

FEASIBLE MEASURES FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION ACROSS THE TAIWAN STRAIT

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Abstract:

Without conflict prevention measures, miscalculation or misperception may cause unintended conflicts resulting in disastrous tragedies. Since the situation across the Taiwan Strait is unique, complicated, mercurial, dynamic, and lacking in mutual trust as well, the crisis of potential conflict always exists. It makes the Taiwan Strait one of the world's flashpoints. Therefore, conflict prevention is one of the key measures to stabilize the Taiwan Strait.

Conflicts across the Strait will not only be exclusive in the aspect of military affairs, but also extend to the others, such as issues of sovereignty, difference in cognitions of security threat, economics and trading, or direct charter flights, etc. But among all, due to unwilling to give up using forces against Taiwan, fast military expansion, and military modernization, the military balance across Taiwan Strait has gradually tilted to China's favor in recent years. Saying so, unstable security and military conflicts become the two most worrisome issues beside sovereignty one among international concerns. Under the reality of international security framework and China's so called "The Strategic Opportunity Period," both China and international societies will not like to see the conflicts taking place in Taiwan Strait. Therefore, due to China's unwilling to give up using forces to solve Taiwan problem, we may easily find the most possible causes which initiates China's invasion of Taiwan are misperception and miscalculation between the two sides. Although the ties of economical trading and cultural exchanges are pretty strong, but the mutual trust are relatively weak by comparison. According to the experiences of past half century, the possibility of misjudge has not been decreased with the positive development of the Cross Strait relations. Because the security of the two sides is affecting the survival and development of our country, this paper will provide the discussion that how to prevent the armed conflict in order to secure our national interests.

One of our national security goals at present stage is "to prevent military conflict in Taiwan Strait." In order to secure our national interests, realize national security objectives, and meet the challenges of the international environment, our current defense policies consist of three fundamental objectives—preventing war, defending the homeland, and countering terrorism and responding to contingencies. The meaning of "preventing war" is to take precautions in order to avoid the unintended wars. The Cross Strait relations are so complicated that not only affecting the international interests in the area, but also the regional power structure and global economy. Therefore, in the frame of the existing international systems and the global strategic atmosphere, misjudgments are the most probable fuses of the military conflicts across the Strait. This paper has studied different conflict prevention measures which comply with national security strategy according to development of present Cross Strait situation in order to achieve the basic goals of national defense policy and national security.

In the cold war era, most western scholars of the conflict prevention studies believed that the most powerful means for conflict prevention was nuclear deterrence because the power of nuclear weapons were powerful enough to destroy human existence. Therefore, the studies of “Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD)” became the basis among the conflict prevention researches. Most military strategies were to keep retaliating capability after surprised first attack from hostiles.

During the post cold war era, the possibility of massive global conflict has reduced, although regional conflicts remain constantly, the diffusion of scientific and technology leads to the increasing of asymmetric warfare; the 911 attack by Al-Qaeda in 2001 was a typical example. However, in the past half a century, whether global sight focus on “Mutually Assured Destruction” of US and Soviet Union in the past or the region conflicts and terrorists attacks faced by the world now, the situation of Taiwan Strait still remains its unique and asymmetric characteristics.

Although there have been rapid economic and cultural exchanges across the Strait, due to politics separation and military confrontation, the Cross Strait relations have not been eased. It has even lead to the extensive international concern. Thus, how to seek feasible conflict prevention measures with past experiences has become one of prior issue in our national defense policies at present stage.