

## **Appendix 78 -- President Lee Tenghui Address to the National Unification Council (1995)**

April 8, 1995

Vice Chairmen, Council Members, and Members of the Research Committee:

We gather here today for the first meeting of the National Unification Council after its recent reshuffle. We have listened to the reports presented by the Mainland Affairs Council and by the National Security Bureau, followed by full and animated discussions. I attach great importance to all of your views given out of deep concern for the issue of national unification, and I will refer them to the relevant agencies for further study. I thank you very much for your valuable contributions.

In my inaugural speech made on May 20, 1990 as I was sworn in as the eighth-term President of the Republic of China, I noted expressly that "at this time when all of humanity longs for peace and is pursuing conciliation, all Chinese should work together to seek peaceful and democratic means to achieve our common goal of national unification." Then, on October 7 of the same year, the National Unification Council (NUC) was established, as I pointed out on that day, "to pool our collective wisdom and make the best of our individual talents, so that we may take positive and pragmatic steps, keep abreast of the trend of public opinion and guide the course of cross-Straits relations for the purpose of realizing national unification at an early date." On February 23, 1991, the NUC passed the Guidelines for National Unification, which sets forth the Republic of China's conviction and the process for pursuing freedom, democracy, equitable distribution of wealth and, ultimately, national unification. Moreover, on April 30 of the same year, I announced the termination of the Period of National Mobilization for Suppression of the Communist Rebellion, which was a further demonstration of our sincere dedication to paving the way for peaceful unification.

The Guidelines for National Unification sets out four guiding principles in our pursuit of national unification.

The first three are:

1. Both the mainland and Taiwan areas are parts of Chinese territory. Helping to bring about national unification should be the common responsibility of all Chinese people.
2. The unification of China should be for the welfare of all its people and not be subject to partisan conflict.
3. China's unification should aim at promoting Chinese culture, safeguarding human dignity, guaranteeing fundamental human rights, and practicing democracy and the rule of law. I am certain that all Chinese, including those responsible political parties on both sides of the Straits, could not disagree with any of these three principles.

However, in light of the big gap in development between the two sides of the Straits as a result of different systems and conditions that have existed for more than forty years, we added a fourth principle to the Guidelines, to indicate our responsibility for the 21 million Chinese living on Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu and to ensure that the most valuable Taiwan experience is preserved for the benefit of the Chinese people as a whole. The fourth principle

reads: "China should be unified at such a time and in such a manner that the rights and interests of the people in the Taiwan area are respected and their security and welfare protected. Unification should be achieved in gradual phases on the principles of reason, peace, parity, and reciprocity."

The past several years have witnessed increased people-to-people contacts and exchanges between both sides of the Taiwan Straits. People on both sides are bridging the long span of separation and gradually furthering mutual understanding. By the same token, the April 1993 talks between Koo Chen-fu, chairman of our Straits Exchange Foundation, and Wang Taohan, chairman of the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits of the mainland, and other talks between the two organizations on matters of a technical, functional or procedural nature, mark the advent of an era of consultation between the two sides. Indeed, the growing cross-Straits relations have started a cherished historical process for uniting the Chinese people. Regrettably, so far the mainland Chinese authorities still refuse to face the reality that the government of the Republic of China has been in existence for 84 years and that it exercises sovereign authority and effective jurisdiction over Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu; and they snub us at every turn, keeping us from our rightful place in the world forum and the development of our international relations, thus seriously impeding the pace of peaceful unification.

Admittedly, the hostility and misunderstanding accumulated between the two sides over more than forty years of separation and confrontation are not likely to simply disappear overnight. However, in the face of a new situation, both sides must adopt a fresh outlook, take a pragmatic approach, and foster genuine harmony before a favorable climate can be created for the unification of China. In view of the cross-Straits situation at the current stage, we therefore set forth the following position in the hope of normalizing bilateral relations:

1. Pursue China's unification based on the reality that the two sides are governed respectively by two governments:

The fact that the Chinese mainland and Taiwan have been ruled by two political entities in no way subordinate to each other had led to a state of division between the two sides and separate governmental jurisdictions, hence the issue of national unification. Therefore, to facilitate national unification, we have to be realistic and recognize the historical fact that China is currently divided so that we may search for a feasible means to unify our nation. Only by facing up to this reality can both sides build greater consensus on the "one China" issue and at the earliest possible date.

2. Strengthen bilateral exchanges based on Chinese culture:

Chinese culture, known for its comprehensiveness and profundity, has been the pride and spiritual support of all Chinese. In Taiwan, we have long taken upon ourselves the responsibility for safeguarding and furthering traditional Chinese culture, and advocate that culture be the basis for exchanges between both sides to help promote the nationalistic sentiment for living together in prosperity and to foster a strong sense of brotherliness. In the immense field of cultural activities, both sides should improve the breadth and depth of various exchange programs, and further advance media, academic, scientific, and sports exchanges and cooperation.

3. Enhance trade and economic relations to develop a mutually beneficial and complementary relationship:

In the face of the global trend of economic development, Chinese on both sides must complement each other's efforts and share their experience. In this connection, Taiwan should make the mainland its economic hinterland, while the mainland should use Taiwan as a model of development. We are willing to provide our technical know-how and development experience to help improve agriculture and the life of farmers on the mainland. Meanwhile, we will continue to assist the mainland in developing its economy and upgrading the living standards of its people based upon our existing investments and trade relations. As for trade and transportation links with the mainland, the agencies concerned have to make in-depth evaluations as well as careful plans since these are very complicated issues. When the time and the conditions are right, representatives from both sides can meet to exchange views on, and gain a thorough understanding of, all the related issues.

4. Ensure that both sides join international organizations on an equal footing and that leaders on both sides meet in a natural setting:

I have indicated on several occasions that if leaders on both sides could meet with each other on international occasions in a natural manner, this would alleviate the political confrontation between both sides and foster a harmonious atmosphere for developing future relations. At present, both Taiwan and the mainland are members of several important international economic and sports organizations. If leaders of both sides were able to meet each other very naturally when attending meetings of these organizations, this would assuredly help dispel enmity between the two sides, nurture trust, and lay the groundwork for cooperation through consultation in the future. It is our firm belief that the more international organizations both sides join on an equal footing, the more favorable the environment will become for the growth of bilateral relations and for the process of peaceful unification. By doing so, both sides can also show to the world that the Chinese on both sides can surmount their political divergences to work hand in hand for the good of the international community and usher in a new era of pride for the Chinese people.

5. Adhere to the principle of resolving all disputes by peaceful means:

We believe that Chinese people should be sincere with each other and should never again resort to killing each other. We can not bear to see any further suffering in civil wars, and sincerely hope that both sides will soon turn their swords into ploughshares. Therefore, in 1991 I terminated the Period of National Mobilization for Suppression of the Communist Rebellion, publicly recognized the fact of the temporary division of China, and declared that Taiwan would renounce the use of force against the mainland. It is indeed a matter for regret that the mainland authorities for their part over the past four years have refused to renounce the use of force against Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu, so a state of hostility remains between the two sides. We believe the mainland authorities should demonstrate their goodwill by publicly renouncing the use of force and refrain from making any military move that might arouse anxiety or suspicion on this side of the Taiwan Straits, thus paving the way for formal negotiations between both sides to put an end to the state of hostility. I would like to emphasize that using "Taiwan independence" or "foreign interference" as an excuse for refusing to give up using military force against Taiwan will fully ignore and misconstrues the

nation-building spirit and policy of the Republic of China. This only deepens mutual suspicion and dampens mutual trust. It is necessary for both sides to work together sincerely to foster the right conditions for holding formal cross-Straits talks to end the state of hostility. On our part, the pertinent government agencies will carefully study and make plans concerning issues connected with ending the hostility.

After the Chinese Communists publicly state their decision to renounce the use of force against Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu, we are ready to enter into preparatory consultations at an opportune time on how to hold formal negotiations to end hostility.

6. Jointly safeguard prosperity and promote democracy in Hong Kong and Macau:  
Hong Kong and Macau are integral parts of the Chinese nation and the Chinese residents there are our brothers and sisters. Post-1997 Hong Kong and post-1999 Macau are naturally a matter of great concern to us. In this regard, the ROC government has reiterated its determination to maintain normal contact with Hong Kong and Macau, further participate in affairs related to Hong Kong and Macau, and provide better services to our compatriots there. Continued prosperity and life under freedom and democracy are the common aspiration of the people of Hong Kong and Macau; they are also a major concern of Chinese around the world as well as all countries. What is more important, they are a responsibility both Taiwan and the mainland cannot shirk. We hope the mainland authorities would respond positively to the calls of the Hong Kong and Macau residents in this regard so that both sides may work in unison with them to plan for continued prosperity and stability in these two areas.

For about a century, China has gone through numerous difficulties and tribulations, but has yet to become a free, affluent, and modern society throughout its whole territory. Fifty years ago, we won the War of Resistance against Japan. This victory ended foreign invasion and brought hope for a bright future. But soon the country was divided into two parts. For the past forty-odd years, the Republic of China, in compliance with Dr. Sun Yat-sen's teachings, has been making every effort to improve the livelihood of her people and has thus built up the "Taiwan experience" acclaimed worldwide. In recent years, we have carried out constitutional reform to realize the democratic concept of putting sovereign power in the hands of our people. All these efforts are aimed at laying the groundwork for a better future for the Chinese nation. In spite of the longtime separation, we have very much cherished the brotherly ties that bind Chinese on the two sides and always have great concern for the welfare of all the Chinese. In future, with our deep love and concern for our compatriots on the mainland, we will continue to commit ourselves to assisting in further development on the mainland in a stable environment. We sincerely hope the mainland will become increasingly prosperous and more democratic so that our 1.2 billion compatriots there can lead a free and affluent life. It is my firm belief that the most direct and effective contribution the two sides can make to the entire Chinese nation at this time when the international situation is more and more relaxed is for them to respectively develop democracy and their economic systems through engaging in peaceful competition. By doing so, both sides will not only be able to reach a genuine solution for China's unification, but also enable the Chinese people to take pride in themselves on the world stage. This is the essence of Dr. Sun's Principle of Nationalism; it is a responsibility leaders on both sides can never shy away from as they face the 21st century.