

Xi-Ma summit sets up a useful channel for communication

I am a supporter of the one-China consensus, and was glad that the leaders on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, Xi Jinping (習近平) and Ma Ying-jeou, met in Singapore and had a long handshake – the first such handshake since China's civil war ended in 1949.

Even more significant than the symbolic handshake was their hour-long closed-door meeting, followed by separate statements in which both leaders agreed to uphold the one-China consensus, with Xi mentioning the "one China" principle while Ma stressed that both sides had different understandings of "one China".

At the meeting, Ma proposed a cross-strait hotline between both sides, to which Xi was supportive. With one million Taiwanese residents living on the mainland, this proposal, if implemented, would be useful in improving economic ties and promoting mutual understanding, irrespective of which political party wins the Taiwan presidential election in January.

In registering concern at the meeting about mainland missiles facing Taiwan, Ma was voicing the worry of all Taiwanese people about a potential attack.

Although Xi's response to Ma was that the missiles were not targeted at Taiwan, this is such an emotionally charged cross-strait issue that mainland leaders would do well to review and strengthen their soft-power expertise on the handling of this issue in future.

Xi made a big stride forward by welcoming Taiwan to join the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the "One Belt, One Road" initiative. By participating, Taiwan will not only be able to work closely with the mainland but also get to know the other participants that come from Asia and other parts of the world.

As to Ma's other request that Taiwan, and especially its non-governmental organisations, be given more opportunity to participate in international society, Xi promised to "appropriately handle" the issue on a case-by-case basis.

I would view the Xi-Ma historic event in neutral Singapore as an unexpected but welcome channel that should facilitate leaders on both sides of the Taiwan Strait to resume contact once the presidential election is over.

The one-China consensus was first orally agreed upon in Hong Kong in 1992.

Unique for its "one country, two systems" and rule of law framework, Hong Kong must continue its role as a "super connector" in what is now recognised by many business offices as the Greater China area, comprising the mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau.

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我是「一個中國」這項共識的支持者，很高興看到習近平和馬英九這兩位海峽兩岸的領導人在新加坡會面，更兩手相握良久，是自1949年中國內戰結束以來第一次這樣的握手。

這次握手有其象徵，但更有意義的是他們一個小時的閉門會談，而在其後分別發表的聲明裡，兩位領導人均同意緊持一個中國的共識；習談到「一中」原則，馬則認為兩岸對「一中」可以各自表述。

會談時，馬提出雙方之間可設立一條熱線，習表示支持。台灣有一百萬人在大陸居住，這個建議若能落實，不論哪一個政黨贏得一月的台灣總統選舉，亦會有利於改善兩岸經濟連繫和促進彼此間的互信。

馬也在會談時提出台灣人對大陸導彈瞄準台灣的憂慮，陰影揮之不去。

儘管習回應時說，導彈並非針對台灣人民，以這個問題的敏感，大陸領導人宜再三檢討，將來處理時應加強其軟實力應對。

習往前邁出的一大步是歡迎台灣加入亞洲基礎建設投資銀行和「一帶一路」計劃。台灣既能參與，不但得以和大陸更好合作，也可以與來自亞洲和世界各地的參與者多點了解。

馬亦要求台灣能夠有更多機會參與國際社會事務，這對台灣的非政府組織尤其重要。習應允按個別情況「適當處理」。

我認為這次習馬在中立的新加坡之會是令人意想不到但感到高興的發展方向，有利台灣大選後兩岸領導人恢復接觸。

一個中國的共識最初是於1992年在香港的口頭協議。

香港以其獨特的「一國兩制」和法治框架，應繼續發揮其「超級聯繫人」角色。在這個現今很多商業機構視之為大中華地區，即是包括大陸、台灣、香港和澳門的地區，香港是有它的作用的。

土瓜灣張有興