

Annette Lu blasts Obama for calling Taiwan 'entity'

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From third left, Northern Taiwan Society chairman Chang Yeh-sen, former vice president Annette Lu and Eastern Taiwan Society vice president Winston Yu chant slogans at a news conference at the National Taiwan University Alumni Hall in Taipei yesterday.

□ **Photo: Liao Chen-huei, Taipei Times**

Former vice president Annette Lu (呂秀蓮) and pro-independence activists yesterday protested against US President Barack Obama after he described Taiwan as an “entity,” reiterating Taiwan’s statehood after a discussion about the nation’s image in mainstream US politics.

“Taiwan is an independent state, not an entity,” Lu said, referring to Obama’s description of Taiwan, adding that Taiwanese are willing to maintain the cross-strait “status quo.”

During the end-of-year White House news conference on Friday last week, the US president said that “China views Taiwan as part of China, but recognizes that it has to approach Taiwan as an entity that has its own ways of doing things.”

“Taiwanese have agreed that as long as they’re able to continue to function with some degree of autonomy, that they won’t charge forward and declare independence,” he said.

Criticizing Obama’s definition of Taiwan, Lu said Taiwan is not an entity affiliated with China, but an independent state.

In a letter addressed to Obama, Lu wrote that Taiwan, ceded to Japan by the Qing Dynasty, has shaped its statehood and held its first popular presidential election in 1996, while Taiwan-US relations are “special state-to-state relations,” as the US is bound by the Taiwan Relations Act to interact with Taipei.

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Taiwanese do not challenge the “one China” principle, but that does not contradict that Taiwan exists as a sovereign state independent of China, the letter said.

Lu and members of the Taiwan Society, the Taiwan United Nations Alliance, World United Formosans for Independence and the 908 Taiwan Republic Campaign signed copies of the letter, which is to be mailed to the American Institute in Taiwan as part of their protest campaign.

They urged the incoming administration of US president-elect Donald Trump to review Taiwan-US relations and recognize Taiwan as a nation.

Meanwhile, praising President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) for refusing to acknowledge the so-called “1992 consensus,” Lu urged the government to build a new consensus between the Democratic Progressive Party administration and the Chinese government.

The “1992 consensus” refers to a tacit understanding between the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) and the Chinese Communist Party that both sides of the Taiwan Strait acknowledge there is “one China,” with each side having its own interpretation of what “China” means. Former Mainland Affairs Council chairman Su Chi (蘇起) in 2006 admitted that he made up the term in 2000.

“How is the president elected this year bound by a ‘consensus’ from 1992? Tsai has to seek national unity and negotiate with China to create a ‘2017 consensus,’” Lu said.

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