

President Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九) would not address the two sides of Taiwan Strait as “two nations” in describing cross-strait relations, the Presidential Office said yesterday.

“According to the Constitution, the Republic of China [ROC] is a sovereign nation, and mainland China is an ‘area’ under the structure of the ROC Constitution,” -Presidential Office Spokesman Wang Yu-chi (王郁琦) said.

“We do not recognize the Chinese communist authorities’ sovereignty. We only hold a non-denial attitude toward its existence in the ‘Mainland area,’” Wang said.

Wang made the remarks in response to a report by the Chinese-language Liberty Times (the Taipei Times’ sister paper) about changes made by the -Presidential Office to Ma’s wording after a meeting with US Representative James Sensenbrenner Jr on Wednesday.

Meeting the US congressman in the Presidential Office, Ma discussed the government’s signing of an economic cooperation framework agreement (ECFA) with China and called on the US Congress to support Taiwan’s efforts to sign a bilateral extradition agreement with the US.

A press release the Presidential Office issued to media at about 12pm on Wednesday quoted Ma as saying that his administration expected the signing of an ECFA to “institutionalize the more than NT\$100 billion [US\$3.1 billion] trade volume between the two nations.”

In a press release on the Presidential Office Web site later in the day, however, the term “two nations” was replaced with “two sides.”

Wang said the phrase had been used by “mistake” by a new -employee and that the Presidential Office made the correction -immediately after discovering the mistake. The president would not make such a mistake, he said.

Wang said the term used by the government reflected the “status quo” across the Taiwan Strait under the Constitution and that such a constitutional structure was revised by former president Lee Teng-hui (李登輝) and followed by the Democratic Progressive Party government.

“It also reflects the political reality of the Strait. [The description] shows no signs of weakness. Instead, it highlights the sovereignty of the ROC,” Wang said.

Source: [Taipei Times 2010/02/19](#)