

## US stance on Taiwan is outdated

Written by James Wang 王健

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US President Barack Obama takes a low-key approach toward China and is often humiliated by Beijing. As Obama is about to step down, he has embarrassed himself yet again by echoing Beijing's "one China" policy this month.

Obama got only one thing right at his year-end news conference when he said that "it should be not just the prerogative, but the obligation of a new president to examine everything that's been done and see what makes sense and what doesn't."

However, his other statements were absurd, as he claimed that there has been a longstanding agreement between Taiwan, the US and China that it is okay for Taiwan to be "able to function with some degree of autonomy."

### SOVEREIGNTY

Taiwan is a nation established through democratic self-determination that has transformed itself into a sovereign state, and it insists on maintaining its sovereign national status. Although the US does not give official recognition to Taiwan's status as a nation, Taiwan has never "agreed" to function with only "some degree of autonomy" within the Chinese framework.

The US definition of "one China" differs from China's definition of "one China." The US demands that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait refrain from any unilateral changes to the "status quo," so Taiwan has agreed to a humiliating compromise by defining the "status quo" as meaning that Taiwan is a "sovereign state," and continues to hope that the US and other countries will recognize this "status quo."

However, whether or not to recognize this "status quo" is a political issue. As US president-elect Donald Trump commented during a TV interview, the US does not need China "dictating" to it.

Obama said that "Taiwanese have agreed that as long as they're able to continue to function

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with some degree of autonomy, they won't charge forward and declare independence."

This statement is seriously flawed and does not represent the position of Taiwanese or the government.

The majority of Taiwanese actually see the nation as an independent state, so there is no need for a declaration of independence, and there is certainly no need to beg China for "some degree of autonomy."

If the US were to recognize Taiwan's national status, there would be even less need for the nation to "declare independence."

According to the San Francisco Peace Treaty, which was signed in 1951 under the direction of the US and took effect in 1952, the sovereignty of Taiwan remains "undecided."

Then-US president Richard Nixon tried to maintain official relations with the governments of Chiang Kai-shek (蔣介石) and then-Chinese leader Mao Zedong (毛澤東), and the administration of then-US president Jimmy Carter never prohibited US officials from contacting their Taiwanese counterparts even after it announced that it was establishing diplomatic relations with China in 1979.

Unfortunately, the US administrations that have come after Carter have paid blind obedience to China, as the issue is "extremely sensitive" to Beijing. Those US presidents have restrained themselves on Taiwan policy and abandoned the stance that democratic leaders should take.

## MISINTERPRETATION

China has come to take US self-restraint for granted, but it has ignored any restrictions it deems unfavorable to it.

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Even Obama misinterprets this shameful Taiwan policy, which only goes to show that Trump does have a point.

After Trump and his administration take office, they should review the US' "one China" policy and adjust the outdated approach that is becoming increasingly divorced from reality.

*James Wang is a senior journalist.*

Translated by Eddy Chang

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