

## Appendix 178 -- MAC Press Release on NUC II

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Mainland Affairs Council—Press Release on NUC March 14, 2006, No. 023

The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) issued the following statement today (March 14, 2006) in response to inappropriate announcements made by the Chinese authorities:

The Republic of China (ROC) is a sovereign independent country and its sovereignty belongs to the 23 million Taiwanese people. Only the 23 million Taiwanese people have the right to make the final decision on the country's future. The ROC and the People's Republic of China (PRC) both exist, and have no jurisdiction over each other.

This has long been the status quo in the Taiwan Strait. No country, including the PRC, has the right to change or deny the status quo.

Despite strong public opposition in Taiwan, as well as skepticism, concern and criticism from the international community, China has continued to strengthen its military deployment against Taiwan. Moreover, a year ago today, the Chinese authorities deliberately passed the so-called "anti-separation law (ASL)" in an attempt to unilaterally change the status quo. These actions have already sabotaged cross-strait relations and threatened peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.

Based on its firm adherence to the important principles of "safeguarding democracy" and "maintaining the status quo," the Taiwanese government has decided to cease the function of the National Unification Council (NUC) and cease the application of the National Unification Guidelines (NUG). These actions do not involve any change to the status quo in the Strait. The government not only respects the freewill choice of the 23 million Taiwanese people, but also insists that no country or party may set preconditions or ultimate objectives for the Taiwanese people's free choice. The Chinese authorities' malicious criticisms of President Chen have only shown a complete ignorance of the mainstream Taiwanese public opinion.

The promotion of constitutional reengineering projects in Taiwan is aimed at conforming to democratic mechanisms and processes and adhering to the spirit of "bottom to top," "outside to inside," and "civic sector to political parties." Any issue of sovereignty that strays from these procedures will be disregarded. This action is aimed at establishing mechanisms for deepening democracy in the ROC. Since the PRC does not dare to put democratic systems into practice, it is unqualified to question and criticize Taiwan's actions.

Today, the Chinese authorities have attempted again to irrationally impose its unilaterally defined "one China" framework upon the Taiwanese people. It has also resorted to use of intimidation against Taiwan, which fully expose an impertinent attitude that clearly lacks democratic understanding.

The key to resolving the cross-strait issue lies not in diplomatic or military competition, but in

the insistence of a democratic and peaceful approach to resolve disputes between the two sides. China faces serious problems of urban-rural disparity, rich-poor inequality and manifold social contradictions and conflicts. We urge the Chinese authorities to pay close attention to the political legitimacy and legality of its regime. In addition, we remind the Chinese authorities to fully understand that in order to effectively solve its internal problems, China must thoroughly implement democratization. Only under such circumstance will China have a healthy judgement and attitude and the ability to accurately understand the democratic development in Taiwan and other countries in the world.

The MAC reiterates that the cross-strait issue must be resolved through peaceful means. To this end, we appeal to the Chinese authorities on the following:

1. To renounce the policy of resolving the cross-strait issue through force, to immediately terminate the application of the ASL, and to peacefully coexist with Taiwan;
2. To renounce the fictitious "one China" principle, to promptly engage in official negotiations with the Taiwanese government, and to seek an approach to peacefully resolve cross-strait disputes; and
3. To promptly implement political reforms and return freedom and democracy to the Chinese people.