

AIT's opening represents improved ties: foundation

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Taiwan New Century Foundation chairman Chen Lung-chu yesterday speaks at his book launch in Taipei.

Photo: Chien Jung-fong, Taipei Times

The opening tomorrow of the new American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) compound in Taipei's Neihu District (新湖區) represents an improvement in bilateral ties and a move toward the normalization Taiwan-US relations, chairman of Taiwan New Century Foundation Chen Lung-chu (陳龍駒) said yesterday.

Chen made the remarks at a book launch in Taipei for the Chinese-language version of his book *The US-Taiwan-China Relationship in International Law and Policy* (美國、台灣、中國關係國際法與政策).

Chen said backs both developments, while advocating that Taiwan hold national referendums on sovereignty issues, but urged legislators to enact an “anti-China annexation” (反中國併吞) law.

In the book — first written in English and published by Oxford University Press in 2016 — Chen details Taiwan's political status and the development of its relationships with other countries throughout history, with an assessment of the nation's current situation.

He then looks toward the future for Taiwanese striving for self-determination and normalization of ties.

“One of the main focuses is on the US Congress' enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act

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(TRA) in 1979. Over the past decades, the TRA has been integral to guaranteeing regional security, and vital for Taiwan's economic development and its transformation into a democratic society with protection of freedom and human rights," Chen said.

The book also focuses on a discussion of and recommendations for Taiwan's status under international law, he said, adding that the best way to counter China's military threat of invasion is to hold national referendums to achieve "effective self-determination" and propose that the Legislature to pass an "anti-China annexation" law.

He urged Taiwan to strive to change its political status by abandoning the anachronistic framework of Republic of China and its outdated Constitution, Chen said.

Taiwan should become "the Switzerland of Asia" with a policy of permanent neutrality in the Asia-Pacific region, he said.

The Democratic Progressive Party government seems to be fixed on maintaining the "status quo," Chen said, adding that it is up to Taiwanese and civil society to demand that Taiwan become a normal sovereign country.

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