

Auseinanderfallens der Arbeitsmärkte und wirtschaftlicher Urbanisierung einbezogen waren. Ferner galt der Austausch den Fragen verbesserten Austausches zwischen Wissenschaft und Entwicklungspraxis, aber auch zwischen Fachleuten unterschiedlicher regionaler Schwerpunkte. Strukturell-organisatorisch wurde über Möglichkeiten verbesserten Informationsflusses zwischen den TeilnehmerInnen, über gewisse Institutionalisierung und eine geplante Tagung zum Thema "Geographische Stadtforschung in Entwicklungsländern" mit möglichem Schwerpunkt auf "Wohnen", "Akteure der Stadtgestaltung" oder "Globalisierung und Stadtentwicklung" beraten.

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## **Perspectives on Cross-Straits Relations: Views from Europe International Conference**

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Taiwanese scholars and politicians have been studying European integration experiences for some time. The idea to have an international conference, especially on European views on cross-straits relations, was born two years ago in talks between Taiwanese representatives with the Institute of Asian Affairs, IFA, Hamburg. The conference was organized by the Institute of International Relations, IIR, Taipei. As Prof. Bih-jaw Lin (Vice-President, National Chengchi University, and Director, IIR) explained in his inaugural speech, the EU's integration process, especially German re-unification, has been analyzed quite substantially in Taiwan in order to draw conclusions for shaping and reshaping its own policy for the future. To do this, the IIR had already organized a series conferences as well as single projects like this conference.

Following the intention of the co-organizing institutions, the IIR and the IFA, all the papers were presented by European scholars (coming from Germany, the UK, France, Poland, and Russia), while the discussants came from Asia, mostly from Taiwan, but also from Hong Kong, Macao, Singapore, and South Korea. Unfortunately, for various reasons, scholars from the PRC could not participate.

When this conference was conceived, Beijing had not yet stopped cross-strait contacts because of the forthcoming elections and Taipei was not pushing its plan of having a "defensive referendum" in order to show the Taiwanese people's disapproval of the mainland's missiles pointing at the island. By the time the scholars met in the IIR, tensions between the two sides had sharpened. Many people in Taiwan assert the island is not only a separate political entity, but an independent sovereign country. Taiwan challenges the "One China" principle continuously, and there is no consensus on how far the government could go testing China's limits as well as those of the USA in its support to Taiwan.

To nobody's surprise, the question of sovereignty ran through all the discussions. Another reoccurring theme was the debate over national identity. Until the end of the final discussion, it remained unclear how to strike an appropriate balance between "sovereignty" and "identity" and how to handle cross-strait relations. The whole conference, especially the final 'general discussion' in which young students

of the IIR also participated, made very clear that the relationship with China is an overwhelming day-to-day issue in Taiwan. On the island, all political, social and economic questions are closely related to national questions and emotions run high. The fact that in Taiwan academic analysis and political programs are closely entwined was obvious from the beginning of this conference when discussants presented standpoints of the one or other party instead of commenting on the papers. Luncheon speeches were also held by representatives of the 'blue camp' (Kuomintang/KMT and People First Party) as well as the 'green camp' (Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan Solidarity Union) who explained their strategies for the electoral campaigns, which were then just underway.

The papers dealt with several of the above mentioned issues. Prof. Steve Tsang (Oxford University) put "Chinese Unity and the Relations between Taiwan and Mainland China in Historical Context". Unity as a prevailing pattern, he concluded, does not resemble reality. Typically Chinese history is one of division. Prof. Jean-Pierre Cabestan (French National Centre for Scientific Research, CNRS, Paris) analyzed the "Cross-Straits Tensions and Their Impact on Taiwan's Domestic Policy". By threatening Taiwan, the PRC helped to perpetuate the unification-independence axis on Taiwan and forced every political party to move towards the center. Dr. Hans-Wilm Schuette (IFA, Hamburg) discussed "Political Culture and National Identity in Cross-Straits relations": If Taiwan wanted to survive both as a state and as a democracy the government, it has to put the question of national identity to the top of the agenda. Prof. Gunter Schubert (University Tuebingen) analyzed "Similarities of and Differences between the KMT and DPP Mainland Policy Approaches" concerning "'One China' or 'One China, One Taiwan'". He predicted, if the KMT won the election, it would be in a much more difficult situation as the DPP government to face the Beijing authorities who require them to implement the "One China" principle.

Three of the papers touched the international dimension of cross-straits relations. Dr. J.V. Brisset (Research Director, Institute of International Relations and Strategy, IRIS, Paris) explained "The Impact of US, EU and Japan's Interests on Cross-Straits Relations and the Future Development of Taiwan's International Status". For most of the Western actors and Japan, it is important to enhance the international status of Taiwan without risking a clash with the mainland. Prof. Michael Karpov (University of Moscow) focused on "Current Russian Perception of the Cross-Straits Relations. Can Moscow Change It's Stance?". Russia views cross-strait relations as an international problem and proceeds from the belief that an open military conflict is undesirable and in fact very unlikely to happen. And Prof. Karin Tomala (Academy of Social Sciences, Poland) described the development of "Poland and Cross-Straits Relations after the End of the Cold War – with Special Regard to Taiwan". Even though Poland supports the democratic development on Taiwan, it does not recognize it as an independent state and follows the "One China" principle.

Dr. Margot Schueller (IFA, Hamburg) dealt with "Cross-Straits Economic Interaction: The Role of the Business Community as a Driving Force for Bilateral Economic Relations". Despite the often hostile political environment, cross-strait economic interaction saw a rapid development during the 90s. Without being a truly

globalized place, Taiwan will not achieve its goal of becoming a regional operation center. And Dr. Guenter Schucher (Shu Junde, IFA, Hamburg) analyzed "The Importance of "Low Politics" for the Future Development of Cross-Strait Relations". Both Chinese governments should do away with restrictions and actively promote economic, cultural and social exchange in order to "buy time for compromise".

Looking at future developments, Prof. Gottfried Karl Kindermann (University Munich) draw some conclusions from "Cases of Successful Rapprochement and Integration" and designed "a Roadmap to Cross-Strait Rapprochement" whereas Dr. Hermann Halbeisen (University Cologne) described the implications of a "Continuation of the Status Quo". Although Taiwan will be able to enhance its international position through increasing membership in international organizations, there will be little progress in the core area of the status quo, the "One China" principle.

The papers were discussed by some quite well known Taiwanese scholars like Prof. Chih-cheng Lo (Department of Political Science, Soochow University, Taipei), Prof. Wen-hsien Chen (IIR, Taipei), Dr. I Yuan (IIR, Taipei), Prof. Yang-shan Chou (Director, Sun Yat-Sen Graduate Institute, Chinese Culture University, Taipei), Prof. Yung Wei (Shih Hsin University, Taipei), Prof. Keng Shu (IIR, Taipei), Prof. Kao-chen Wang (Director, Graduate Institute of International Affairs and Strategic Studies, Tamkang University, Taipei), Dr. John Young-pei Chang (Director, Taiwan Research Institute, Taipei), Dr. Francis Yi-hua Kan (IIR, Taipei) and Prof. Da-hua Mo (Graduate Institute of Political Science, Fu Hsing Kang College, Taipei).

Other discussants came from Singapore (Prof. Chien-peng Chung, Nanyang Technological University), Hong Kong (Prof. S.H. Lo, University of Hong Kong), Macao (Prof. Zhen-hai Qiu and Prof. Zhi-dong Hao, both from the University of Macao), and South Korea (Prof. Byung-joon Ahn, Visiting Professor of International Relations, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, Tokyo).

Among the chairpersons were scholars like Prof. Deng-ker Leem (Dean, College of International Affairs, NCCU, Taipei) and Prof. Chu-cheng Ming (Department and Graduate Institute of Political Science, National Taiwan University, Taipei) as well as those who currently act or used to act as political advisors like Prof. Ming-tung Chen (Vice-Chairperson, Mainland Affairs Council) and Prof. Chi Su (Institute of China Research, Tamkang University, Taipei).

After the conference ended, the foreign participants had the opportunity to meet some political leaders like former president Lee Tenghui, acting General Secretary of the Strait Exchange Foundation, and the Chairwoman of the Mainland Affairs Council, Tsai Ing-wen. Frank discussions with them underscored how different the views are on the status quo. For the Taiwanese politicians, the status quo is a democratically governed Taiwan that is already a "sovereign, independent country" – a stance Beijing certainly does not agree with. For the European scholars, the status quo is, most of all, the continuation of peace across the strait.

Günter Schucher