

Taipei confirms 'secret' channels

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The Presidential Office yesterday confirmed that Taipei and Beijing have been using unofficial communication channels, adding that all matters concerning the exercise of public power must be handled by quasi-official conduits and supervised by the legislature.

Presidential Office Spokesman Lo Chih-chiang (洛智強) said cross-strait exchanges and communications consisted of official and unofficial channels.

When public matters are discussed, Lo said, it is the remit of the Straits Exchange Foundation and its Chinese counterpart, the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait.

"All official dealings with China are supervised by the legislature," Lo said. "Everything is open and transparent."

Lo made the remarks in response to a statement by former National Security Council (NSC) secretary-general Su Chi (蘇吉雄), who said in an interview with the Chinese-language United Daily News yesterday that Taipei and Beijing had secret communication channels.

Through secret channels, Su said, "the two sides can immediately handle incidents in the Taiwan Strait."

Such an incident, Su said, could resemble the March 26 sinking of a South Korean navy vessel after an explosion tore through the frigate in the Yellow Sea.

Although Seoul has not directly blamed North Korea for the sinking, suspicion has focused on Pyongyang.

He did not elaborate what other type of issues Taipei and Beijing could discuss through backdoor communications and did not say when they had started.

Su was also quoted as saying that it was an "open secret" that there were cross-strait brokers during the presidencies of former president Lee Teng-hui (李登輝) and Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁), adding that President Ma Ying-jeou's (馬英九) administration has both official channels in charge of administrative affairs and "secret" ones responsible for "non-administrative" matters.

He declined to elaborate on how the "secret channels" operate, saying only that the NSC did not play a part.

No NSC officials would comment on Su's remarks and Su's mobile phone rang unanswered yesterday.

At a separate setting yesterday, Joseph Wu (吳敦義), a Mainland Affairs Council chairman during the Chen administration, said the DPP administration did not have any authorized "secret" communication channel or "secret envoys" to China.

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Wu, who was also US envoy under the DPP, said Su was making groundless allegations, which he said were intended to undermine the DPP's reputation.

Despite the Presidential Office's reiteration of transparency in its dialogue with China, the DPP has said Ma often deals with China in a clandestine manner that hurts Taiwan's interests, a charge Ma denies.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2010/05/17](#)