

MA-XI MEETING: Tsai slams Ma over missile remarks

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Democratic Progressive Party Legislator Chen Ting-fei, center, yesterday indicates positions on a map during a press conference held in Taipei to challenge Chinese President Xi Jinping's assertion that Chinese missiles are not pointed at Taiwan.

Photo: Lo Pei-der, Taipei Times

Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) presidential candidate Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) yesterday panned President Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九) over a statement he made during a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping (習近平) that China should remove missiles aimed at Taiwan to appease criticism from the opposition.

Ma has come under fire for failing to elaborate on the so-called "1992 consensus" as meaning that Taiwan and China belong to "one China," although each side could make its own interpretation of what "China" means, during Saturday's meeting and he spoke only of the "one China" principle, according to a transcript of Ma's statements during the closed-door meeting publicized yesterday by the Mainland Affairs Council.

The transcript drew further criticism over Ma's request that China remove the more than 1,000 missiles aimed at Taiwan, as it was a "basis for opposition criticism."

Ma later said that Xi told him that the missiles are not aimed at Taiwan.

"The president represents the nation and he should not take into consideration partisan politics

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when dealing with foreign affairs,” Tsai said in response.

“Military issues, especially, should not be simplified as a dispute between the blue and green political camps, as it could involve lives, property and the safety of Taiwanese,” she said.

“The way that the president describes it is very disappointing,” Tsai added.

Asked if she would follow the so-called “1992 consensus” if elected president, Tsai did not directly address the question.

Tsai said that she has made it very clear that the main objective of her cross-strait policy would be maintaining the free and democratic lifestyle of Taiwanese, as well as maintaining peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.

“All cross-strait exchanges must meet the criteria of ‘equal footing and dignity,’ ‘open and transparent,’ as well as ‘not involving political preconditions,’” Tsai said.

If elected president, Tsai said her responsibility would be defending the right of Taiwanese to have more options instead of limiting people’s right to choose.

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