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Discussion Paper  
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**Prospects of Cross-Taiwan-Strait Relations after MA Ying-jeou  
Assumed the Reins of Government**

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The year 2008 is an eventful year for China. On March 20<sup>th</sup>, Taiwan held the Leadership Election, and went through the second of the government party after the year 2000. MA Ying-jeou, the candidate who represents the Kuomintang (KMT), won the election, and became the leader of Taiwan. Before that, on March 4<sup>th</sup>, HU Jintao, President of the People's Republic of China and General Secretary of the Communist Party of China presented the keynote speech in a joint meeting of the Revolutionary Committee of the Chinese Kuomintang, the Taiwan Democratic Self-Government League and the All-China Federation of Taiwan Compatriots, on the 1<sup>st</sup> full Session of the 11<sup>th</sup> the CPPCC (Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference). This speech, with a thesis of "to seize the theme of peaceful development in cross-Straits relations firmly, working for the interest of people on both sides of the Strait, and promoting peace in the region of Taiwan Strait", guides the direction of a peaceful development of cross-Straits relations. On August 8<sup>th</sup>, the 29<sup>th</sup> Olympic Games are to be held in Beijing successfully. All these great events open up a new prospect of cross-Straits relations, and indicate a significant historical opportunity for a peaceful regional future of the Taiwan Straits.

## 1. HU Jintao's Description of the "Peaceful Development" Roadmap of Cross-Straits Relations

It was in his second meeting with LIEN Chan, Honorary President of KMT on April 16th 2006 when President HU Jintao first proposed "peaceful development" as the theme in promoting cross-Straits relations. In October 2007, in the Political Report made at the 17th National Congress of Communist Party of China, HU Jintao reconfirmed this idea. On the March-4th-Speech, HU Jintao further elaborated this doctrine. In his speech, HU Jintao first pointed out the vital interrelationship between "peaceful development" and peace and stability in cross-Strait relations with an implication for compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Straits. HU Jintao said:

The facts have proved and will prove that the peaceful development across the Straits will benefit the peace and stability of cross-Straits relations and will benefit the compatriots on both sides of the Straits. In contrast, "Taiwan independence" activities run counter to peace and stability of cross-Straits relations, and thus would harm the compatriots on both sides of the Straits. Therefore, to realize the peaceful development of the cross-Straits relations is the only approach which is in the common interest and common responsibility of the compatriots of both sides of the Straits.

Then he emphasized that the foundation and the driving force of "peaceful development" already exist.

With the long-term effort of the compatriots on both sides of the Straits, a better and solid foundation with a more powerful driving force and a more favourable conditions has already been prepared for "peaceful development". Peaceful development of cross-Straits relations is the general trend of events and the will of the people.

Thirdly, he further elaborated the target and approaches of the "peaceful development" of cross-Straits relations: "The foundation is the adherence to the 'one China Policy'. The aim is to pursuit common prosperity for compatriots on both sides of the Straits. And the approach is to deepening the exchanges and win-win cooperation for mutual interests." Finally, HU Jintao emphasized our strong determination in promoting "peaceful development" of cross-Straits relations: "Although there are some resistances and obstacles, and the future route will be zigzag and challenging, our determination in promoting the peaceful development of cross-Straits relations will never fade and will not fail."

HU Jintao's March 4<sup>th</sup> address, therefore, has several main characteristics. First is its "people oriented" principle. The speech highlights the "people foremost" political perceptions: he pledged that the mainland will make the utmost effort to do a good job in everything that is good to the Taiwan compatriots. "We are always committed to our pledges to the Taiwan compatriots. We will never sway due to temporary fluctuations of the situation, or change due to a few individuals' deliberate disturbances," the president said. Second is the scientific character of this speech. The speech sufficiently represents the idea of "scientific development" in the modern political conception of the CPC. For example, HU Jintao appeals that "we look forward to the formal end of the state of hostility across the Straits through joint efforts by both sides and consultations based on the one-China principle, and hope to reach a peace agreement and build up a framework for the peaceful development of cross-Straits relations." In this sense, considering the reality that we still have to solidify the foundation of reunification of the two sides of the Taiwan Straits, the speech didn't mention any detailed negotiations on reunification, but provides a proposal on the "framework of peaceful development of the cross-Straits relations". Third is the flexibility of this speech. "We are ready to have exchange, dialogue, consultation and negotiation with any political parties in Taiwan, as long as they recognize that both sides of the Taiwan Straits belong to one China," HU said, "The negotiation will be conducted on an equal footing with completely open topics - there is nothing we can't talk about." "To find a solution of cross-Straits relations on politics, economics, military, culture and foreign exchange issues by negotiation." The fourth character is the involvement of all possible companions. HU Jintao suggested that: "We should rally the Taiwan compatriots to our best. Only when realizing the grand rally, we can promote the great development of cross-Straits relations. As for those who once fantasized, claimed or even promoted 'Taiwan independence', we should also make effort to rally these persons. We will warmly and sincerely welcome them into negotiation, if only they come back to the

rightful route in promoting peaceful development of cross-Straits relations.” The fifth is the foresight of this speech. HU Jintao’s speech is based on the reality of cross-Straits relations, and prospects the future. He appeals that “compatriots of the both sides of the Straits rally together, seize the theme of peaceful development in cross-Straits relations, start a new phase of cross-Straits relations, and promote the great revival of the Chinese Nation.”

## 2. Taiwan Politics is Changing toward a Favourable Situation for Peaceful Development in Cross-Straits Relations

On March 22nd 2008, the result of leadership election in Taiwan was published. Among the 17, 321, 603 registered voters, 13, 221, 609 casted their vote, which counted up to 76.33% of the electorate. Ma Ying-jeou as the representative candidate of the KMT won 7, 658, 724 votes, which counts up to 58.45% of all the votes. HSIEH Chang-ting as the representative candidate of DPP (Democratic Progressive Party) won 5, 445, 239 votes, which counts up to 41.55% of all votes. MA won by 2, 213, 488 votes over HSIEH, which counts up to 16.9% of the votes. Both the “referendum on UN membership” and the “Referendum to return to the UN” that were held simultaneously with the election failed to gain the necessary support.

To revisit the causes of this result of the election, the DPP’s extreme political route in pursuing the ideology of “Taiwan independence”, its self-closed route on cross-Straits policy, improper policy on human resources, factional strife within the party and tactic failure in preparing for the election all contributed to the final failure. The result of this election could be regarded as the general public’s vote of no-confidence to the past eight-year-governance of CHEN Shui-bian. A sense of dissatisfaction with the governance of the DPP was widespread among the citizens. Thus the general public called for a change and voted for another party. They consider their vote in the election as bidding for “party stock”, thinking that the potential of MA Ying-jeou and the KMT will seek the interest of the general public and Taiwan in the future, and thus lead Taiwan into prosperity. As for MA Ying-jeou’s himself, he is warmly welcomed and supported by the general republic. His sober image in the public with the virtues of sincerity and honesty in political practice and personality meet the social expectations. Meanwhile, the KMT and its “blue” counterparts united together with an intensive sense of crisis. Their strategies of “long stay” in grass-roots society and “economy as a vitally important thing” in the election were quite successful.

As for the political situation in Taiwan after MA Ying-jeou assumed the reins of government, our analysis is as follows. On the one hand, firstly, MA is more capable in leading the political situation and politics in Taiwan in “MA Ying-jeou era”. Secondly, a “bi-partisan politics” of KMT and DPP has been basically formed in

Taiwan. Thirdly, the Central Committee of the KMT can now better lead the “legislators” with a membership of KMT into consensus on legislative affairs. The WU Po-hsuing-lead Central Committee of the KMT and the administrative power are the two headquarters of political powers in Taiwan with equal importance. Moreover, consider MA Ying-jeou’s grand victory in the election and the formation of “bi-partisan politics” of KMT and DPP, the clear prospect of politics in Taiwan call for a certain mergence of the KMT and the People First Party (with Soong Chu-yu as the leader). Therefore, a satisfying prospect of cohesion is at hand for the “Grand Blue Camp”. On the other hand, the DPP is facing a “Warring Epoch”, and different groups challenge each other in this “post CHEN Shui-bian era”, fighting for their own power and interest.

At the moment, the DPP, which used to provoke the smooth-going of cross-Straits relations once and again, falls out of power. Actions of “Taiwan independence” such as the “referendum of UN membership”, which challenge the fact that both sides of the Taiwan Straits are of one China, also came to doom and failure. Especially, MA Ying-jeou has a strong will to fulfil his commitment to the general public in Taiwan that “whatever direction the political wind blows, once you take a ride on a Horse (means: once Mr. Horse, MA Ying-jeou wins the election), the three means of direct communication (direct flight, business and postal communication between the two sides of the Strait) are at hand.” In this sense, MA is in need of a favourable environment of peace and stability in cross-Straits relations. MA, therefore, emphasized that he would like to be a “peace promoter”, rather than a “trouble maker”. All of the above analysis shows a favourable transition of the political situation in Taiwan toward a landscape of peaceful development of cross-Straits relations.

### 3. Some Problems and Challenges of Cross-Straits Relations that Mainland China May Encounter

- A. The DPP might restrict MA Ying-jeou and his administrative partners in real politics. In the bi-partisan politics in Taiwan in the future, the DPP’s cross-Straits relations policy would greatly restrict the policy making and practice of Ma Ying-jeou and his administrative partners. DPP could exam and challenge the opening up policy and practice made by MA and his partners. The DPP could resort to “Taiwan’s subjectivity”, and challenge these policies with a criteria of “whether the KMT loves Taiwan or not” and the aim of “Taiwan independence”. Once they find any hint of “political incorrectness about ‘love Taiwan’” according to their only criteria, the DPP could criticize these policies as “politically incorrect”, and thus restrict the opening up policy initiated by MA and his administrative partners.

- B. MA Ying-jeou's political perceptions, personal character, as well as his provincial origin as the "original sin", may restrain his practice in pioneering significant opening up policy in cross-Straits relations. MA's anti-communist political perception, his compromise to DPP's veto, and especially, his provincial background (i.e. MA's father "immigrated" from Hunan in mainland China to Taiwan just before 1949) as his irreversible "original sin" are all notable factors. These factors, therefore, would make him feel inferior and not confident enough to answer questions like "whether MA loves Taiwan", "whether or not would MA betray Taiwan". MA, in this sense, may worry about the DPP's criticism of him as not "loving Taiwan", and would possibly make more extreme policies than those of the DPP with the intention to prove his "deep love for Taiwan", or even, "love Taiwan better than DPP did".
- C. The structural contradiction between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits is also quite notable. If we admit that the existing contradiction between the mainland government and KMT was unintentionally frozen during the eight years of DPP government, then with MA Ying-jeou assuming the rein of government, this traditional contradiction would arise again. This is the structural contradiction between the two sides of the Straits. Firstly, it is a problem of the political standard of "Republic of China and its government". How to find a proper and reasonable solution for both sides of the Strait by negotiation between the two sides is of vital importance. Secondly, it is a problem of so called "international space" initiated by Taiwan's administration. Thirdly, it is a problem of mainland China's "military deterrence". There exists a disagreement that mainland China considers this as "military proof of China's sovereignty over Taiwan", but some people in Taiwan consider it as "military deterrence".
4. The International Society: Policy Choice on the Involving Cross-Straits Relations
- A. The peaceful development of the cross-Straits relations meet with the interests of different parties in the international society. People from both sides of the Straits look forward to peace and a stable situation across the Straits in a long term. Moreover, peace and stable cross-Straits relations, as well, meet the interests of United States, Japan, East Asian states and regions and European states. Not only mainland China and Taiwan should seize the chance in cross-Straits relations, but also the international society should seize it as a public good. U.S. President Bush stated in a public speech that he wishes for a dialogue between the two sides of the Straits after MA Ying-jeou's victory in the election. We think that this speech plays a positive role rather than a negative one.

B. The policy inclinations of some states and international organizations to Taiwan are important influential factors for the peaceful development of cross-Straits relations. When the international society notices progressive changes in the peaceful development of cross-Strait relation, they may have three kinds of reactions. Some of them are happy to see the progress. Their actions are in accordance with their words, and thus benefit the peace and stability of the cross-Straits relations. Some others might wonder about the progress. Their actions are different from their words, and thus challenge the peace and stability. Some even worry about this progress and try to postpone this progress by making disputes, and thus might disturb peace and stability.

C. The Ideal Role of European Countries in Cross-Straits Relations.

A basic principle for European countries is: European countries should do more to promote the peace and stability of cross-Straits relations, whereas they should not do anything which may harm peace and stability. This is the same to the promotion of cross-Straits (cultural, economical and political) exchange and political dialogues. Especially, European countries should be prudent in solving sensitive issues. First, there is the problem of arms sales to Taiwan. European countries should strictly regulate these actions, or these actions will not only harm cross-Straits relations, but also challenge diplomatic relations between China and the European country. Second, as for the problem of exchange visits of the higher-level officers, such exchanges should be strictly limited to the non-official level. Third, as for issues related to FTA, the “one China policy” should be strictly affirmed. Fourth, as for Taiwan’s participation in related international organizations, the participation and involvement of Taiwan should be firmly limited to the “non-sovereign-state” level. Etc.