

The Message of the “OKINAWA DIALOGUE PROJECT”

Jan/21/2024

“OKINAWA DIALOGUE PROJECT to Prevent a Taiwan Contingency”

What we learned

1. Through this project we realized and confirmed the importance of the “dialogue.” Direct communication through “dialogue” with the people from Mainland China(China) and Taiwan became our hope for peace. It has started dialogues between conservatives and reformists, elderly and youth. We want to continue to share the importance of dialogue in every generation and aspect. Not only do we ask the national leaders to improve the relationship between countries by full use of dialogue, but we as citizens also spread and deepen the exchange and dialogue between the countries beyond the borders.
2. Nansei Islands including Okinawa and Taiwan are places where many people from the children to the elders enjoy their daily lives with their rich history and culture. We should not regard these islands where people live from a viewpoint of military strategy. We should not make these islands US and Japan’s military attack bases. We should not make Okinawa a “sacrificial lamb” again.
3. Due to the change in the situation this year, what we call “the Taiwan Contingency” (armed conflict) is not likely to occur in the short term. No nation and no country wants a war or an armed conflict in this region. There exists a US-China conflict in the backdrop of the crisis. Both the US and China should avoid the exchange actions that heighten the tension. We call for serious and continuous dialogue and diplomacy between the US and China, as well as between Japan and China, which should be continued.

4. It is important for peace in this region that the US and Japan should keep the “One China” policy which was promised in the course of normalization of diplomatic relations with China. Particularly, Japan should reconfirm and stand by the four basic agreements between Japan and China, such as the Japan-China Joint Communiqué and Japan-China Treaty of Peace and Friendship.
5. As for the relationship between China and Taiwan, we have no way but to leave it to these two and we expect the matter to be settled through dialogue between them.
6. East Asia, long regarded as a region of armed conflict, can be a place where we enjoy economic and cultural exchange and prosperity with a change of viewpoint. We should make efforts to change this crisis to an opportunity with this view.
7. We believe that Okinawa’s regional diplomacy works to facilitate peace in East Asia. We strongly support it and cooperate with it as citizens of Okinawa.
8. In any sense, war is not the answer. War does not solve any problems. We strongly deny war.

We add the following opinions heard in the symposium of the project.

1. There was an opinion that against China, armed preparation is needed together with works of diplomacy. It’s a view of what we call “deterrence theory.” How should we think of a deterrent? We did not conclude it but decided to keep it as a topic to discuss continuously.
2. As for the “Taiwan Contingency”, there were two different views. One was the situation defined by China’s threat of armed invasion in the unification policy, and another was the situation defined by the US’s provocative policy of trying to weaken China’s power. There was also an opinion that China’s unification with Taiwan would be through a peaceful process and the “Taiwan Contingency” is an idea of US elites, an idea centering on military power. We concluded that regardless of which is

right, it is important to avoid a war, the use of arms, by suppressing acts of inciting threats.

3. There was an idea to set up a regional security system such as ASEAN or "Six-party talks." However, China rejects the internationalization of the problem between China and Taiwan. Therefore, we decided to leave it to these two and place our hope in their dialogue.
4. To the "Okinawa dialogue project," from outside, through media and in SNS, some made an assumption and labeled us Pro-Chinese. We regard such acts as having no relation to the objective of the project aiming to avoid a "Taiwan Contingency." To realize our aim, we think it important to have a dialogue with every person regardless of his/her nationality and ideology.