

Ex-envoy to Japan says Taiwanese lack sense of crisis

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Taiwan's gravest crisis is the lack of a sense of crisis among its people, who are at a crossroads, faced with the choice of being annexed by China and living under a one-party regime or continuing to be citizens of a free and democratic nation, former representative to Japan Koh Se-kai (高思凱) said.

Koh made the remarks in a speech, titled "Taiwan's Prospects: Seeing from the Taiwan-Japan Ties," at a public event in Tokyo on Sunday.

"If Taiwanese were to take the wrong path at the crossroad, they may experience the bitter fruit of a new era of totalitarian darkness that their forebears tasted in the past," Koh said, adding that the nation's fate depended on whether "its people won the next [presidential] election."

President Ma Ying-jeou's (馬英九) administration may appear to be leaning slightly toward the US by signing a fisheries agreement with Japan in April to end controversies over fishing in waters surrounding the contested Diaoyutai Islands (釣魚台), but the president has not abandoned his attempts to bring Taiwan into China's fold, Koh said.

Former presidents Lee Teng-hui (李登輝) and Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) had both sought to put Taiwan on the road to internationalization, while Ma has not only denied that cross-strait ties were "state-to-state" relations, but also endeavored to turn Taiwan into an internal affair of China, Koh said.

"The Republic of China [ROC] that the Chinese Nationalist Party touts no longer exists, and it is ironic and even preposterous that the Democratic Progressive Party is the one left to shoulder the burden of a fictitious nation," he said.

Koh also warned against Ma's and former KMT chairman Wu Poh-hsiung's (吳伯雄) repeated denials that Taiwan is a country, saying that such remarks would only see the nation and its people reliving past misery.

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“At a time when a majority of Chinese people do not wish to be born a Chinese in the next life and hope to escape communist rule, why would anyone who already live in a free and democratic nation like Taiwan be willing to be annexed by China and ruled by a communist party?” Koh asked. “It is just unthinkable.”

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