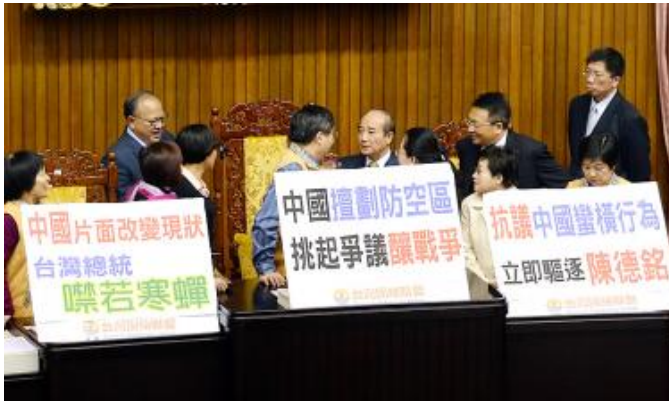


Resolution urges air zone protest

Written by Taipei Times

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Members of the Taiwan Solidarity Union take over the podium at the legislature in Taipei yesterday as Legislative Speaker Wang Jin-pyng steps in to sort out the issue.

Photo: Wang Yi-sung, Taipei Times

The legislature's caucus leaders, including the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), yesterday approved a non-binding resolution demanding that President Ma Ying-jeou's (馬英九) administration lodge an official protest with China over its unilateral demarcation of an air defense identification zone (ADIZ) in the East China Sea.

The resolution asks Ma to file a stern protest against the Chinese demarcation, which it said has destabilized regional stability, and to take concerted action with the nation's democratic allies by refusing to submit flight plans as Beijing has requested.

It also states that Beijing's announcement of the ADIZ on Saturday last week and the Chinese aircraft carrier Liaoning's passage through the Taiwan Strait on Thursday have escalated tensions that not only affect Taipei, but also Tokyo, Seoul and Washington.

The resolution calls on China to exercise restraint, resolve the dispute with Japan, South Korea, Australia, Taiwan and the US through multilateral negotiations, and advises that China withdraw the demarcation to safeguard peace in the area.

Earlier yesterday, Taiwan Solidarity Union lawmakers had occupied the legislative podium to protest China's action and called for a boycott of legislative proceedings. The deadlock was broken after Legislative Speaker Wang Jin-pyng (王金平) convened a cross-party meeting, and all party caucuses reached a consensus on the resolution.

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However, the TSU's proposal that visiting Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits Chairman Chen Deming (陳德明) should be expelled was not included in the resolution.

The Executive Yuan issued a five-point statement in response to the resolution later yesterday.

First, the National Security Council had issued a four-point statement on Saturday last week in response to China's ADIZ demarcation, in which it said that the government would firmly safeguard its sovereignty over the Diaoyutai Islands (釣台) and urges all concerned parties to exercise self-restraint to resolve regional disputes peacefully, the Executive Yuan said in the statement.

Second, China did not consult Taiwan before announcing its new ADIZ demarcation, which overlaps with Taiwan's air defense zone and the Taipei Flight Information Region. This has not contributed to positive cross-strait relations, it said, adding that the government would "express our firm and serious concern to the mainland [China] through appropriate channels."

Third, China's air defense zone will not change how the military conducts operations in the region, and the military will increase inspections in the area to enhance air and sea defenses to protect national security and public interests, the statement said.

Fourth, the Civil Aeronautics Administration will handle issues related to the requirement imposed by China that commercial flights notify China before planes fly through the newly designated zone in line with related International Civil Aviation Organization regulations and based on requests made by airlines to ensure aviation safety, it said.

Fifth, the government is extremely concerned about how the situation develops and has made unequivocal calls to concerned parties to resolve disputes through bilateral or multilateral channels and in a peaceful manner to jointly maintain peace and stability in the region, the Executive Yuan said.

Executive Yuan spokesperson Cheng Li-wun (鄭麗文) declined to elaborate when asked about the statement.

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