

## Lawmakers call for tough response to 'pirate' attack

Written by Taipei Times

Saturday, 11 May 2013 11:03 -

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Members of the Democratic Progressive Party caucus talk during a press conference at the legislature yesterday about the Taiwanese fisherman who was killed on Thursday when a Philippine government vessel fired at a Taiwanese fishing boat.

**Photo: CNA**

Lawmakers across party lines said yesterday that the government should stand tough in dealing with a Philippine attack on a Taiwanese fishing vessel and provide better protection for the country's fishing boats.

Fisherman Hung Shih-cheng (洪世成), 65, was shot dead on Thursday after a Philippine Coast Guard vessel fired at the fishing boat he was working on about 164 nautical miles (304km) off the southern coast of Taiwan.

Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) Legislator Lin Kuo-cheng (林國榮), who had previously been an official in a fishermen's association in Kaohsiung, said the navy should help to protect fishing boats in the area, at least during the bluefin tuna season, as most disputes are reported then.

Another KMT lawmaker, Su Ching-chuan (蘇清川), called on the government to launch air and naval forces to safeguard Taiwanese fishing boats during the bluefin tuna season, which begins in March and ends in June.

In accordance with international law, the manner in which the Philippines attacked the unarmed fishing vessels was tantamount to "an act of piracy," KMT Legislator Chiu Wen-yen (邱文彦) said.

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People First Party Legislator Thomas Lee (李顯明) agreed with Chiu, saying the government “should not be soft-hearted in the face of pirate attacks.”

In addition to defending against aggressive behavior, the government could also consider imposing economic sanctions on the Philippines, including reducing the number of migrant workers allowed into Taiwan and elevating the travel advisory notice to the Philippines to the highest level, Lee said.

Meanwhile, KMT Legislator Alex Tsai (蔡啟芳) posted a message on his Facebook page saying: “It’s not an incident. It’s a war. Taiwan should attack and sink all Philippines government vessels once they sail into the waters, without exception.”

KMT Legislator Lin Yu-fang (林錫山) urged the Coast Guard Administration and the navy to “make proper preparations for possible conflict” in the South China Sea.

“The government should increase the frequency of patrols and extend the airport runway at [Taiwan-controlled] Taiping Island (太平島, Itu Aba),” Lin said.

Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) Legislator Hsiao Bi-khim (蕭美琴) said she did not want to see the incident escalate into a more serious conflict, but stressed that the Philippines needed to conduct a thorough investigation and handle the issue with the utmost sincerity.

Meanwhile, DPP Chairman Su Tseng-chang (蘇貞昌) yesterday demanded that President Ma Ying-jeou’s (馬英九) government ask for international reparations from the Philippine government.

Su said in a Facebook post that “only by such a move could Hung’s death be justified and his spirit appeased.”

Taiwan is a maritime nation and the government should establish a comprehensive security web for the nation’s fishing industry, he added.

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This is not a singular incident, Su said, adding that it was a topic concerning national security and regional relations.

Taiwan must interact with its neighboring nations and in the process set up systems and standards for future governments, he said

Former DPP chairperson Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) also issued a statement, saying she was sad and regretted to learn of the incident.

The government must do something about the incident, Tsai said, who also issued a call for the Philippine government to immediately launch a judicial investigation into the incident.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2013/05/11](#)