



News

About China

One Home

Key Documents

Home | [One-China Principle](#)

- [One-China Principle](#)
- [One Country Two Systems](#)
- [International Agreements](#)
- [White Papers on the Taiwan Question](#)
- [Gov's Position on the Taiwan Question](#)
- [Origin of the Taiwan Question](#)
- [Anti-Secession Law](#)
- [Important Speeches & Documents](#)

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One-China Principle

International

Agreements

One Country Two

Systems

Anti-Secession Law

White Papers on the

Taiwan Question

Gov's Position on the

Taiwan Question

Origin of the Taiwan

Question

Important Speeches

& Documents

首页-英文频道-One-China principle-Important Speeches & Documents-Jiang

Jiang Urges Resumption of Straits Dialogue

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Top Chinese leader Jiang Zemin Friday urged Taiwan authorities to recognize the one-China principle to reopen cross-Straits dialogue as soon as possible for eventual peaceful reunification of the country as early as possible.

That position remains the mainland's consistent policy, said Jiang in a group discussion with native Taiwanese deputies in the ongoing Fifth Session of the Ninth National People's Congress (NPC).

Jiang said Taiwan authorities are urged to accept the fact that both sides of the Straits belong to one country, and the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity are inseparable.

Jiang said he made public that point two years ago, and the policy remains unchanged that dialogue and negotiations between the two sides can be resumed either in Taiwan or in the mainland.

Jiang called on both sides to work together and seize the opportunity from their membership into the World Trade Organization to realize direct exchange of trade, air routes and shipping and postal services.

He said it is universally acknowledged that there is only one China in the world, and Taiwan is part of China, and the mainland will follow the basic line of "peaceful reunification and 'one country, two systems'" for the overall interests of the Chinese nation.

After reviewing briefly the achievements China has made during the past two decades, Jiang said the Chinese Government and people are determined and capable of solving the Taiwan question at an early date and complete the task of reuniting the motherland.

He warned that "Taiwan Independence" will naturally incur disaster.

Jiang also said, at an NPC discussion Friday, that the central authorities will continue to support and help the vast western region seek fast development.

Jiang said the central authorities are taking powerful measures to push forward the implementation of developing the western region, and that the western region should seize the opportunity to boost economic restructuring, foster specialty and advantageous industries, strengthen infrastructure and ecological construction, and open wider to the outside world. Jiang spoke to deputies from the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, a Muslim-inhabited region in Northwest China.

He stressed it is imperative to carry out the Party's policies on nationalities and religion to unite people of all nationalities.

He called on officials at all levels to do solid work in the interest of the broad masses of people in the western region.

(Xinhua News Agency March 10, 2002)

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