Ukrainian Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Oleksandr Merezhko called Taiwan a “true friend” in an interview published on Saturday.

During an interview with US online news outlet Axios, Merezhko said that he realized “China is not our friend” after Beijing described its relationship with the Kremlin as a “friendship without limits.”

Taiwan, on the other hand, had placed sanctions on Russia over its invasion of Ukraine, and had offered Ukraine substantial material support, he said.

Ukrainian Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Oleksandr Merezhko, left, attends a reception in Washington with Representative to the US Hsiao Bi-khim, center, and Ukrainian lawmaker Mykola Kniazhytsky on Sept. 14.

Photo courtesy of Oleksandr Merezhko

Merezhko said that Ukrainians were not fooled by China’s attempts to convince Europe that it supports sovereignty and the rule of law, while at the same time expressing support for Russia.

Two members of the Ukrainian parliament joined the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance for China Policy last week, the first time Ukrainian representatives have participated. The alliance is an international cross-party group of legislators working to reform how democratic countries approach China, according to its Web site.

In its most recent meeting, it discussed China's military aggression toward Taiwan.

"I have experienced living in the Soviet Union for 20 years. I know what it's like to live in a totalitarian state, which tramples human rights and undermines the world order," Merezhko said, adding that China is "like the Soviet Union, but more dangerous."

Merezhko also mentioned concerns about China's treatment of Uighurs in Xinjiang.

"Genocide is a ... crime against all countries. When China is committing genocide, it is also a crime against Ukraine," he said.

Ukraine's parliament on Aug. 17 launched the Taiwan Friendship Group, which is led by Merezhko and consists of 15 lawmakers, two-thirds of whom belong to the ruling party.

Newsweek magazine reported a few days earlier that the Chinese embassy in Ukraine attempted to thwart the establishment of the group. In response, Merezhko was quoted as saying that China is "trying to dictate what a foreign parliament should do."

Source: Taipei Times - 2022/09/26