

Aborigines criticize May Chin's Beijing comments

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An announcement posted on the Facebook page of the Indigenous Youth Front on Saturday objects to comments made by Non-Partisan Solidarity Union Legislator May Chin.

Photo taken from the Indigenous Youth Front Facebook page

An Aboriginal group yesterday criticized Non-Partisan Solidarity Union Legislator May Chin (馬金) over her remarks at a summit on cross-strait relations in Beijing.

Chin, who is of Atayal and Manchu ancestry, on Friday claimed to represent Taiwan's Aborigines at the summit, where she advocated strict adherence to the so-called "1992 consensus" and the idea that "both sides of the Taiwan Strait are part of one China," the Chinese-language China Times said.

Chin also called for a deepening of the cross-strait relationship and greater unity between the people of Taiwan and China, the paper said.

"There is no consensus on the '1992 consensus.' This 'one China' you [Chin] speak of has nothing to do with the indigenous people of Taiwan!" the Indigenous Youth Front said in an open letter.

Aboriginal officials should stick to their duties and not use their titles as bargaining chips to accumulate political capital, front representative Savungaz Valincinan said.

"Going to China and engaging in an exchange of personal benefits tramples on and degrades the sovereignty of the nation's indigenous people," she said.

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Within four hours of its release, the letter, which lambasted other Aboriginal officials, such as Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) legislators Sufin Siluko, Yosi Takun and Sra Kacaw for “losing sincerity” by promoting closer ties with China, had 500 signatures.

“We are Taiwanese Aborigines, not Chinese minorities. Please do not claim to represent us,” the letter said, adding that Aborigines have never signed an agreement with a modern nation to abandon their sovereign rights, and Aboriginal communities had fought for many years to have their sovereignty respected by the government.

The hard-fought achievements of the Aborigines of past generations made it possible to have the Republic of China Constitution amended to secure equal status and political participation for today's Aborigines, it said.

Those who take part in political events in China as “Taiwanese Aboriginal representatives” are overstepping the boundaries of their positions, which are to protect the interests of Aborigines in the Legislative Yuan, it said.

Those representing Aborigines in the legislature are not involved at the community level, where local groups and their leaders were already in place, it said.

The failure of China's “one country, two systems” formula in Hong Kong was proof that Beijing would never respect the sovereignty of Aborigines, it said.

“Although we are not fully satisfied with the current government in Taiwan, we are working hard to change it,” the letter said. “We definitely cannot accept a system that concentrates sovereignty into a single nation and does not respect Taiwan's diversity.”

The “1992 consensus” — a term former Mainland Affairs Council chairman Su Chi (蘇起) admitted in 2006 to making up in 2000 — refers to an understanding between the KMT and Beijing that both sides acknowledge there is “one China,” with each side having its own

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interpretation of what "China" means.

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