

Reliance on China makes Taiwan vulnerable: Clinton

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Former US secretary of state Hillary Rodham Clinton said the government's push for closer cross-strait ties could lead to Taiwan losing its economic and political independence and becoming vulnerable to over-reliance on China, according to an interview in the next edition of the Chinese-language magazine *Business Weekly*.

Widely expected to make a run in the 2016 US presidential election, Clinton made her position on the Taiwan-China relationship clear in the interview, which was conducted in Los Angeles on Thursday last week.

Citing Ukraine's relations with Russia as a cautionary tale, she advised Taiwan's leaders to be careful, or Taiwan might lose its current political independence.

"Economic independence goes with political independence," she said. "How far can you go before you lose your economic independence? Because it will affect your political independence."

Economic opportunities mean there are growing cross-strait connections and now Taiwan has arrived at "a turning point," she said.

"Now you have to decide how dependent economically you become... How ... do you handle the [cross-strait] relationship, if you say this far, but no farther?" Clinton said. "That will put pressure on you from China, if they want more, but you have to make these evaluations based on what you think is in the long-term interest of Taiwan."

It may be difficult for Taiwan to strike a good balance with China, because "it will be harder and harder, because the demands from China will grow, because [China] is growing so much," she said.

Taiwan should proceed with caution, as decisions made now could have "unintended consequences," she said, adding, "you have to look five years, 10 years from now on, to see if

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that's where you want to end up."

She reiterated the US' support for Taiwan.

"We have been willing to support Taiwan in many ways, [even] against China's objections, and we will continue to do so," she said.

The interview is reportedly Clinton's first one-on-one with a Taiwanese media organization, and the first time she has stated her position on cross-strait development.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2014/06/25](#)