Promoting Confidence Building across the Taiwan Strait


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The 2008 Taiwan presidential election has brought with it the hope of a new era in cross-strait relations. The 2000 election and especially the 2004 reelection of Chen Shui-bian as Taiwan's president dramatically changed the cross-strait geopolitical landscape and put cross-strait dialogue, particularly on confidence-building measures (CBMs), on the back burner. The coming to power of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in 2000 was not so much the beginning of a new era as it was confirmation that the dramatic changes unleashed during Taiwan's first true democratic election in 1996 were now irreversible. While many (myself included) argued that there was an opportunity for cross-strait CBMs during the DPP's reign if both sides prioritized this task, unfortunately this was not meant to be. Placing blame is of little value; there was enough blame to go around.

In 2000, Beijing took a wait-and-see attitude that could also be characterized as a “guilty until proven innocent” approach toward the new DPP-led government. It chose to dismiss Chen as a leader without majority backing, given that he came to power with only about a third of the popular vote and was backed by a minority party. It showed little flexibility on its “one-China” policy and took a “marry me or I’ll kill you” approach to reunification that proved increasingly counterproductive.

For its part, the Chen administration seemed to view a confrontational approach toward Beijing as more beneficial to its domestic political agenda; a series of political surprises that stretched, if not broke, his inauguration promises further convinced Beijing that Chen could not be trusted. Simply put, CBMs were off the table because Beijing believed it was very much in its interest for Taipei not to feel confident. Beijing's cross-strait strategy was based, first and foremost, on Taiwan's fear of the consequences of moving toward independence. As long as this was/is the case, most CBMs are seen as counterproductive to achieving this goal.

With the change of government in Taipei in 2008, the opportunity for a new era in cross-strait relations once again presents itself. The now-ruling Kuomintang (KMT) Party has attached a high priority to improving cross-strait relations under President Ma Ying-jeou’s “three nos” policy of “no independence, no unification, and no use of force.” The tacit acceptance by both sides of the “1992 consensus,” under which both sides essentially agreed to a “one-China, different interpretations” policy, provides a new opportunity in cross-strait relations if Taiwan and China show the political wisdom, courage, and maturity to step across this threshold together.

It was in anticipation of this prospective new era that China specialist Bonnie Glaser from the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) led a team of experts in April 2008 to both Taipei and Beijing to examine the prospects for cross-strait CBMs. Glaser and trip rapporteur Brad Glosserman from Pacific Forum CSIS have prepared this highly useful report summarizing key observations and insights obtained during the team's visit as they captured the changing atmosphere.
The road ahead will not be an easy or sure one. Both sides face challenges and limitations. As this report documents, there are limits to Ma’s flexibility in dealing with the mainland, given strong opposition suspicions regarding Ma’s, and especially Beijing’s, true intentions and a healthy skepticism that will grow if the promised political and economic benefits of improved cross-strait relations fail to materialize. For its part, Beijing is still struggling to develop an appropriate strategy for dealing with a cooperative regime in Taipei after years of following a “just say no” policy. Finding ways to increase Taiwan’s “international breathing space” without further solidifying its de facto independent status remains a challenge.

The key to future progress will be the ability of both sides to develop a win-win approach toward confidence building with mutually compatible (although not necessarily identical) definitions and objectives. The recent resumption of cross-strait dialogue between the China-based Association for Relations across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS) and Taiwan’s Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) sends a signal that the time may now be ripe to move in this direction. This report also makes clear the need for direction from decisionmakers at the highest level. While CBMs often focus on lower-level actors and actions, the supercharged political environment requires direction from the top to overcome political and bureaucratic inertia. An effective CBM strategy has to address both of these dimensions if it is to succeed.

If both sides truly see the geopolitical benefit in mutually improving cross-strait relations, then the insights and recommendations contained in this report should contribute toward them taking the first steps down this path. The time may finally be ripe to explore cross-strait confidence-building measures as a vehicle for building greater mutual trust and understanding aimed at creating a more stable, positive geopolitical environment.
This project was undertaken jointly by CSIS and Pacific Forum CSIS. The authors would like to thank the Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in Washington, D.C., for assisting the delegation’s visit in Taipei. This project would not have been possible without the collaboration of the Foundation on International and Cross-Strait Studies (FICS) in Taipei, particularly chairman Chang King-Yuh and his staff; and the China Foundation for International and Strategic Studies (CFISS) in Beijing, particularly secretary-general Chen Zhiya, chairman of the Academic Assessment Committee Zhang Tuosheng, and the CFISS staff.

CSIS and Pacific Forum CSIS are grateful for the participation of the American and Canadian delegates, listed in Appendix A, whose expertise was critical to the success of the meetings in Taipei and Beijing and to advancing the discussion on cross-strait confidence-building measures. Special recognition is owed to U.S. Navy Commander and CSIS military fellow Daniel E. Murphy for his excellent work on laying the groundwork for and leading the meetings on military confidence-building measures. The views expressed in this report do not reflect a consensus reached among the delegates but rather the opinions of the authors.

The authors would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Derek Mitchell, senior fellow and director for Asia in the CSIS International Security Program (ISP), and Alyson Slack, ISP research associate, both of whom provided invaluable suggestions on the draft manuscript. In addition, Alyson shepherded the project from its inception to its conclusion, and we are both especially grateful for her assistance.

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The advent of a new administration in Taiwan under the leadership of President Ma Ying-jeou and his Kuomintang (KMT) party has brought with it promising prospects for improved mainland China–Taiwan relations. The progress of recent months suggests that the leadership of both governments understands that there is an opportunity to realize a long-term stabilization of their relations. For good reasons, Taipei and Beijing agree that achievements in the economic realm will precede negotiations on the more sensitive and complex issues of Taiwan's participation in international organizations and security. Both sides hope that near-term successes will create a positive track record and a reservoir of good will that will be beneficial in the future negotiation of thorny issues.

Many mutually satisfactory compromises must be made in order to improve and consolidate the relationship. Critical to this process is the role of confidence-building measures (CBMs), which are both formal and informal measures that address, prevent, or resolve uncertainties among parties and thus reduce the possibility of incidental or accidental conflict and increase mutual understanding and trust.

In April 2008, the authors visited Taipei and Beijing with a delegation of U.S. experts and a Canadian scholar to discuss prospects and constructive suggestions for cross-strait confidence-building measures. This report does not represent a consensus view of the delegation members; rather, it presents the authors’ reflection on what they learned during the trip and their assessment of the possibilities for and main obstacles to confidence building in the Taiwan Strait.

With 300 cargo ships transiting the Taiwan Strait daily and thousands more fishing boats, and the recent introduction and pending expansion of direct air links between Taiwan and the mainland, there are many benefits to be gained from the establishment of reliable communication channels and measures to introduce greater predictability, minimize the risk of accidents, and reduce misperceptions of intent on both sides. The two sides could set up operational military hotlines; the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA) could publish advance details of its military exercises, like Taiwan already does; and the two sides could jointly build and exercise emergency response capacity.

There are also emerging opportunities for confidence building in nontraditional security issues, such as the environment and public health. Establishing patterns of cooperation in these areas could precede the negotiation of more difficult military CBMs and build habits of collaboration.

Cross-strait CBMs will need to reflect the unique nature of mainland China–Taiwan relations and respond to the security concerns of both sides. One key conclusion is that there is a critical role to be played by top-level decisionmakers, particularly on the mainland, to accommodate the political needs of the other side and promote improved cross-strait relations. Without directives
from the leadership, lower-level policymakers will not take politically risky initiatives to advance
the relationship. In China, the default approach to confidence building is one of extreme caution.
The Chinese fear that negotiated CBMs could be used by the KMT government to strengthen its
de facto independent status or by a future Democratic Progressive Party–led Taiwan government
to promote de jure independence. China is also concerned that dialogue and trust-building exer-
cises not be designed to undermine deterrence and perpetuate the status quo but instead promote
eventual reunification. These concerns will have to be addressed for continued progress to be
made.

There are differences in the way mainland China and Taiwan think about CBMs, but there is
also substantial common ground. The biggest obstacle to CBMs is the deep-seated suspicion on
both sides of the Taiwan Strait. Americans, Taiwanese, and Chinese all agreed that a strategic op-
portunity exists to improve relations across the strait that should not be missed. But realizing this
opportunity is not inevitable, and there is no substitute for a gradual, evolutionary approach to im-
proving cross-strait relations. Confidence-building measures can play a critical role in this process.

All three sides should take steps to promote mutual trust and seek win-win-win solutions.
China could make a near-term political gesture by reducing some of the missiles currently aimed
at Taiwan and in the longer term take meaningful steps to reverse its military buildup opposite
Taiwan. Through bilateral negotiations, Beijing could declare its intent not to use force against
Taiwan as long as Taiwan refrains from declaring independence. Beijing can and should allow
Taiwan to play a greater role in international society, including in multilateral organizations—both
those that don't require sovereignty for membership and those that do. Taiwan should persist in
expanding its engagement and contacts with the mainland, be flexible in its approach to seeking
participation in international organizations, and consult with the United States on managing the
evolving cross-strait relationship. Both Taiwan and the mainland should avoid setting precondi-
tions for engaging in dialogue on any specific issues. The United States should make clear that it
supports improvements in cross-strait relations reached through the free choices of the people in
mainland China and Taiwan and offer to assist them, when requested by both sides, in overcoming
obstacles to implementing any future agreements that they may reach.
PROMOTING CONFIDENCE BUILDING ACROSS THE TAIWAN STRAIT
Bonnie Glaser and Brad Glosserman

The election of Ma Ying-jeou as president of Taiwan in March 2008 and his Kuomintang (KMT) party's hold on a majority in the Legislative Yuan could herald the start of a new era in relations across the Taiwan Strait. Ma has promised to put pragmatism ahead of ideology in his administration, to focus on economics instead of identity issues, and to forge a new, more stable, and mutually beneficially relationship between Taipei and Beijing.

So far, both Taipei and Beijing have moved quickly to exploit this opportunity; the progress of the last few months has been remarkable. Dialogue between quasi-official organizations that provide a channel for cross-strait discussions—the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) in Taiwan and the Association for Relations across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS) on the mainland—has resumed; regular weekend charter flights have been established; Chinese tourists have begun to visit Taiwan; Taiwan has eased restrictions on investment in the mainland and on Chinese investment in Taiwan; and several meetings have taken place between People's Republic of China (PRC) president Hu Jintao and KMT leaders. ARATS chief Chen Yunlin was scheduled to visit Taiwan in September. One of his deputies, Wang Zaixi, spent 10 days in Taiwan in mid-July, during which time he met with senior KMT leaders as well as many county magistrates, including officials belonging to the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP).

To nurture the process of putting the relationship on a more stable footing, a group of U.S. experts and a Canadian scholar visited Taipei and Beijing during the week of April 14–18, 2008, to assess the state of and prospects for cross-strait relations and to provide constructive suggestions for cross-strait confidence-building measures (CBMs). (A delegation list and agenda are provided in Appendices A and B.) CBMs are both formal and informal measures, whether unilateral, bilateral, or multilateral, that address, prevent, or resolve uncertainties among states, including both military and political elements. CBMs are critical to the process of exploring new avenues for threat reduction and cooperation and to shifting the two sides' terms of engagement. By reducing misperception and suspicion, these measures help to lessen the possibility of incidental or accidental war. The key to successful CBMs, especially in the cross-strait context, is devising win-win approaches that respond to the security concerns of both sides.

This project is premised on the idea that a changed cross-strait political dynamic presents new opportunities for Taiwan and the mainland to stabilize and consolidate their relationship, and the delegation's conversations reveal that all three parties in the cross-strait conversation—Taiwan, the PRC, and the United States—recognize the opportunities inherent in this environment and the need to seize the moment. Recent achievements, while promising, have been relatively easy.

1. This report does not represent a consensus view of all participants; rather, it presents the authors’ reflection on what they learned during the trip and their assessment of the possibilities for confidence building in the Taiwan Strait.
The foundation for agreements on direct charter flights and tourists from the mainland had been laid under the prior Taiwan government. Suspicions between mainland China and Taiwan remain deep, and considerable obstacles persist. The truly difficult issues have been sidelined for now, but they must be addressed before a breakthrough can occur. Progress is possible, however, if all sides remain sensitive to their negotiating partners’ concerns and keep expectations in check. In short, there is no substitute for an incremental, evolutionary approach to improving cross-strait relations. In this process, confidence-building measures can play a key role.

The analysis that follows reflects the views that were shared during our discussions in Taipei and Beijing. It begins with a comparison of perspectives in Taiwan, China, and the United States on the state of cross-strait relations and the impact of recent developments. It then explores Taiwanese and mainland Chinese thinking on the roles and purposes of CBMs in the cross-strait context and identifies and assesses several potential CBMs for future implementation—both in military and nontraditional spheres—including measures that would address Taiwan’s search for international space. The report concludes with specific policy recommendations for each of the three parties.

**Background: Perspectives on Cross-Strait Relations and Recent Political Developments**

**Taiwanese Perspectives**

The year 2008 began with Legislative Yuan elections that gave the KMT 71 percent of the seats in the legislature. There were various reasons for the crushing defeat of the ruling DPP: the government’s perceived poor economic record, an image of corruption, and President Chen Shui-bian’s confrontational politics, which alienated both the United States, Taiwan’s traditional friend and ally, and the mainland. This stunning defeat was followed by KMT candidate Ma Ying-jeou’s decisive victory in presidential elections in March with 58 percent of the vote. While economics appeared to dominate voters’ thinking, Ma’s mainland policy—the “three nos” that refer to no independence, no unification, and no use of force—fit the electorate’s preference for the status quo in cross-strait relations.

In a meeting at KMT headquarters during our visit to Taipei, then president-elect Ma Ying-jeou explained the pragmatism that guides his thinking. His government’s first priority is economic development, and stable cross-strait relations are a means to that end. Regular cross-strait charter flights, which were inaugurated on July 4, and an expansion of tourism from the mainland to Taiwan are designed to boost the island’s economy. Ma acknowledged that the mainland would like to pursue more links faster—such as permitting PRC “green field” investment in Taiwan—but he said that he will move slowly, giving voters a chance to evaluate the progress and benefits of his initiatives. Still, Ma confessed that he would like to see daily charter flights by year’s end and then regularly scheduled flights. Ma also wants to reach an agreement to avoid double taxation, make arrangements for currency convertibility, and improve financial services for Taiwanese businessmen residing on the mainland. There is also discussion of honoring advanced Chinese degrees in Taiwan, a move that could facilitate Taiwanese students studying on the mainland.

Ma stated that his second priority is strengthening Taiwan’s security. A key component of that effort will be repairing relations with the United States, which were badly strained during the eight years that Chen was in office. His budget calls for spending a minimum of 3 percent of gross
domestic product (GDP) on defense—the same percentage promised by Chen’s administration in his final year in office—which will help an armed force that Ma said “desperately needs revitalization.” Increasing the defense budget is essential for establishing an all-volunteer force and is likely to include arms purchases from the United States.

As a third priority, Ma wants better cross-strait relations. He indicated clearly that he and his supporters do not seek improved cross-strait ties as an end in itself but as a way to boost the island’s economy. To reassure the majority of Taiwanese who favor maintaining the status quo, including preserving Taiwan’s status as a de facto independent sovereign state, Ma has deliberately set limits on the extent to which the political relationship between Taipei and Beijing will change by ruling out negotiations on reunification during his term in office. But he is prepared, he assured our delegation, to search for a compromise that would allow Taipei and Beijing to move forward with political negotiations; the formula that he used in his acceptance of the “1992 consensus” on the existence of “one China” with the modification “one China, respective interpretations” might accomplish this. Many observers think that Ma will undoubtedly insist, if pressed, that one China is the Republic of China but will couple that with his position of “mutual non-denial.” But as long as Ma does not expand this definition to a “two-states theory,” such as that put forward by Lee Teng-hui in 1999, or the “one country on each side” position adopted by Chen Shui-bian in 2002, Beijing will likely acquiesce to the resumption of political dialogue.

Chinese Perspectives

China’s Taiwan policy should be seen in the context of its broader policy framework. Central to China’s current national strategy is its “peaceful rise,” a concept that was put forward by the leadership in an attempt to assure the world of the rising power’s benign intentions and which has been interpreted to mean that China seeks a stable international environment to facilitate its focus on domestic economic development. Most observers believe accordingly that a war over Taiwan is not in China’s interest and that the use of force should only be considered as a last resort. Indeed, several Chinese insisted that stable and peaceful relations with Taiwan are an essential part of the mainland’s strategy to promote China’s peaceful rise and establish a “harmonious society.” Still, the centrality of the Taiwan issue to the perceived legitimacy of any Chinese government means that there are limits to how much the mainland can accommodate Taiwanese aspirations, even if tensions threaten the international community’s perceptions of China’s peaceful intentions or its economic development.

Beijing plainly welcomes the election of Ma Ying-jeou and the defeat of two referenda, held concurrently with the March presidential election, which asked Taiwanese voters whether Taiwan should seek admission to the United Nations. Yet in our discussions, Chinese experts cautioned against expecting near-term initiatives by the mainland to improve cross-strait ties. While conceding that the KMT’s ascendance has altered the domestic political dynamic in Taiwan, there was widespread concern among Chinese analysts that the change could be temporary: any Chinese concessions to the new Taiwan government might be used to back a pro-independence agenda if the DPP returns to power. Thus, they argued that caution will continue to guide Chinese thinking for the foreseeable future. Beijing, they insisted, must make an assessment of Ma and muster a consensus on how to proceed.

Chinese experts suggested that although both sides have learned during the past four years of the need for mutual accommodation, Beijing will not compromise on its principles of territorial
integrity and sovereignty. For the Chinese, the cornerstone of the cross-strait relationship remains recognizing the one-China principle and opposition to Taiwan independence. One Chinese scholar contended that although Ma has abandoned the drive for de jure independence, he seeks to enhance Taiwan’s international space in order to consolidate the island’s de facto independence. This observer cautioned that Beijing would be on guard against efforts to solidify separation of the mainland and Taiwan as opposed to promoting integration. In comments that were repeated by several Chinese experts in various settings, we were told that cross-strait dialogue should seek to create “a framework for cross-strait peace and stable development” that is in keeping with China’s long-term goal of peaceful reunification.

But Ma, like any politician, needs tangible successes if he is to convince Taiwanese voters to keep him and his party in power. Plainly, then, it seems that the Chinese have a stake in seeing Ma’s program succeed—and should take action to ensure that outcome. When pressed, Chinese interlocutors acknowledged that the surest way to see the DPP return to power is for Ma to fail. But in our discussions, rather than focusing on potential Chinese actions that could influence Ma’s success, Chinese experts more abstractly agreed that the best way to prevent a DPP return to power was improving cross-strait relations generally. While this reasoning leads to the same conclusion—that increased cross-strait ties will facilitate Ma’s chief priority of economic development—it shifts responsibility from Beijing to the two governments on either side of the Strait.

Significantly, recent developments have already revealed that our Chinese interlocutors were behind the curve. Although the analytical community may be cautious, the government has been bold—or at least prepared to take some of the steps that U.S. participants urged. This lag in nonofficial thinking is important. It confirms the critical role played by top-level decisionmakers—especially Hu Jintao—to promote progress in cross-strait relations. Absent new guidelines from the top, lower-level players are risk averse and therefore unwilling to propose creative solutions that depart from current policy.

It was not surprising, therefore, that the first signs of a thaw came from the very top. Hu Jintao was involved in two of the breakthrough meetings: with Vice President-elect Vincent Siew in Boao in April and KMT chairman Wu Poh-hsiung in Beijing in May. The speed with which China corrected a Xinhua news release that followed the Boao meeting, which erroneously noted that the two sides had agreed to accept the one-China principle as the basis for their talks, was another important signal of Chinese readiness to show limited flexibility so that the relationship can move forward. This gaffe reveals both a lack of coordination and a lag between top-level policy formulation and implementation at lower levels.

In another example in which the cautious approach of Chinese scholars lags behind the more forward-leaning stance of Hu Jintao, Chinese experts emphasized in our April meetings that Taiwan’s demands for greater international space—both participation in international organizations and retaining its 23 diplomatic allies—would be difficult to meet, because these matters related to Chinese sovereignty. However, when Hu Jintao met with Wu Poh-hsiung, he reaffirmed the commitment from his April 29, 2005, joint press communiqué with then–KMT chairman Lien Chan to “discuss the issue of Taiwan’s participation in international activities” and pledged to “give priority” to discussion about “Taiwan’s participation in the activities of the World Health Organization.” Hu added, however, that both sides should jointly do their utmost to promote win-win solutions. Additionally, when Hu met with honorary KMT chairman Lien Chan on April 29 of this year, he issued a 16-character phrase that has become the guiding line for Chinese policy toward Taiwan:
“establish mutual trust, shelve disputes, seek common ground while reserving differences, and together create a win-win situation.”

The Chinese are not oblivious to the formidable challenges that remain. In our discussions, they noted that negotiations must eventually surmount the thorny question of the political status of the Republic of China. The most practical and workable solution, suggested a Chinese speaker, was maintaining flexibility while searching for a creative fix that leaves space for each side’s interpretation of one China. A second concern is the aforementioned Chinese fear of a reversal in Taiwan’s domestic politics. Chinese repeatedly expressed their worry that concessions on international space to persuade Taiwanese of China’s good intentions and shore up Ma’s standing could be used to challenge China’s claim to sovereignty if a pro-independence government were to retake power in Taiwan.

Farsighted Chinese observers recognized that forward-looking cross-strait relations cannot be built on a base of insecurity. At our meetings on the mainland, some Chinese acknowledged that the United States can play a positive role, although few accepted the common U.S. argument that a solid U.S.-Taiwan relationship will boost confidence in Taipei and thus enhance its willingness to negotiate with Beijing. Most Chinese at these meetings maintained that Taiwan’s de facto independent status is a sufficient source of confidence and worry that closer U.S.-Taiwan relations, especially in the security sphere, will boost Taiwan’s inclination to enjoy the benefits of cross-strait economic integration while eschewing closer political ties.

China’s policy of squeezing Taiwan and deploying missiles against it indicates that the leadership prefers that Taiwan be insecure rather than too confident so that its room for maneuver is restricted and that Beijing’s influence and leverage over decisionmaking in Taipei is increased. Despite the recent changes in the political environment, the views expressed by our mainland interlocutors confirm that suspicions remain deep and mistrust is high. As one military official explained, “imbalance is natural,” implying that Beijing’s possession of the upper hand is proper.

Several Chinese speakers also warned that Taiwanese pressure on the mainland to be more democratic could be counterproductive. For example, they conceded that “candidate Ma” had to appeal to DPP supporters by stressing human rights and condemning Chinese policy on Tibet, but they urged “President Ma” to change course, insisting that constant criticism will irritate Beijing and hamper improvement in cross-strait relations. Americans countered that this viewpoint indicates a misreading of Taiwanese sentiment: that in fact, Ma’s campaign statements were not merely tactical but reflect the widely held view in Taiwan that the mainland can’t be trusted to safeguard Taiwan’s political and social achievements. Nevertheless, Ma appears to be downplaying this issue for the time being, as evidenced by his statement on the 19th anniversary of the June 4, 1989, Tiananmen tragedy, which was not as sharp as his statements in prior years and simply noted his concern for “whether compatriots in mainland China will be able to enjoy a free and democratic lifestyle.”

The U.S. Role in Cross-Strait Relations

Although the United States has no direct role in the evolving cross-strait relationship, its actions shape the context in which that engagement occurs. Given its legal obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act to provide defensive goods and services to Taiwan and maintain a robust force presence in the west Pacific to forestall Chinese military intimidation or coercion, the United States is intimately involved in the cross-strait relationship.
Both Taiwan and China should recognize that Washington supports active and positive cross-strait relations and dialogue that is aimed at peacefully resolving differences. Those long-standing U.S. objectives will not change, no matter who wins the 2008 presidential election. The United States does not seek, nor does it benefit from, tensions between Taiwan and mainland China. Americans urged Chinese at our meetings not to see U.S.-PRC, U.S.-Taiwan, or cross-strait relations in zero-sum terms. Each relationship should not depend on the state of the other relationships—and, in particular, improvement in one relationship should not come at the expense of another. Most Americans anticipate considerable improvement in U.S.-Taiwan relations with the advent of the Ma government. In a zero-sum framework, improvement would come at the expense of the cross-strait or the U.S.-China relationship, which does not—and should not—have to be the case.

Our Chinese interlocutors acknowledged that the United States has a role to play in the cross-strait relationship, but they differed sharply from U.S. analysts on what the appropriate role is. There was almost complete unanimity when it came to U.S. arms sales to Taiwan, with the Chinese insisting that arms sales “damage the atmosphere” of cross-strait relations and undercut a rapprochement between Beijing and Taipei. During our visit, there were warnings that agreement to provide Taiwan with 66 F-16 C/D fighters as requested would severely damage Sino-American ties. (A few Chinese participants viewed the sales as inevitable, however, and appreciated a suggestion from a U.S. participant that the administration of George W. Bush make the sale after the Olympic Games to clear the deck for the next U.S. president.)

At our meetings in Beijing, Americans countered that U.S. arms sales to Taiwan will continue, not only because of legal commitments, but also because Americans believe that such sales bolster Taiwanese confidence—a necessary precondition for Taiwan to enter into negotiations with the mainland. The common U.S. view is that China, meanwhile, can influence the nature of the U.S.-Taiwan security relationship by reducing the military threat to Taiwan, which could persuade Taiwan to spend less on “guns” to defend itself against a Chinese threat and more on “butter” to provide for the needs of its citizens.

Americans also urged Chinese not to be overly concerned about arms sales, arguing that China would continue to strengthen its advantage in the cross-strait military balance and, for the foreseeable future, maintain a credible deterrent against a Taiwanese break for independence. In candid moments, Chinese acknowledged that arms sales are worrisome primarily because of their political significance, not their military impact—they send a signal to both Taipei and Beijing about U.S. commitments to Taiwan—but it was clear that this does not make them any less offensive to mainland sensibilities.

Our discussions revealed a deep-rooted suspicion among Chinese that concessions in this area could open the door to Taiwan’s inclusion in a U.S.-led collective security system in East Asia, an unacceptable proposition to Beijing. Perhaps to forestall such a possibility, one Chinese interlocutor suggested that the United States and China build on their cooperation during Chen Shui-bian’s rule and jointly “manage” Taiwan’s security. In practice, according to this formulation, this would entail a gradual reduction of U.S. arms sales to Taipei, while Beijing increases its responsibility for Taiwan’s defense. This idea was roundly rejected by U.S. participants as both not feasible and unacceptable.

Chinese experts at our meetings urged that the United States take “a strategic view” of cross-strait relations, by which they meant that the United States should appreciate the centrality of
Taiwan to PRC interests and recognize that U.S. relations with China are a higher priority than its ties to Taiwan. These comments reflected the broader Chinese hope that the United States will eventually come to see Taiwan as only peripheral to its interests—although there is little expectation that this will happen anytime soon.

Official U.S. policy—opposition to any unilateral change to the cross-strait status quo—does not assuage Chinese doubts about U.S. intentions. First, the Chinese we met with reiterated a commonly voiced skepticism that the United States would accept mutually agreed changes to the cross-strait relationship. As one U.S. participant explained, the “ultimate shape of cross-strait relations is not U.S. business; it’s cross-strait business. How you get there is U.S. business.” Second, Chinese experts voiced concern that the U.S. preference for stability in the Taiwan Strait is temporary and the result of the overall U.S. strategic predicament: mired in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States cannot afford to open another front for its military. According to this view, when the United States extracts itself from the Middle East, the U.S. calculus regarding Taiwan may change. These concerns reflect the more deep-seated Chinese fear that the United States ultimately seeks to contain China and slow its rise. In this effort, Taiwan is seen as an invaluable card as it can, in theory, block Chinese access to the Pacific Ocean as well as drain Chinese resources as the mainland struggles to contain Taiwanese independence aspirations. A divided China is a weaker China, and by this logic, the United States will work hard to prevent reunification when it has the time and resources to focus on that project.

In our meetings, Chinese also noted the “regional dimension” of the Taiwan problem and criticized U.S.-Japanese cooperation on missile defense. Chinese wariness about Japan’s role in the Taiwan issue has grown since Tokyo and Washington included a “peaceful resolution” of the Taiwan situation among their shared strategic objectives in the February 2005 U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee statement. Chinese analysts took offense to the comment when it was issued, condemning it as interference in their country’s internal affairs, despite U.S. and Japanese insistence that the language merely repeats long-standing policy. The fact that Taiwan was not mentioned in a subsequent U.S.-Japan statement was wrongly interpreted by some Chinese experts as a sign that Beijing’s complaints had been heeded and alliance policy had been altered. Americans in our group argued that the strategic interests and concerns of the U.S.-Japan alliance remain unchanged, and the failure to specifically identify Taiwan should not be seen as either a shift in alliance objectives or a readiness to put Chinese concerns above those of the two allies.

Ominously, and despite the positive changes underway in Taiwan, the Chinese we met with continued to insist that U.S. policy toward Taiwan will be a litmus test for Beijing of U.S. sincerity in seeking a constructive, cooperative relationship with China. An American countered that Chinese must not assume that U.S. decisions that they dislike represent an intention to keep the two sides of the strait divided. This problem will persist. Taiwanese interlocutors repeated that they want the United States to help provide for Taiwan’s national defense, through arms sales and active assistance in the event of an attack from the mainland, and that they look to the United States to support Taiwan’s aspirations to play a meaningful role internationally. Meeting those expectations, if the United States opts to do so, is likely to anger and disappoint the Chinese.

Fortunately, overall, the Chinese we met with were generally optimistic about PRC relations with the United States, mirroring the expansion and deepening of cooperation that has occurred under the Bush administration. There was some anxiety that the departure of Chen Shui-bian will remove the “glue” that has provided a basis for common understanding and action by Washington and Beijing. But the majority we spoke with holds the view that improving relations between the
two sides of the Taiwan Strait will result in a decline in the status and sensitivity of Taiwan in the U.S.-China bilateral relationship, which carries the potential for increased mutual trust and greater cooperation. “Differences will exist, but we can find tolerable compromises,” opined one Chinese analyst.

**U.S. Perspectives on Recent Developments**

The mainstream view among U.S. observers generally is that Taiwan’s election results have the potential to transform the cross-strait situation. Ma’s election is seen as a clear rejection of his predecessor Chen Shui-bian’s confrontational approach toward Beijing and signals a desire for better relations with the United States and mainland China. At the same time, it is well understood that Taiwanese still seek recognition of their political and economic accomplishments and greater opportunities to participate in international society—a desire that was repeatedly communicated to us during various meetings in Taiwan. The KMT win in legislative and executive elections, far from demonstrating Taiwan voters’ rejection of their sovereign status, shows that they want a change in the way in which their leaders protect their sovereign status. Our Taiwanese interlocutors emphasized that the defeat of the two referenda on membership in the United Nations does not mean that Taiwanese do not seek participation in that international body or others; rather, it shows their recognition of the limits of and the inherently partisan—rather than practical—nature of such referenda.

U.S. participants—like Taiwanese and Chinese—agreed that favorable circumstances merely make possible a better relationship between Taiwan and China and that there is nothing inevitable about the future of cross-strait relations. President Ma has inherited a deeply divided electorate, and he has made winning over a large portion of the 42 percent of people who did not vote for him a top priority. Only when he has built a genuine national consensus can he move forward in negotiations with the mainland. Building that consensus is likely to require some help from Beijing; Taiwanese must see that a change in policy delivers concrete benefits for them. That will require affirmative action by China.

Moreover, there is no guarantee that hard-liners in the KMT are prepared to accommodate the opposition, although Ma signaled his desire for national reconciliation when he reached across party lines and appointed Lai Shin-yuan from the green Taiwan Solidarity Union party as chairman of the Mainland Affairs Council. It also remains to be seen whether the DPP and its backers are prepared to work cooperatively with the new KMT government or if they will seek to undermine it. The DPP’s reaction to the progress in cross-strait relations illustrates that opposition to talks with the mainland, and especially to cross-strait economic integration, is deeply entrenched. President Ma has a long way to go to win over his domestic detractors.

Thus, U.S. participants urged Beijing to think and act boldly to help break the potential logjam in Taiwan, contending that a show of goodwill, and tangible returns to the Taiwanese people, could help build a consensus in favor of sustained cross-strait engagement. At a minimum, this means avoiding any action that suggests closer cross-strait relations will increase Taiwan’s vulnerability. Americans also warned Chinese that they should not expect too much from Ma too quickly, for even if he favors improved cross-strait ties, he cannot be seen as the handmaiden of or too accommodating to China; he must protect Taiwan’s interests.
CBMs in the Cross-Strait Context: Chinese and Taiwanese Views

The experience of Taiwan and China in confidence building has been largely unilateral in nature, typically involving unilateral declarations and voluntary constraint measures. President Ma's decision to subordinate national identity and independence issues to economic concerns and his pledge of "no independence, no reunification, and no use of force" can be considered declaratory CBMs, as can his declaration in his inaugural address that he is prepared to negotiate with Beijing based on the 1992 consensus.

Bilateral CBMs have been very limited, as tension in the cross-strait relationship has circumscribed virtually all official contact. Beijing apparently concluded that the danger of Taiwan independence created risks in taking steps that would increase Taiwan's confidence and instead obliged the mainland to make Taiwan feel insecure. There are some informal CBMs between police and coast guard officers, but they tend to be low-level arrangements to deal with practical problems, such as rescuing fishermen in distress and dealing with law enforcement problems in the strait. The two sides have not developed broader habits of cooperation, and the relationship continues to be dominated by deep-seated mistrust and suspicion.

There are both differences and commonalities in the way that mainland China and Taiwan think about CBMs. For the majority of our mainland interlocutors, the core of the process is political trust, because trust allows the two sides to develop common interests that permit them to make compromises during the negotiation process to pursue those shared concerns. Once the political framework is set, according to this Chinese view, then the two sides can push from the top and the bottom—among ranking officials and at the working level simultaneously—to expand the structure of interaction and trust. Taiwanese agree on the centrality of trust to the process of building a foundation for stable cross-strait ties. In its 2008 defense white paper, Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense (MND) argues that cross-strait relations are built on a foundation of "both sides being equal and trustworthy."

The MND approach to cross-strait CBMs matches the thinking of mainland Chinese as expressed by those we met with. Both concur that CBMs should be pursued in three stages—short-term, mid-term, and long-term (each of which can be further divided into specific steps and goals). But, argued one Chinese analyst, "a confidence-building mechanism can only be established following the mechanisms of dialogue and negotiation and should be developed in a coordinated way with other mechanisms." In other words, Chinese see CBMs as part of a broader political process rather than precursors to it.

For Chinese, it was elaborated during our discussions, this approach means that the CBM process must be top down: political leaders set the pace for discussion, and reconciliation and CBMs follow. Recent developments attest to both the accuracy of this characterization and the rationale behind it. A top-down model reflects the realities of an authoritarian political system, particularly

2. Several Chinese participants argued that their preference for using "mutual trust" rather than the phrase "confidence-building measures" reflects a linguistic twist: when speaking with Taiwanese in Chinese, the former phrase is used; when speaking in English, the preferred phrase is "CBMs." It is worth noting that the same language—"cross-strait mutual military trust"—is used in the Taiwan Ministry of National Defense 2008 white paper.
when dealing with such sensitive issues. Only senior decisionmakers are in a position to stretch the envelope of the possible; initiative by lower-level actors could be career threatening.

Chinese thinking diverged sharply from the Western approach. U.S. participants characterized CBMs as facilitating the dialogue process and noted that although all CBMs require political approval, rarely do policymakers have the requisite skills or knowledge to make informed decisions about technical issues. As such, implementation of specific measures that facilitate contact or reduce the possibility of a mishap—for example, between navies—are best left to working-level officials who better understand the context in which the two sides interact.

Differences are also evident in thinking about the objective of CBMs. As one U.S. participant explained, CBMs are transformational measures, designed to move a relationship from the existing state to something better. Some Chinese experts shared this perspective but emphasized that this dialogue and trust-building exercise must not be designed to perpetuate the cross-strait status quo; CBMs should at least be conducive to the eventual peaceful unification of China. U.S. participants cautioned the Chinese to avoid evaluating the desirability of a CBM based on whether it advances Beijing’s cause of reunification. Moreover, they advised that China should respect Ma’s insistence that reunification not be discussed. Doing otherwise would counterproductively chafe the Taiwan public’s wait-and-see attitude toward the future political relationship and preference for the status quo for the time being.

U.S. participants also stressed the utility of CBMs in avoiding an accident between armed forces that could escalate to a broader military conflict. Chinese participants, as previously mentioned, insist that the primary purpose of CBMs is to build mutual trust. Avoiding inadvertent conflict is of secondary importance for Taiwanese and Chinese alike. This is likely because both sides claimed to be familiar with the other’s military rules of engagement (ROE). Taiwanese officials assured us that their ROE are clear, and although they are not written, they believe that the Chinese know and understand them. As one Taiwanese officer explained, the Taiwan policy is “to avoid conflict by all means.” Taiwanese warships do not cross the midline in the Taiwan Strait; do not lock on PLA vessels with their radar or target Chinese weapon systems; do not use anything other than sonar to identity underwater vessels; and do not come within four to six km of PLA vessels or territory. Taiwan is prepared to take the first strike, but, cautioned one senior official, “We won’t surrender either.” One Taiwanese official suggested that the PLA takes advantage of those rules of engagement.

Mainland experts reiterated the common Chinese refrain that there will only be war if Beijing determines that the use of force is unavoidable. That might explain why a Chinese interlocutor flatly denied the possibility of formally establishing a centerline in the Taiwan Strait to prevent inadvertent contact between the two militaries, arguing that it would promote the separation of China and Taiwan rather than eventual unification. This is problematic for the proposal in Taiwan’s 2006 National Security Strategy to establish a buffer zone along the centerline of the Taiwan Strait.

Taiwanese thinking may be changing, however. In his meeting with our delegation, then president-elect Ma explained that “We need to pay more attention to the accidental outbreak of hostilities.” Minister of Defense Chen Chao-min expressed hope to a Legislative Yuan committee on June 4 that CBMs can be established to avoid an accidental conflict in the Taiwan Strait. Both statements were a marked contrast with the majority of views we heard from both Taiwanese and Chinese.
It became clear in our meetings that both sides see the CBM process beginning with informal contacts, with track two (nongovernmental) discussions a favored avenue. Contacts between retired military officers were considered equally important. Under the Chen government, suspicions about the loyalties of KMT stalwarts among Taiwan’s retired military inhibited the development of such contacts, as did restrictions imposed on PLA officers by their government. Exchanges of visits by both sides’ national defense universities and collaborative research projects were cited by Chinese and Taiwanese as possible follow-up steps. Military officers on both sides shared a vision of negotiation of a maritime safety agreement, setting up operational hotlines, and joint search and rescue exercises as desirable CBMs in later phases.

For the most part, Chinese experts viewed the mutual trust-building process as bilateral. But, as one expert noted, “having been involved in the Taiwan situation for many years, the United States cannot be an outsider.” Chinese we met with, however, insisted that to facilitate progress, the United States must understand the interests at stake and the dynamics that are involved. From their perspective, this was another argument in favor of restricting U.S. arms sales to Taiwan, because such sales “prevent the two sides from getting closer.” Some Taiwanese indicated that they foresee a U.S. role in cross-strait confidence building, for example, to provide verification of missile demobilization on the mainland if an agreement is reached.

The considerable experience between China and its neighbors in implementing CBMs may not provide a guide for Beijing in its approach to CBMs with Taiwan. Chinese participants insisted that they need to better understand the CBM process in the cross-strait context. One Chinese participant noted that in the wake of the May 2005 meeting between Hu Jintao and Lien Chan, some Chinese military-affiliated research institutes undertook new research on CBMs between Taiwan and the mainland, especially on the possible contents of a framework for peace and development between the two sides of the strait and its relationship to regional security. Chinese research has focused on the following aspects of CBMs:

- The relationship between CBMs and “the framework of peaceful development across the Taiwan Strait.” The Chinese concluded that CBMs are a crucial part of this framework and that they are no less important than other mechanisms such as political dialogue and economic cooperation. CBMs can only be established after those other mechanisms are created and should be developed in tandem with them.

- CBMs and political reassurance. CBMs are “the fundamental representation” of political reassurance as well as part of it. CBMs and political reassurance can facilitate each other, and the latter should not be seen as a precondition of military reassurance. Political trust can promote confidence building, but military confrontation makes political reassurance difficult, if not impossible. CBMs aim to show goodwill to the other side, and avoiding inadvertent conflict is only a secondary objective.

- The relationship between CBMs and the use of force. Different approaches are needed for different phases of cross-strait relations. As the relationship evolves, new responses are required. But, the Chinese have concluded that they cannot renounce the use of force before the state of hostility across the Taiwan Strait is ended through negotiations and the signing of a peace accord.

- The relationship between CBMs and the end of the state of hostility. When the two sides reach a peace agreement, the cross-strait relationship will be transformed. Most significantly, at this
point the mainland will be prepared “to clarify the conditions under which it will commit to
give up the use of force.” At that time, CBMs, which are not legally binding, would be replaced
by binding pacts.

- The contents, measures, and steps in establishing CBMs. While Chinese concede that they can
draw on the experiences of the rest of the world in assessing CBMs, they also insist that cross-
strait relations are qualitatively different from those between states, and this limits the applica-
ability of these lessons. As mentioned above, the Chinese envision CBMs being established in
three phases—short-term, medium-term, and long-term, and each can be further divided into
steps and goals.

- Favorable as well as unfavorable factors in building CBMs. From China’s perspective, the fac-
tors that make CBMs easier to establish include: the same blood relationship; shared culture
and language; increasing contacts in trade and people; the desire of both sides to avoid military
conflict; common interest in implementing CBMs; and the PLA experience in CBMs. Unfavor-
able factors include: the DPP’s refusal to accept the one-China principle; the Taiwan indepen-
dence movement; asymmetrical threat perceptions (i.e., Taiwanese fear of the use of force by
the mainland and Chinese fears of Taiwan independence); and the possible collision of Taiwan
populism and mainland nationalism.

In our discussions, Chinese participants indicated that these research findings are preliminary
and have yet to be considered by policymakers. They maintained that it is premature to devise a
CBM agenda and counseled patience. Ma Ying-jeou’s subsequent announcement that cross-strait
relations should proceed from economics to politics to security suggests that Taiwan also does not
view the establishment of military CBMs as pressing. Nevertheless, CBM research should con-
tinue on both sides of the strait, and a dialogue between mainland and Taiwan experts should be
encouraged. A useful exercise would be to compare Taiwan and mainland roadmaps for CBMs to
identify each side’s respective priorities and see how specific measures are sequenced.

**Potential Cross-Strait Confidence-Building Measures**

**Traditional CBMs**

It is estimated that 300 cargo ships transit the Taiwan Strait daily; some 20,000 fishing boats ply
those waters as well. Mishaps are inevitable. Channels of communication exist to deal with in-
cidents and accidents, but they are not always reliable and are potentially time consuming. At
various meetings, Taiwan officials explained that unofficial channels are preferred—such as the use
of search and rescue frequencies, ship-to-ship communications over channel 16, the international
calling and distress channel, and even connections to law enforcement officers or military facili-
ties on land, but they were reluctant to go into detail. The resort to such measures in the event of
emergencies has undoubtedly saved lives. The success of these channels so far may be a function of
their informality, and the lack of specific protocols could be a prerequisite for continued use. Ben-
efits would be reaped, however, from the establishment of reliable communication channels and
steps to introduce greater predictability. Both Taiwanese and Chinese agreed in our meetings that
operational military hotlines would be more useful than political hotlines or a communication
link between defense ministers. A Chinese PLA officer suggested the negotiation of a cross-strait
maritime safety agreement as a longer-term goal.
The establishment of direct air links provides an especially important opportunity to build confidence. Preparations for such flights provide the opportunity to expand the range of contacts between the two sides, including law enforcement agencies and the two militaries. Protocols for safe and efficient operations should be set up. Communications links should also be established and maintained. Air corridors should be agreed on for civilian and military aircraft to minimize the possibility of an accidental collision. Emergency response measures, including joint humanitarian rescue capacity, should be prepared. Each of these actions would contribute to the safe conduct of cross-strait flights, build capacity to respond to an accident, as well as lay a foundation for future cooperative action between the two sides.

In contrast to the enthusiasm expressed by Taiwanese toward seizing the opportunity presented by the establishment of direct air links to promote confidence building, mainland experts acknowledged the need for such practical steps but were extremely cautious about moving toward negotiated CBMs. As indicated above, this is consistent with a more general Chinese approach to foreign policy that favors agreement on broad political principles prior to discussion of specific arrangements. Moreover, the Chinese prefer to implement the easier steps of economic cooperation while postponing the more difficult security steps until later. Beijing also seeks firmer assurances from Taiwan that the option of independence will not be adopted in the future. It is better, one Chinese researcher explained, “to cross the river by feeling the stones” than it is to set objectives—such as CBMs—in advance.

Taiwanese military officials also urged the PLA to promote confidence, transparency, and predictability by publishing details of its military exercises annually. Taiwan publishes information concerning its military exercises, including location, dates, size, and purpose. A similar move by China would help reduce the chance of an accident or misperception of Chinese intent. Provision of advance information either to the internationally community or directly to Taiwan on location, size, dates, purpose, and schedules would be helpful. A Chinese military researcher argued, however, that it would be difficult for China to be transparent about its military exercises because the PLA insists on preserving the element of surprise.

Chinese analysts suggested that the PLA is considering unilateral gestures, such as the withdrawal of some missiles aimed at Taiwan, “at the proper time.” President Ma has made it clear that his government will not be cowed or forced to the negotiating table. In our meeting, he explained that he “is willing to discuss a peace agreement, but it is embarrassing to talk with more than 1,000 missiles aimed at Taiwan.” The threat of the use of force by the mainland makes it difficult for Ma to sell any proposal to the Taiwanese public, and he has said that he will seek public ratification of major cross-strait agreements. The missile deployments have been a source of concern for some time and a focus of Taiwanese (and U.S.) complaints against China.

If China moves a large portion of missiles out of range of Taiwan it would be a welcome gesture, but one that carries greater political symbolism than military significance because the missiles could be rapidly redeployed in the event of a crisis.³ There was virtual unanimity among those we met with in Taiwan that only the actual destruction of missiles would suffice. This, however, raises questions of both verification and transparency: it is uncertain how far Beijing would be willing to go in declaring the number of missiles deployed and in storage and in permitting inspection of missile sites and factories to ensure compliance. Moreover, Chinese missiles—short-

³. Taiwan would gain warning time, however, because moving the missiles forward would reportedly require approximately 48 hours.
range and medium-range, ballistic and cruise—are only a part of the military threat that Taiwan faces from the mainland.

Chinese participants, for their part, indicated that they would like to see Taiwan forego deployment of its Hsiung Feng 2E surface-to-surface cruise missile with a range of 1,000 km. Chinese military experts also expressed concern about the surface-to-air missiles deployed on the small islands close to the mainland that are occupied by Taiwan.

Other suggestions of CBMs from Chinese researchers included:

- Downgrading military alert levels. Given the changed atmosphere resulting from Chen’s retirement, this may not be as controversial as it seems.
- Downsizing military deployments. This would follow a negotiated peace accord.
- Joint seminars of military think tanks. This would build on the contacts by former military officers and could start with nontraditional security threats and technical cooperation.

Cross-strait military issues have both political and security significance. Most observers understand that a variety of factors drive PLA modernization and that China’s military buildup is not aimed solely at Taiwan. But, as one Taiwanese military officer noted, a sense of threat is the product of both capabilities and intentions, so steps that clarify Beijing’s intentions can play an important role in stabilizing cross-strait relations. A declaration of China’s intent to not use force against Taiwan—which Beijing could frame as conditional on Taiwan not declaring de jure independence—would send an important signal to Taiwan. While most Americans identified this as the cornerstone of an enduring cross-strait peace, Chinese argued instead that they could only give up the threat of the use of force when the two sides have “ended the state of hostility” between them. Even then, a pledge to refrain from use of force would remain conditional on a continuing commitment by Taiwan to forego independence.

Ripe for Building Confidence: Environmental and Public Health Issues

To date, experts on both sides of the strait have focused primarily on military CBMs. Yet increasing regional interest in nontraditional security has created new opportunities for cross-strait cooperation in two important areas: the environment and public health. Environmental damage and the consequences of climate change, on the one hand, and the threat of emerging infectious diseases like severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and avian influenza, which originated in Asia, on the other, affect everyone, and no one country can achieve positive change without regional and global cooperation.

These challenges can severely impact economies and trade and undermine political stability. Environmental pollution and viruses do not recognize borders; in a crisis, it is clear that no single entity can go it alone and that cooperation, even without trust, may become necessary. Beginning to develop a pattern of cooperation in these two areas can create a positive environment that will sustain cooperative and collaborative prevention and mitigation efforts as well as build mutual trust.

Environmental CBMs

Although no industrialized country is immune to serious pollution problems, the scale and speed of the environmental degradation in mainland China perhaps has no parallel. Over the past 30
years, China’s transition to its new role as the world’s manufacturing hub has brought millions of Chinese out of poverty—but at the cost of massive water, air, and soil pollution that threaten human and ecological health. China’s pollution reaches far beyond its borders. Annual sandstorms caused by desertification in the country’s northeast close schools and airports in South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan, and Chinese sand has even been found in the Grand Canyon. A growing car culture and China’s dependence on coal in a highly energy inefficient industrial sector have driven a rapid rise in the country’s CO₂ emissions. Although China’s per capita greenhouse gas emissions are low, it is now the lead emitter of CO₂ in the world. China has many progressive environmental policies, but the weakness of its Ministry of Environment and the power of local governments have meant enforcement is generally weak. The country’s environmental nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) represent the largest civil society sector in China, in great part due to funding and partnerships with international environmental organizations. Although these represent an important movement for promoting better environmental education and awareness, political obstacles have meant that Chinese green groups have not yet gained significant size or strength to become aggressive watchdogs of local government polluters.

Taiwan has also struggled in dealing with its environmental problems, most of which mirror those on the mainland. Over the past 10 years, Taiwan has made great strides in addressing its severe air pollution and waste problems through more aggressive policies and a fairly strong environmental NGO sector. Per capita CO₂ emissions in Taiwan are considerably higher than those in the PRC, and Taiwan ranks as the 11th-highest emitter globally, a high level for such a small island. Since 2005, Taiwan’s Environmental Protection Administration has been working on passing a fairly aggressive climate change strategy to promote better intergovernmental coordination to mitigate CO₂ emissions, promote renewable energy and natural gas, and establish national reduction targets.

This overview of environmental challenges and policies in Taiwan and mainland China underscores how they both face similar problems and could benefit from dialogue and cooperation on these issues. For example, Taiwan has made much more progress in bringing municipal waste under control with very aggressive recycling and waste reduction programs, an area in which China is very weak. Meanwhile, the PRC has been receiving considerable international assistance in the area of energy efficiency and greenhouse gas mitigation and thus could have useful information to share with Taiwanese counterparts on that front.

Our meetings with Taiwanese researchers and government officials revealed significant concern over air pollution and floating trash from the mainland. Water pollution in the PRC poses both direct and indirect challenges to Taiwan. For example, polluted rivers and municipal wastewater that flow into coastal waters account for considerable loss of coastal ecosystems, which include fish and mangroves. Indirectly, aquaculture products from mainland China are often contaminated with veterinary medicine and fungicides, which farmers are forced to use in order to keep fish alive in highly contaminated water. Taiwan has periodically banned imports of PRC aquaculture products. Taiwan, like many in the international community, is often frustrated by the lack of transparency in pollution data for the mainland, but this issue may improve with the passage of the PRC’s Measures on Open Environmental Information, which came into effect on May 1, 2008.

Although cross-strait environmental CBMs would bring obvious benefits to both mainland China and Taiwan, so far there has been no official dialogue on pollution problems and possible collaborative solutions. The Chinese Ministry of Environment has not only rejected invitations for
dialogue or data exchange with its Taiwanese counterpart, but the PRC government also has been firm about denying Taiwan even observer status in most international environmental agreements and dialogues—a position that highly frustrates Taiwan's environmental watchdog.

One notable trend that potentially opens opportunities for cross-strait work on environmental challenges in the region are the numerous international NGOs that are active in environmental projects in mainland China in a broad range of areas that also concern Taiwan, such as animal trafficking, energy efficiency, and antidesertification. The international community has not been particularly active in working in municipal waste reduction, an area in which Taiwan has made considerable progress.

Our conversations in Taiwan revealed that there is notably little public awareness of China's environmental problems beyond those that impact Taiwan and that Taiwanese green NGOs currently focus their work primarily on indigenous issues.

Due largely to the island's high level of economic development, there have not been many international environmental NGOs doing work in Taiwan, but some do have offices in Taipei as part of regional environmental initiatives. Most notable are Greenpeace, which is active in antinuclear issues in Taiwan, and TRAFFIC, a joint program of the World Wildlife Fund and the International Union for Conservation of Nature, which is a global network that uses research, monitoring, and other projects to help decrease illegal wildlife trade globally. The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) used to be active in energy issues in Taiwan and notably catalyzed the creation of the Taiwan Fuel Cell Partnership, which helped bring together Taiwanese government, research, and industry representatives to help promote development of this new technology. Over the past few years, NRDC has been undertaking a similar network building activity in Shanghai, in which some members of the Taiwanese Fuel Cell Partnership have been involved.

International cooperation on environmental and energy issues in the PRC has been growing steadily for the past 27 years, and the activities of U.S. green NGOs have been the most notable. The large number of international NGO projects in the PRC could represent opportunities for Taiwanese to get involved, albeit at a civil society and research level.

In 2001, the Woodrow Wilson Center's China Environment Forum held the first, and to date only, cross-strait workshop bringing together environmental NGOs and journalists. The workshop revealed that although there was little concrete knowledge on either side of the problems faced by Chinese and Taiwanese counterparts, the interest in exchanging information and strategies was strong. A continuation of more such civil society exchanges could provide a useful mechanism to promote CBMs, which potentially could help strengthen the capacity of PRC green groups and the environmental research community. The NRDC Shanghai Fuel Cell Partnership discussed above is an ideal model for such an exchange.

At our delegation's meetings in April, Taiwanese experts shared information about existing nonofficial exchanges among researchers across the strait that aim to improve environmental awareness and technical exchange. For example, there has been a communication channel established between the environmental authorities of Jinmen in Taiwan and Xiamen on the mainland to discuss the floating trash problems, in which garbage from Fujian Province has created costly coastal cleanup in Taiwan. Fujian Province has evidently been improving its waste treatment facilities and carrying out public education campaigns against littering. A similar floating trash problem exists between Fuzhou in Fujian Province and Mazu in Lienjiang County in Taiwan. Personnel
from Lienjiang’s Environmental Protection Bureau (EPB) visited Fuzhou’s EPB in 2006 and 2007, and a reciprocal trip took place in 2007.

The goals of these visits were to discuss how to improve the waste problems and develop emergency response measures. Beijing made clear that it viewed these as cross-provincial visits. Future exchanges might be more easily handled if neither side insists on labeling them so that sovereignty issues can be avoided. The floating waste issue is one in which NGOs on both sides of the strait could potentially come together and discuss solutions, because, as noted above, Taiwan has been fairly successful at reining in garbage problems.

Taiwanese experts suggested several areas in which common interests might be explored to develop cross-strait environmental CBMs:

- Working together on monitoring air pollution, such as dust, acid rain, and mercury.
- Setting up information exchange, monitoring, and joint protection activities for migrating birds and illegal wildlife trade.
- Creating a marine peace park in the cross-strait region to help raise awareness of severe coastal water degradation and increasing technical exchanges and projects to correct these problems.
- Establishing environmental information exchange platforms, particularly regarding air pollution.
- Including Taiwanese scientists in the Acid Precipitation Monitoring Network in East Asia.
- Setting up an environmental education program that creates partnerships between PRC and Taiwanese universities, high schools, and elementary schools.
- Promoting city-to-city dialogues on urban waste problems.

In considering cross-strait environmental CBMs, the priority should first and foremost be on successfully addressing some of the serious pollution problems that plague the cross-strait region. These CBMs initially would likely involve civil society groups and researchers from Taiwan and mainland China, but as these initiatives develop, officials on both sides of the strait could be brought in as observers or participants. Although there is a fairly significant network of scientists in Taiwan and on the mainland that talks about environmental issues, the participants in our meetings with Taiwanese agreed on the need for international organizations to help catalyze new projects.

Ultimately, nonofficial, civil society, and research networks built up around green issues are not likely to be central in solving the political deadlock between the PRC and Taiwan, but the environment does represent an area in which the two could build some much needed goodwill and trust.

Public Health CBMs
Taiwan’s public health index today is one of the highest in the world despite almost four decades of isolation from international institutions such as the World Health Organization (WHO). Taiwan attributes its success, in part, to the public health infrastructure built by the former Japanese government that occupied Taiwan as well as to significant outside assistance when Taiwan was still a member of the United Nations.
In addition to its own vibrant public health system, Taiwan has also been a key contributor to global health efforts through government institutions, a plethora of NGOs that serve around the world, the joint governmental and NGO cooperation that has contributed to polio eradication, AIDS prevention in central Africa, and many other global health challenges.

Our mainland interlocutors feared that Taiwan might use its activities in the global health arena to enhance its status internationally and that cooperating with Taiwan through CBMs might prove an enabler for Taiwan, should a future return of DPP leadership choose to exploit any expanded international space that might result from such cooperation. Taiwanese interlocutors, however, asserted that Taiwan seeks regular unfettered access to information so it can protect the health of Taiwanese citizens and experience meaningful participation in global health activities. They were very clear that their definition of “meaningful participation” meant being granted observer status in the World Health Assembly (WHA), the executive arm of the WHO. It remains to be seen how firm this position will be under Ma Ying-jeou’s administration.

In our meetings, Taiwanese expressed disappointment, frustration, helplessness, and sometimes anger in the face of political obstacles that the mainland interposes to Taiwan’s desire for fuller participation in global health issues. Taiwan’s institutional distrust of China’s government is linked to the argument that the public health systems of China and Taiwan are very different and that if an epidemic broke out in Taiwan, China would not be able to provide the appropriate assessments and reports to the WHO. During our visit to Taipei, Taiwanese experts often cited the shigellosis outbreak in 2007 linked to baby corn exports from Thailand, when it took seven days for Beijing to notify Taipei of the problem. Because it is currently excluded from the WHO’s International Health Regulations disease reporting system, Taiwan claims it is often denied timely access to disease outbreak information.

Existing political and institutional distrust has impeded progress by fueling frustration and dissatisfaction on both sides. This was particularly palpable in 2005 when the WHO Secretariat and China signed a secret memorandum of understanding that required the WHO to seek Chinese approval prior to any communication with Taiwan and mandated that Taiwan be referred to as “Taiwan, China,” in all WHO activities. The political and institutional distrust on both sides make it difficult for either side to engage in public health CBMs.

This does not mean that there will not be future progress; it simply reinforces the need for trust building. An increase in cross-strait tourism will place increased pressure on Taipei (and perhaps Beijing) to either reach a compromise that would facilitate a more effective flow of health information or prompt both to focus on reinforcing their internal disease prevention mechanisms; the latter, though, would increase, rather than ease, mutual distrust.

Taiwanese experts acknowledged nascent efforts to hold cross-strait dialogue activities relating to health issues. In July 2006, representatives from health departments of municipalities on both sides of the strait—the Xiamen Health and Quarantine Department and the Jinmen Health Department—held a public health seminar that centered on strengthening public health information links, skills/technology exchange and cooperation, as well as personnel training. Three months later, a two-day Cross-Strait Medical Cooperation and Exchange Forum took place in Beijing and was attended by 400 members of the medical community. Common proposals were put forward on expanding cross-strait cooperation in health/medicine, facilitating Taiwan-to-mainland medical industry investment, and making it possible for Taiwanese medical professionals to practice on the mainland. Yet these conferences have been limited in their ability to propel the two sides into
sustained cooperative relations in a substantive way that would engender mutual trust, openness, and predictability.

Taiwanese experts suggested three areas where common interest might be explored to develop CBMs. First, with the influx of Taiwanese tourists, investors, and workers traveling to China, and Chinese tourists and investors traveling to Taiwan, there is a need to work together on ways to provide reasonable health services and insurance for visitors on both sides of the strait. Second, education and training programs for Chinese counterparts are currently limited and should be expanded. From the Taiwanese perspective, greater benefit would be derived from providing longer-term scholarships and fellowships so that medical professionals from both sides of the strait can learn from each other's best practices. Finally, the rise of pharmaceutical contamination cases originating from China suggests to Taiwanese experts that this may be an area where positive collaboration could be beneficial.

Health issues provide a unique opportunity to promote progress in confidence building across the strait. However, absent a neutral ground for collaboration that is sanctioned by the political leadership on both sides, a forum for building confidence and mutual trust through public health CBMs might be initiated but cannot be sustained. Given a neutral ground for interaction, CBMs will be useful to the extent they move China and Taiwan toward the goals that they set together and a mutual desire for health cooperation, creating gradual, step-by-step actions where both sides interact and move toward greater mutual trust, openness, and predictability.

Taiwan’s Search for International Space

U.S. and Chinese observers have applauded President Ma’s decision to downplay the independence and identity agendas. But these are quite separate from Taiwan’s desire for dignity and international space, which continue to be strong and were emphasized by those we met with in Taipei. It would be a serious mistake for Beijing not to recognize the negative psychological impact on the Taiwanese people of a decision by Beijing to “steal” yet another diplomatic ally from Taiwan. Such a move could result in increased doubts about the wisdom of Ma’s new engagement strategy. It would also be a grave error if the PRC and other countries fail to appreciate the near universal desire in Taiwan to play a bigger role in international society, including in multilateral organizations that require sovereignty for membership, or to underestimate the political pressure Ma will be under to show progress on this front. Indeed, the new Taiwan leadership regards this issue as a litmus test of Chinese sincerity.

At meetings in Taipei with agency heads of the (now former) government to discuss possibilities for cross-strait confidence building on nontraditional security issues such as health and the environment, there was universal demand for opportunities for their departments to contribute to the work of international organizations and to demonstrate Taiwan’s accomplishments and value. Officials at all levels were offended by their inability to contribute to international activities and lamented the losses to Taiwan and others that result from Taiwan’s inability to participate. Representing the then-DPP government, they insisted that Taiwan’s participation had to be on an official state level and refused engagement that did not recognize Taiwan’s sovereign prerogatives. One agency head explained that “Taiwan needs mutual respect: there can be no ‘big brother, little brother’ mentality.”

In our meeting with then president-elect Ma, he described future progress on the issue of international space for Taiwan as having two components: 1) declaration of a truce in the diplomatic
competition between the two sides, enabling Taiwan to maintain its existing diplomatic ties with 23 countries; and 2) achievement of meaningful participation in regional and international multilateral organizations. Ma argued that “there is no need for the mainland to continue squeezing Taiwan in the international community,” as Taiwan is no longer pressing for international recognition as an independent sovereign state and is on a course to improve relations with the mainland. He urged the PRC to “make a virtue of necessity” and let Taiwan have specialized membership in international organizations (i.e., those that do not require sovereignty to join.) The obvious candidate is the World Health Assembly, in which both the United States and Japan back observship for Taiwan—a status held by non-sovereign entities such as the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Ma has stated that Taiwan would accept observer status in the WHO under the name of Chinese Taipei, which is one of the designated names used by the Republic of China—Taiwan’s formal name—to participate in international activities, including the Olympic Games.

Members of our delegation pressed those we met with in Beijing to seize the opportunity presented by the WHA meeting, which convened as Ma was sworn in as Taiwan’s president, by signaling that China would not block a Taiwan bid to become an observer. Chinese experts replied that the meeting was “too soon” and that President Chen Shui-bian’s insistence that Taiwan apply for full membership under the name of Taiwan ruled out a change in China’s position this year in any case. A U.S. suggestion that China support observer status on an annually renewable basis—to act as a check on Taiwanese behavior—got no response.

But our Chinese interlocutors warned that the mainland government must not be seen as bowing to international—read U.S.—pressure to make concessions on sovereignty. One Chinese analyst insisted “that any decisions on international space must be in line with the one-China principle and must conform to the regulations of the international bodies that Taiwan wants to apply to join. We can’t allow Taiwan to participate in international organizations that require sovereignty to join.” A Chinese official cautioned that prior to granting Taiwan a formal status such as observer status in any international organization, China must fully understand the legal and political ramifications of such a decision. He and other Chinese were clearly wary that granting Taiwan observer status will imply acceptance of “two Chinas” or “one China, one Taiwan,” both of which are anathema to Beijing. Signaling his view that Taipei needs to help create the conditions for progress on this issue, he added, “If Taiwan gives the mainland more confidence, then we can take some steps to accommodate their desires.” Subsequently, newly appointed director of the State Council’s Taiwan Affairs Office Wang Yi told a visiting Japanese delegation that the “mainland would not accept Taiwan formally joining the World Health Organization but might arrange a separate framework to connect Taiwan with the international health community, other than the WHO, when avian flu or other epidemic diseases break out.”

Policy Recommendations

Based on the shared recognition among all three parties that a strategic opportunity exists to establish long-term stability in the Taiwan Strait, increasing confidence among them should be a principal task. Establishing good communication between leaders on both sides of the strait and between both leaderships and the U.S. government is essential. Efforts should be directed toward promoting win-win-win outcomes.
For the United States:

- The United States should continue to state publicly and privately its firm support for the ongoing process of easing cross-strait tensions and building trust between the mainland and Taiwan. U.S. government officials should seek to dispel suspicions in both Taipei and Beijing that the United States fears its interests could be harmed by cross-strait reconciliation and that the United States might therefore take steps to slow down the process. The U.S. government should also make clear its support in principle for cross-strait agreements that are reached by the free and uncoerced choice of the people on both sides.

- Washington should urge the Chinese leadership to provide greater opportunities for Taiwan to participate meaningfully in the international community in ways that do not touch on the question of sovereignty. It should specifically encourage Beijing to support observership for Taiwan in the World Health Assembly when the WHA convenes in May 2009 and substantially greater participation in the activities of the WHO. Washington should also press the mainland to ease its military threat to Taiwan, including but not limited to reducing the number of short- and medium-range missiles deployed against the island.

- Close security ties with Taiwan should be sustained in accordance with U.S. obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act. Specific decisions on U.S. arms sales, military cooperation with Taiwan, and U.S. force deployments should be made in the context of U.S. interests in securing long-term peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.

- The U.S. government should pay especially close attention to any requests that come jointly from Beijing and Taipei for U.S. assistance to help overcome obstacles, including obstacles to implementing any agreements that they may reach.

For mainland China:

- In developing its policy toward Taiwan, China should respond in a forthcoming manner to the desires and needs of the Taiwan people. Beijing should continue to expand economic ties and cultural exchanges with Taiwan. Agreements on direct cross-strait cargo shipping and flights should be concluded, and direct passenger flights should be regularized.

- The mainland should respond positively to the wishes of the Taiwanese people to play a greater role in the international community, including participation in international organizations in ways that do not touch on the issue of sovereignty. A tacit diplomatic truce should be adhered to, pending future negotiations on the issue of international space.

- In the military sphere, the mainland should consider near-term reduction in deployments of missiles opposite Taiwan as a good will gesture. A plan should be developed to initiate cross-strait military-to-military exchanges to explore agreements in the security field and other ways to reduce tensions, build confidence, and expand cooperation.

- Beijing should take a long-term perspective toward U.S. arms sales to and security cooperation with Taiwan. Even if a cross-strait peace accord is signed and a framework put in place for long-term peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, the mainland will likely view it as necessary to maintain a deterrent against the possibility of future Taiwan independence activity, and Taiwan will continue to seek to sustain and improve its abilities to resist coercion and deter an attack from China. Whatever adjustments both sides make to suit such a new situation,
provision of an adequate defense by the Ma administration will be an important foundation for the kinds of political and security progress both sides of the strait seek. In this context, therefore, the mainland should not react to U.S. weapons sales to Taiwan in ways that set back progress in cross-strait relations.

For Taiwan:

- Taipei should continue to constructively engage with the mainland to expand contacts and increase mutual trust.
- President Ma Ying-jeou should continue to seek a broad domestic consensus across Taiwan's political spectrum in favor of engaging the mainland and cross-strait reconciliation.
- Taiwan should closely consult with the United States on its approaches to managing its evolving relationship with the mainland. Consistent with this, good communication should also be maintained on Taiwan's defense strategy and other related issues. More effective contacts should be developed between Taiwan's Legislative Yuan and the U.S. Congress.
- Taiwan should take a pragmatic and flexible approach to the issue of promoting Taiwan's participation in international organizations. Recognizing that how Taipei handles the continuing desire of the people of Taiwan to join the United Nations will affect Beijing's attitude and policy toward the issue of Taiwan's international space; UN membership and other similar issues should be dealt with carefully and with consideration to Taiwan's long-term objectives.

Making the Most of Opportunities

It should be apparent that although there are differences in the way that the two sides think about and pursue CBMs, there is still substantial overlap. Common ground is not hard to find. The biggest obstacle to the pursuit of confidence-building measures is the deeply ingrained suspicions on both sides of the strait. Chinese fear that any concessions Beijing makes to the Ma government could be pocketed to consolidate Taiwan's de facto independence and exploited if the opposition returns to power in Taiwan. Taiwanese, meanwhile, fear that the mainland will not provide substantial benefits to Taiwan and as a result will undermine Ma's engagement policy. In addition, there is persistent belief in China that sustaining Taiwan's sense of insecurity is desirable because it renders Taiwan more vulnerable to the mainland's pressure.

Resistance to cross-strait CBMs in China is somewhat understandable given the events of the last decade. But the events of recent months suggest that the leadership in both governments grasps the stakes and wants to move the relationship forward. President Ma's readiness to explore better relations provides political cover in Taiwan to expand contacts at all levels. This should include CBMs between the militaries as well as across the civilian bureaucracies on both sides of the strait. Ma also echoed the call by Hu Jintao in his report to the 17th Party Congress for the negotiation of a peace agreement and the creation of a framework for peaceful development of cross-strait relations. Hu's embrace of rapprochement is especially important given the caution and resistance we heard from some of our Chinese interlocutors. Lower-level actors in China are timid and risk averse; absent new guidelines and principles, long-established policies and habits will derail this opportunity.
This new mindset does not mean that progress will continue at the current pace. Recent developments are long overdue and, although important, are relatively minor and have been easy to achieve. Success has depended on—and for a long time to come will continue to depend on—shelving critical issues, such as sovereignty and recognition. Building mutual trust will be a gradual and interactive process that will require flexibility, creativity, and firm commitment from both sides. Mutually satisfactory compromises will demand more patience, effort, and trust than exists today. CBMs will prove integral to eventual success.
APPENDIX A

LIST OF DELEGATION MEMBERS

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CSIS

Kenneth Allen  
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China Studies Center, CNA

Bernard D. Cole  
*Professor of International History*  
National War College  
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China Environment Forum, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

Robert M. Witajewski  
*Director*  
Office of Regional Affairs, Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation, U.S. Department of State (Taipei meetings only)
APPENDIX B

MEETING AGENDAS

Meetings and Visits in Taipei, April 13–17, 2008

- Stephen M. Young, director, American Institute in Taiwan
- Department of Health, Executive Yuan
- Michael Tsai, minister of national defense (now former)
- Su Chi, now secretary-general, National Security Council
- Ma Ying-jeou, president-elect (now president)
- Coast Guard Administration, Executive Yuan
- Wang Jin-pyng, speaker, Legislative Yuan
- Environmental Protection Administration, Executive Yuan
- Foreign Affairs and National Defense Committee, Legislative Yuan
- Ministry of National Defense
- Republic of China Navy Headquarters
- Ho Szu-yin, now deputy secretary-general, National Security Council
- Leng Tse-kang, professor and chair, Department of Political Science, National Chengchi University

CSIS—Foundation on International and Cross-Strait Studies Workshop, April 16, 2008, Taipei

Agenda

Panel I: Cross-Strait Military Confidence-Building Measures
Panel II: Cross-Strait Health Confidence-Building Measures
Panel III: Cross-Strait Environmental Confidence-Building Measures
Taiwanese Participants

Chen Han-hua
Associate Research Fellow
National Security Council

Chen Tzay-jinn
Deputy Minister
Department of Health, Executive Yuan

Arthur Ding
Research Fellow
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Alexander Huang
Director
Graduate Institute of American Studies, Tamkang University

Lang Ning-li
Vice Admiral (Ret.)
Republic of China Navy

Lee Wen-chung
Former DPP Legislator

Liang Yung-fang
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Lin Yung-lo
Director-General
Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Liu Chia-hsiu
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Bureau of International Cooperation, Department of Health, Executive Yuan

James Shiang-ping Liu
Director
Department of National Defense and Security, Taiwan Association for Strategic Simulation

Liu Shyh-fang
Minister Without Portfolio
Executive Yuan

Sun Hone-ling
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Yu Hui-ching
Associate Professor
Division of General Education, Chengshiu University
CSIS—China Foundation for International and Strategic Studies (CFISS) Workshop, April 18, 2008, Beijing

Agenda
Session I: The Current Situation across the Taiwan Strait
Session II: Military Confidence-Building Measures across the Taiwan Strait

Chinese Participants

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CFISS

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Chairman  
Academic Assessment Committee, CFISS

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Xu Weidi  
Professor  
National Defense University

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Yang Mingjie  
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China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations

Niu Xinchun  
Research Fellow  
China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations

Duo Yingyi  
Research Fellow  
Beijing Society for the Promotion of Exchanges with Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau
ABOUT THE AUTHORS


Brad Glosserman is executive director of Pacific Forum CSIS in Honolulu, Hawaii, which has provided policy-oriented analysis and promoted dialogue on regional security, political, economic, and environmental issues in the Asia-Pacific region for more than 25 years. He oversees all Pacific Forum programs, conferences, and publications and also directs the Pacific Forum’s Young Leaders program. Glosserman is editor of Comparative Connections, the Pacific Forum’s quarterly electronic journal, and originally wrote the section on U.S.-Japan relations; he now coauthors the regional overview with senior editor (and Pacific Forum CSIS president) Ralph Cossa.

Glosserman is coauthor of numerous monographs on U.S. foreign policy and Asian security relations and appears regularly at conferences on Asian security and foreign policy held around the world. His articles have appeared in scholarly journals throughout the region, and he has contributed chapters to various books on regional security. He is the editor, with Tae-hyo Kim, of The Future of U.S.-Korea-Japan Relations: Balancing Values and Interests (CSIS, 2004). His opinion articles and commentary have appeared in the Japan Times, South China Morning Post, International Herald Tribune, Asian Wall Street Journal, Index on Censorship, Japan Digest, and Straits Times, as well as other publications. Glosserman has been a regular commentator for the BBC and Asian radio programs. Prior to joining Pacific Forum, he was a member of the Japan Times editorial board for 10 years and wrote a weekly column on technology; he continues to serve as a contributing editor. While in Japan, he lectured on Japanese politics at the Institute for the International Education of Students. Glosserman holds a J.D. from the George Washington University, an M.A. from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, and a B.A. from Reed College.