

KMT's China talks must be probed

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Former Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) chairwoman Hung Hsiu-chu (洪秀柱) has been racking up a lot of air miles in the past few months, shuttling between Taiwan and Chinese cities to participate in secretive talks with Chinese officials.

The latest confab took place on July 4, with Hung leading a delegation to a “cross-strait forum” in Tianjin, which was held behind closed doors with China’s Taiwan Affairs Office Minister Liu Jieyi (劉結一) and other Chinese officials.

These shadowy meetings are no laughing matter: Far from innocent talks, they are negotiations designed to circumvent Taiwan’s democratically elected government. Their purpose is clearly to hammer out a Taiwanese version of Hong Kong’s “one country, two systems” model, which Chinese President Xi Jinping (習近平) has been attempting to impose on Taiwan since he introduced the idea in a speech on Jan. 2.

After meeting with Hung, Liu said that his office had reached an agreement with the delegation on several matters, including “a common opposition to Taiwanese independence separatism, and joining forces to make progress toward peaceful unification with the motherland.”

Touching down at Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport on July 5, Hung told reporters: “Taiwan’s future direction is toward unification, as laid out in the Constitution ... many people have placed a red hat on my head [accused me of being pro-communist] — that is fine, I must tell the truth.”

This is quite a U-turn for Chiang Kai-shek’s (蔣介石) “anti-communist” party.

Chiang once said: “Negotiating peace with Communist bandits is like asking a tiger for its skin,” while his son former president Chiang Ching-kuo (蔣經國) was equally intransigent and insisted that a compromise between the “nationalists and communists” will never come to pass.

With the lifting of martial law in 1987, the party’s long-standing policy of “no contact, no

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compromise, no negotiation" with China began to crumble.

In 1992, the Straits Exchange Foundation held a historic meeting with China's Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits in British-ruled Hong Kong, during which something that was later called the "1992 consensus" was supposedly cooked up.

The opaque nature of the meeting set the tone for a succession of cloak-and-dagger liaisons between members of the KMT, its pan-blue camp allies and the Chinese Communist Party during former president Chen Shui-bian's (陳水扁) tenure, during which they sought to undermine Chen's government by conducting a form of parallel diplomacy with Beijing.

Today's plethora of symposiums, talks and forums is simply a continuation of the KMT's long-standing record of duplicity and treachery in the post-Chiang era.

Last month, the Mainland Affairs Council for the first time raised the prospect of taking legal action against delegations such as Hung's under the Act Governing Relations Between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area (兩岸人民關係條例) and the Civil Associations Act (民間團體法), saying that any political party found to have contravened the law could be broken up under the Political Parties Act (政黨法).

With the KMT yesterday selecting pro-China Kaohsiung Mayor Han Kuo-yu (韓國瑜) — who himself held a closed-door meeting with Chinese officials in Hong Kong in March — as its candidate for next year's presidential election, the government must not shy away from taking a tough line against politicians suspected of colluding with the Xi regime.

After all, China is not just any country: Its military and its politicians are committed to the destruction of democratic Taiwan through the manipulation of its open society and its democratic freedoms. It is time the government used every means at its disposal to put an end to the KMT's treachery.

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