

### Ill-gotten asset panel to 'settle' accounts: Koo

Written by Taipei Times

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Committee of Illegal Party Asset Settlement Chairman Wellington Koo (辜振甫) yesterday said the organization would return the ill-gotten assets obtained by the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) during its authoritarian rule to their rightful owners.

During a plaque unveiling ceremony in Taipei, Premier Lin Chuan (林揆) presented Koo with a seal and an appointment order, officially launching the committee.

"Some say we are attempting to settle accounts [with the KMT]. Indeed, we are settling an account with a political party that used its power and privilege, unavailable to ordinary organizations, to illegally acquire assets during its party-state rule," Koo said.

"Settlement" entails understanding the injustice of the KMT's use of state apparatuses to acquire properties, compensating victims and the nation and making the truth known to the world, Koo said.

"The handling of ill-gotten party assets is not made up or a historical issue. It is an overdue task left unfinished from the nation's transition from an authoritarian regime to a democracy," he said.

No one, including historians or experts, knows how much property the KMT collected and disposed of since its authoritarian rule, he added.

Koo said the committee would follow legal procedures to deal with illegal party assets, but added that a timetable for the organization's work could not be immediately proposed.

Lin said that handling illegal party assets is necessary for the nation to understand its past and transition toward a mature democracy, adding that assets the committee recognizes as illegally acquired should be returned to their original owners or the state.

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"Next year will be the 30th anniversary of the lifting of martial law. The nation's democracy is still growing, and it is necessary to remove all obstacles impeding its achievement of a full-fledged democracy," Lin said.

To ensure a level playing field, Germany in 1990 established a committee to review the assets of political parties and organizations active in East Germany during the Cold War, which did not complete its task until 2006, Lin said.

Germany's experience shows that it requires a prolonged effort to push reform and transition, he added.

In response to a reporter's question regarding the eligibility of committee member Lo Cheng-tsung (羅成宗), who was sentenced to six months in prison for contravening the Copyright Act (著作權法), an apparently enraged Koo said the Act Governing the Handling of Ill-gotten Properties by Political Parties and Their Affiliate Organizations (政黨及其附屬組織不當取得財產處理條例) does not disqualify people with a criminal record from being members of the committee.

Koo was also asked whether his Democratic Progressive Party membership would affect the committee's objectivity, but he did not give a definitive answer, saying he did not understand the question.

He later said we would be happy to welcome KMT members to apply for positions on the committee.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2016/09/01](#)