and conflict between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait — such as the struggle for diplomatic recognition, as well as applying the tension reduction and functional exchange approaches to current relations between Taiwan and mainland China, cross-Strait relations are moving onto a new stage step by step. In addition, the intensified institutionalization of cross-Strait interflows better help leaders of both sides understand and calculate each others’ strategic intention and objectives, thus decreasing the chance of miscalculation and bringing peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.

Optimistically, there are at least three strong driving forces that lead cross-Strait relations to a more stable environment. They are the salient self-consciousness of using caution to deal with Taiwan-mainland China affairs, continued technical and functional exchanges, as well as enhanced economic interactions. Pessimistically, there are also three driving forces worth examining to figure out the pace of cross-Strait relations since May 2008. They refer to the lack of mutual trust, the leadership or regime change in a certain period of time, as well as the traditional sovereignty or irredentism issue. The basic framework of cross-Strait relations, if excluding the role of external actors, is set on the basis of these forces. The positive driving forces are more visible now but can be withdrawn easily, whereas the negative ones are hidden on purpose by the two sides of the Strait but can loom large at any time to ruin the foundation of current cross-Strait relations.

It appears that so long as cross-Strait relations can continue to move forward, they will benefit the region of the Asia Pacific in many ways. Mainland China that calls for peaceful development and “Harmonious World” has been too important and influential to ignore, and Taiwan with stable democracy, robust economy, and free society is also an important player that vows to be a responsible stakeholder and peace creator in the region. If this period of “strategic opportunity” can be seized not only by the two sides of the Taiwan Strait but also by the region’s countries, it will facilitate the future development of the Asia Pacific to a great extent.

In previous paragraphs this essay raised three suspicious statements associated with the improvement in cross-Strait relations and the region of the Asia Pacific. Based on the analyses provided, in
the foreseeable future the progress of cross-Strait relations will not weaken Taiwan's position in the Asia Pacific strategic map of the US, will not bring Japan's strategic and economic standing to a dangerous and inferior position, and should not give mainland China a good chance to garner Taiwan's political and military support for collective action against the other parties to the territorial disputes.

But again, logically, one still can not rule out the possibility that mainland China is able to shift its strategic focus on the other sensitive areas of dispute after it has succeeded in reducing the likelihood of Taiwan independence after May 2008. Therefore, it is imperative for mainland China to form a friendly environment which can be made good use of. It is also imperative for Taiwan to maintain stability and peace in the Taiwan Strait, and for the countries involved in dispute with mainland China to ask the latter to show its assured policy consistency in line with its own claim on peaceful development and the "Harmonious World."

As cross-Strait relations are making salient progress, the bilateral economic cooperation and the success in fulfilling a couple of agreements of functional cooperation can definitely attach something positive and beneficial to the current development of the Asia Pacific. ECFA and its related development are more a joint gain and open economic cooperation than a merging competition against the rest of the countries in the region. The dividends of peace out of the relationship between Taiwan and mainland China can be disseminated more effectively to the parties in the region if Taipei and Beijing can deepen the interactions in relevant fields and if Taiwan's international space is furthered with the assistance and support of the international community and the tacit understanding between Taipei and Beijng in this regard. Also importantly, the other countries in this region should view the current state of cross-Strait relations as a valuable asset, rather than a troublesome liability.

Through the joint effort made by both Taiwan and mainland China, the gradual stabilization and peace dividends have emerged to guide cross-Strait relations to an encouraging direction that can also contribute to the development of the Asia Pacific. For this goal to be realized, three conditions must be met.

The first condition is that both Taiwan and mainland China should to exercise great caution and self-restraint to avoid violent consequences and misunderstandings coming with frequent interactions. The second condition is that the other parties concerned should play an impartial and supportive role in encouraging con-
structive dialogue between the two sides of the Strait to move on, witnessing proactively the consensuses and agreements reached by Taiwan and mainland China, as well as providing security guarantee to ensure that the engagement process will not be in favor of any side. The last condition is an obvious change in mainland China’s political institution and values. Ma reiterates that the criterion of determining the distance between Taiwan and mainland China is human rights. To elaborate, it can be argued that the connections between the two sides via ECFA, official-to-official, people-to-people exchanges are useful, but mainland China’s political reform that can bring up more respect to democracy and human rights will be very essential in order to consolidate what the two sides have gained and to further help the region enjoy the fruit of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.
GLOSSARY OF SELECTED NAMES AND TERMS

Selected Names

CHEN Shui-bian 陳水扁
CHEN Yunlin 陳雲林
CHIANG Pin-kung 江丙坤
HU Jintao 胡錦濤
JIANG Zemin 江澤民
JIANG Zengwei 姜增偉
KOO Chenfu 辜振甫
LEE Teng-hui 李登輝
LIANG Kuo-Hsin 梁國新
MA Ying-jeou 馬英九
MAO Zedong 毛澤東
SU Chi 蘇起
TSAI Ing-wen 蔡英文
WANG Daohan 汪道涵
XI Jinping 習近平

Selected Terms

1992 Consensus 九二共識
Act Governing Relations between Peoples of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area 臺灣地區與大陸地區人民關係條例
Anti-secession Law 反分裂國家法
ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) 東協區域論壇
Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) 亞太經合
Association of Relations across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS) 海峽兩岸關係協會
business-level communication 業務溝通
Chiang-Chen Talks 江陳會
Chinese Communist Party (CCP) 中國共產黨
confidence building 信心建立
Council for Security and Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) 亞太安全合作委員會
Cross-Strait Agreement on Cooperation in Fishing Crew Affairs 海峽兩岸漁船船員勞務合作協議
Cross-Strait Agreement on Cooperation in Inspection and Quarantine of Agricultural Products 海峽兩岸農產品檢疫檢驗合作協議
Cross-Strait Agreement on Cooperation in Respect of Standards, Metrology, Inspection and Accreditation 海峽兩岸標準計量檢驗認證合作協議
Cross-Strait Agreement on Intellectual Property Rights Protection and Cooperation 海峽兩岸智慧財產權保護合作協議
Cross-Strait Agreement on Medical and Health Cooperation 海峽兩岸醫藥衛生合作協議
Cross-Strait Agreement on Nuclear Power Safety Cooperation 海峽兩岸核電安全合作協議
Cross-Strait Agreement on Travel by Mainland Residents to Taiwan 海峽兩岸關於大陸居民赴臺灣旅遊協議
Cross-Strait Air Transport Agreement 海峽兩岸空運協議
Cross-Strait Economic Cooperation Committee 兩岸經濟合作委員會
Cross-Strait Food Safety Agreement 海峽兩岸食品安全協議
Cross-Strait Crime-Fighting and Mutual Judicial Assistance Joint Agreement 海峽兩岸共同打擊犯罪及司法互助協議
Cross-Strait Financial Cooperation Agreement 海峽兩岸金融合作協議
Cross-Strait Investment Protection Agreement 兩岸投資保障協議
Cross-Strait Notarial Document Use and Verification Agreement 兩岸公證書使用查證協議
Cross-Strait Postal Service Agreement 海峽兩岸郵政協議
Cross-Strait Registered Letter Inquiry and Compensation Agreement 兩岸掛號函件查詢、補償事宜協議
Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea 南海各方行為宣言
Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) 民主進步黨
Diaoyutai Islands (or Senkaku Islands) 釣魚臺列嶼
Diplomatic Truce 外交休兵
early harvest 早期收穫（早收）
East Asia Summit (EAS) 東亞高峰會
Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) 海峽兩岸經濟合作架構協議
Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) 專屬經濟區
functional cooperation 功能性合作
gradual reduction in tension (GRIT) 漸進降低緊張
Harmonious World 和諧世界
Koo-Wang Talks 辜汪會談（晤）
Koo-Wang Talks Joint Agreement 置汪會談共同協議
Kuomintang (KMT) 中國國民黨
Minutes of Talks on Cross-Strait Charter Flights 海峽兩岸包機會談紀要
mutual non-denial of jurisdiction 互不否認治權
Neofunctionalism 新功能主義
non-traditional security 非傳統安全
One China Policy 一個中國政策
One China, respective interpretations 一個中國各自表述（一中各表）
peace dividends 和平紅利
People’s Liberation Army (PLA) 人民解放軍
preventive diplomacy 預防外交
profit yielding 讓利
Strait Exchange Foundation (SEF) 海峽交流基金會
SEF-ARATS Contact and Meeting System Agreement 兩會聯繫與會談制度協議
Supplementary Agreement on Cross-Strait Air Transport 海峽兩岸空運補充協議
Taiping Island (Itu Aba) 太平島
Taiwan identity 臺灣主體性
Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) 臺灣關係法
Three Links 三通
Track one and a half 一軌半
Track Two 二軌
Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) 貿易暨投資架構協議
Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement 泛太平洋戰略經濟夥伴協定
Tungshe (Pratas Islands) 東沙島
united front 統戰
United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 聯合國海洋法公約
vertical/short-takeoff-and-landing (VSTOL) 垂直/短場起降
Workshop on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea 處理南海潛在衝突研討會