

International Day of Peace Observed by UPF-Chinese Region

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Taipei, Taiwan—On September 21, UPF-Chinese Region and UPF-Taiwan co-organized the Cross-Strait Peace Forum in observance of the International Day of Peace 2015, whose theme for this year is “Partnerships for Peace-Dignity for All.”

Representatives of UPF and guests from the greater China region, including mainland China; Hong Kong; Macao and Taiwan were invited to participate in the forum, making it a significant step in history. Organizations devoted to cross-strait peace—such as the Cross-Strait Affairs Exchange Association, Hua Sun Art Cultural Exchange Foundation and Xuanmen Church—were invited to co-organize the forum. In total, 165 people attended the event.

UPF-Chinese Region chairman, Rev. Kuei Soung Chang, gave welcoming remarks. The president of Control Yuan, Dr. Po Ya Chang, introduced the speakers. Deng Dai, director of the Economics Department of the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) gave the keynote speech in which he spoke about SEF’s work in advancing cross-strait relations. SEF is an organization commissioned and authorized by the Republic of China (ROC) government to contact and negotiate with the People’s Republic of China (PRC) directly on matters involving the exercise of public authority. Under the authority of both the ROC and PRC governments, SEF and the Association for Relations across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS) began holding formal negotiations in 1991. The following year, both reached the “1992 Consensus” on the “only one China, but agree to differ on its definition” principle. In April 1993, leaders of both organizations convened the historic “Wang-Koo summit” in Singapore, where four agreements were signed. Both governments continued negotiating and consulting with each other according to this pattern after the summit, and a constitutionalized consulting mechanism has gradually been established.

The two-day forum was divided into three sessions: “Cross-Strait Consensus and Sustainable Peace,” which was about political issues; “Cross-Strait Economic Cooperation and the Prospects of East Asian Community,” which was about economics issues and “Cultural Identity and Religious Harmony,” which was about cultural issues.

For the session “Cross-Strait Consensus and Sustainable Peace,” deputy director of the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy, Dr. George W. Tsai, served as moderator. Dr. Tong FaYao, a researcher at Tianjin Social Sciences in China, first affirmed the cross-strait cultural link, saying that mainland China and Taiwan are as one because they share the same root and culture; there is a link between the origin of both. He also said that cross-strait unification is unshakeable in terms of Chinese culture; it is the cornerstone of long-term interactions and exchanges between both sides. He talked about the origin and essence of Chinese culture as well as offered an objective evaluation of it. Dr. Yao also stated that the status and role of Chinese culture in terms of cross-strait relations is based on history, theories and reality. Along with increasingly frequent cross-strait interaction, Chinese culture has secretly and silently influenced our perception towards unification, until we reach a consensus. The day Chinese culture is rooted on both sides, the day the reunification between the ROC and PRC will take place.

Dr. Chung-chian Teng, a distinguished professor in the Department of Diplomacy at National Chengchi University, spoke about the continuous decline of the economy of Taiwan. Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou—who is up for re-election in January 2016—plans to continue to promote the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement, based on the “1992 Consensus,” to enroll in negotiations for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). On the other hand, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) candidate, Ing-wen Tsai, has proposed the development of cross-strait relations by replacing the “1992 Consensus” with “maintaining the status quo across the Taiwan Strait.” Mainland China firmly adheres to the “1992 Consensus” as the basis of the peaceful development of cross-strait relations and has not accepted Tsai’s proposal. In order to continue to boost economic growth in Taiwan and win the 2016 presidential election, the DPP will need to come up with a better solution than President Ma’s strategy.



Next, during the second session, “Cross-Strait Economic Cooperation and the Prospects of East Asian Community,” Dr. Yen-po Tang, President of Taipei College of Maritime Technology, served as moderator. The representative from mainland China was Dr. Xiaoheng Cao, professor and the Director of the Taiwan Economic Research Institute at Nankai University. Dr. Cao pointed out that the basic strategy for cross-strait to participate “One Belt and One Road” should include the following:

1. Deepening cross-strait trade helps develop an along-the-line national market based on the theory of “One Belt and One Road.”
2. Direct investment development cross-strait helps both sides co-invest on a “One Belt and One Road” along-the-line nation.
3. Continuing to deepen cross-strait industries helps industrial collaborations reach their tentacles to international markets.
4. Institutionalization of cross-strait economic cooperation provides institutional safeguards while both are heading towards establishing a “One Belt and One Road” along-the-line nation.

Dr. Cao also pointed out that challenges to the plan for both sides to participate in the “One Belt and One Road” strategy include: First, the emergence of “populism” in Taiwan’s political environment. Second, DPP victory in the 2014 nine-in-one local elections signifies the fact that Taiwan’s cross-strait economic policy remains conservative. Third, Taiwan will face challenges due to its lack of understanding and knowledge about “One Belt and One Road” along-the-line nation. In addition to the above, Taiwan will face challenges during the process of contacting “One Belt and One Road” along-the-line nations.

In order to solve these problems, an opportunity for cross-strait cooperation in the “One Belt and One Road” strategy could begin with the following:

First, to promote cross-strait “major logistics” cooperation through “One Belt and One Road” construction projects.

Second, each should respectfully display its respective advantages and participate in the investment and management of “One Belt and One Road” along-the-line national project together.

Third, extend the division of labor of cross-strait manufacturing industries to “One Belt and One Road” along-the-line nations in order to fully upgrade the cooperation between manufacturing industries of both sides. The implementation of “One Belt and One Road” strategy lies in the full play of each side’s advantages within the cross-strait manufacturing industries, and once an opportunity is given, manufacturing industries from both sides should extend their cooperation to “One Belt and One Road” along-the-line nations, and further improve the level of cross-strait cooperation.

The next speaker, Dr. Lee-in Chen Chiu, first talked about the well-designed cross-strait trade and investment policy launched by the authority, and how to share benefits and interests generated from division of labor among cross-strait manufacturing industries with mainland China as well as to maintain industrial competence at the same time. Then, she selected and summarized some quantitative and empirical analysis in publications dating from 1995 to 2003 by the Congress of the East Asian Association of Environmental and Resource Economics, sponsored and organized by the National Institute for Research Advancement (NIRA), a think tank of the Japanese prime minister (a total of 8 books), to show how the “open East Asia Forum” reached a consensus. Documents regarding cross-strait relations in the International Journal were used to review economic and political analysis in order to confirm the views of scholars outside the region of East Asia. At the same time, Dr. Chen used the EU and Asia KLMES model to analyze sub-national and sub-industrial advantages and disadvantages in terms of total productivity and added value ratio (or portion).



In conclusion, Dr. Chen suggested the idea of economic integration in the region of East Asia, saying that Japan, Taiwan and South Korea should combine with Europe and America to provide the flow of capital services (however, the infrastructure should be led by the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which was founded by the government of China) while China and ASEAN Member States provide the flow of labor service. This way, everyone could extend the cross-strait experience and further accomplish the vision of horizontal or vertical labor division.

Dr. Hsiao-hung “Nancy” Chen, an emeritus Professor at National Chengchi University, gave remarkable comments: According to Dr. Nancy Chen’s observation, due to the implementation of planned economy in China, the central government dominates local developments, and even though there had been many dialogues between market power and planned economy in the past 30 years, plus the financial crisis of 2008, there is a lot of pressure because mistakes are not allowed in economics, and as a result, planned economy turns out to be more aggressive. According to Dr. Nancy Chen’s analysis, due to changes in the international economy in recent years, both sides have encountered great challenges. In her opinion, the Taiwan government has not put enough effort into studying how China’s policy and economic plans could impact and affect Taiwan: thus we are now in a difficult situation. Taiwan should focus on this topic in order to have a full grasp of each other’s advantages and disadvantages. She also mentioned that college students in Taiwan are not every interested in China; therefore, colleges and universities should establish schools and departments focusing on China in order to help students cope with changes in the future.

The third session was titled “Cultural Identity and Religious Harmony.” Dr. King-Yuh Chang, the former Minister of Mainland Affairs Council, Executive Yuan, Taiwan, served as moderator. Dr. Chang previously held the posts of Minister of Government Information Office, Director of International

Relations Center at National Chengchi University, the Principal of National Chengchi University, and National Policy Advisor to the President.

The first presenter was Dr. An-Wu Lin, professor at Tzu Chi University Institute of Religion and Humanity and founder of Yuanheng Institute. He spoke of “diversity and unification” based on “the Chinese Orthodoxy,” “the Cultural China,” and cross-strait peace. He used “Comparisons and reflections of the Cultural China, the Political China, and the Economic China” to point out a possible dimension in the future, “diversity and unification” in terms of the concept and interpretation of “the Cultural China.” Dr. Lin pointed out that “the Economic China” is a “functional string of the relationship” because its existence cannot remain stable by itself alone, but an actual body must be behind it. “The Political China” is indeed a “contrast of quasi-entity,” in other words, the fact of existence exists, but it has not yet managed to achieve the level of “reasoning.” The existential situation is not permanent, and this problem must be solved. Only the “real existence of entity” can ease the tension and uncertainty caused by the imbalance, namely the real existence of the “Cultural China.” Finally, Dr. Lin pointed out that the pattern of “duality and mutuality” has already been formed; both sides can be unified under such “real existence of entity.” The duality and mutuality will lead China towards “Yin and Yang Harmony” and “Co-establishment of Heaven and Earth.” Therefore, the “Cultural China” and the “Political China” could head towards a diverse and unified China in terms of “duality and mutuality.”

The second presenter in this session was Dr. Nicholas Louis Chan, an assistant professor in the Department of Chinese Language and Literature at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. In his presentation entitled “Jingwah is no longer the old Jingwah, needless to ask Tanglin about planting melons – An image of hometown from Pu Ru and Pu Giye’s poetry,” he conducted an analysis and comparison of how royal and aristocratic members during the Qing Dynasty looked at the Chinese cultures using poems written by Pu Ru and Pu Giye. Dr. Chan’s humorous and insightful speech received an enthusiastic response from the audience.

Last but not least, Dr. JiazengLi, professor and executive director of the Research Center of Social and Economic Development of Macao at the City University of Macao and director of the Institute of Cultural Industry of Macao, spoke on the topic “To Promote Reunification across the Taiwan Strait via Cultural Identity,” pointing out that the cultures of mainland China and Taiwan share the same root; both are known as Chinese culture. However, the 1949 separation caused by political factors has led to changes and difference across the Taiwan Strait. Changes in Chinese culture began with the written word, which has already had a negative effect and has exposed a number of shortcomings. The key to overcoming such changes lies in cultural identity; in other words, we must recognize the essence of our nation. Governments and people of both sides can start by promoting Chinese art, imparting Chinese moral philosophy, determining the appropriate uses of simplified and traditional Chinese characters, and promoting all-around cultural interactions, etc. We should spare no effort to achieve ultimate reunification and restoration of China via cultural identity.

The forum ended successfully with warm applause and best wishes. We are looking forward to meeting again at the next forum!

