

Taiwan to Tighten Ties with China

Taiwan's president has OK'd plans to loosen economic restrictions, despite past fears of communist China.

The Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan — Taiwan's leader sided with an elite team of economic advisers who urged him Sunday to make a historic policy change and boost economic ties with China — the island's biggest security threat.

President Chen Shui-bian embraced the panel's advice as the island slips into its first recession in three decades and feels the strong pull of China's booming market, which offers cheap labor and land to Taiwanese firms struggling to stay competitive.

Taiwan's top China policy-maker, Tsai Ing-wen, said Sunday's developments were "a significant step forward" toward trying to improve relations with Beijing.

"This is a clear demonstration from our side that we are prepared to take the risk and take a positive attitude toward China," said Tsai, a member of the advisory committee.

China did not immediately comment on the development.

For five decades, the Taiwanese have kept a tight grip on trade and investment with China, fearing that their economy could become too dependent on a communist nation that has threatened to invade.

The two sides split amid civil war in 1949, and China is growing impatient for reunification.

On Sunday, a 120-member presiden-

tial advisory group — including Cabinet officials, business leaders and opposition lawmakers — urged the president to relax limits on how much Taiwanese can invest in China. The group also told Chen to let banks set up branches in China and ease restrictions on Chinese investments in Taiwan.

Just hours after the group made the suggestions during a high-profile summit on Sunday, Chen said that he accepted the suggestions and his government would spend the next two weeks figuring out how to implement them.

"The group's consensus belongs to all the advisers and to the nation's people and to Abian," Chen said, referring to himself by his nickname.

One specific change the president agreed to was abandoning a \$50 million cap on single investments in China. Such big deals will be considered on a

case-by-case basis.

Opponents of expanding trade ties with China have argued that it would speed up the exodus of Taiwanese capital and jobs to China, driving up unemployment rates that have already hit historic highs this year.

"This decision today will only be good for big business. It'll just mean more jobs lost for the workers," said Weng Tai-shan, a Taipei delivery driver in his 40s.

But business leaders have argued that Taiwan — famous for its manufacturing prowess — can no longer compete with China's factories, fueled by low-wage labor.

Most of Taiwan's factories that produced consumer goods have already moved to China, where the Taiwanese have invested an estimated \$60 billion in China during the past decade.

NATO to Confiscate Militants' Weapons

NATO's Macedonian mission, called Operation Essential, will try to gather munitions from ethnic Albanians.

The Associated Press

SKOPJE, Macedonia — NATO revealed Sunday that it plans to collect 3,300 weapons from ethnic Albanian militants in a delicate operation it described as being Macedonia's only alternative to war.

By revealing the figures, NATO sets boundaries for its mission in Macedonia. Called Operation Essential Harvest, it envisions NATO troops setting up collection sites to take weapons as rebels turn them in. NATO has said it plans to complete the process in 30 days and leave.

But the number of weapons NATO decided on could become an obstacle to carrying out the plan.

Macedonian government officials, who say the rebels have thousands more weapons than they have admitted to,

said later Sunday that they had not agreed to accept NATO's figures.

Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski, a consistent opponent of the weapons collection plan, described NATO's estimates of rebel arms as "humiliating."

The dispute opened the possibility that the weapons collection process won't start as planned Monday. By early Sunday evening, political leaders had failed to order their forces to pull back from areas surrounding drop-off sites — a key requirement for NATO to start weapons collections.

"Our regrouping will be simultaneous with the arrival and deployment of NATO troops," said Marjan Gjurovski, the Macedonian defense spokesman.

NATO's announcement came hours

after a deadly explosion ripped through a motel, killing two people and further complicating the alliance's efforts to build confidence between the rebels and the government ahead of its mission.

The Macedonian-owned motel was in Celopek, a village six miles south of the predominantly Albanian city of Tetovo.

Georgievski called the attack "barbaric."

"I have suggested that Macedonia must legitimately respond or retaliate either with a military or police action," he said. It was unclear if the government would actually act.

The explosion took place in an ethnic Albanian neighborhood, about 50 yards from an Orthodox church. Most ethnic Albanians are Muslims; most Macedonians are Orthodox Christians.

Police also reported an exchange of infantry and artillery fire in the Kumanovo area northeast of Skopje.

Security forces "responded adequately," police said.

The planned NATO mission is the alliance's attempt to avert more bloodshed in this ethnically torn nation.

Fighting broke out along Macedonia's border with Kosovo in February after ethnic Albanians launched an insurgency claiming they were fighting for greater rights.

The government says ethnic Albanians, who make about a third of the country's population of 2 million, are fighting for a state of their own.

After an Aug. 13 peace deal, NATO's ruling council authorized a total about 4,700 troops to help with disarmament of the rebels.

The peace deal envisions a step-by-step process in which rebels will hand over weapons to NATO in exchange for political reforms in Macedonia. Since a third of the weapons are to be handed over in exchange for moves in parliament, the figure had to be revealed in advance.

figures were reduced to \$13 million each. Superintendent Neil Pedersen said he fears the funding will be reduced further before the referendum goes before voters.

Pedersen said, "It's just a question of the commissioners finding the right mix and finding the right priority."

The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.

Leaders Urge Condit's Removal From Committee

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Rep. Gary Condit has no reason to quit the House Intelligence Committee, his lawyer said Sunday, despite concerns by colleagues about his relationship with Chandra Levy and his actions since the former federal intern disappeared.

Condit may be the only committee member without any secrets left, and "he's probably the person on the Intelligence Committee who can't be blackmailed anymore," lawyer Abbe Lowell said on NBC's "Meet the Press."

"If it's not punitive for some reason, there's no good reason" for the California Democrat to leave the committee, Lowell said. "He's served very

well, as colleagues will tell you."

House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt, D-Mo., has criticized Condit for failing to be "candid and forward" in an ABC interview last week about his relationship with Levy, a former Bureau of Prisons intern who disappeared four months ago.

When asked repeatedly if he had a sexual affair with Levy, Condit said only that they had a "very close" relationship but sidestepped questions about its nature. He offered no apologies for his involvement with Levy or his level of cooperation with police.

Gephardt characterized Condit's answers as "disturbing and wrong," and said he would talk to House Democrats about possible action against Condit,

including his removal from the committee.

Rep. Scott McInnis, R-Colo., said Gephardt "has an obligation that's inherent in his responsibilities to immediately remove" Condit.

Service on the committee "requires very high integrity," McInnis said on CNN's "Late Edition."

"Certainly any kind of indication that someone has not been forthcoming or truthful when put under pressure should not be in charge or sitting on the committee that oversees central intelligence and our spy networks throughout the world."

Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y., said Condit's behavior was "embarrassing." But, Rangel said on "Fox News Sunday," "there's nothing that we can do in the

Congress.

Unless there is something to take before the Ethics Committee, I don't see how we can do anything."

Later, on CNN, Rangel added: "What is it that we could possibly charge him with in the Ethics Committee? Not one thing."

Condit's lawyer Lowell asked that Gephardt consider comments Condit made in other media interviews last week before determining any possible action.

When asked by Newsweek what message he would have liked to have relayed during the ABC interview, Condit said he would have made it clear "how disheartened and heartbroken I am that it's been four months and we haven't been able to find Chandra."

PETA

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Shannon said PETA members are waiting to hear back from OWASA before pursuing other methods of getting their point across.

"They promote fishing on the lake, they rent boats so people can take them

out and go fishing," he said. "We're asking them not to do that because A, it's cruel to the fish, and B, it's not safe for the environment."

If OWASA refuses to acknowledge PETA's request, Shannon said the group will seek other ways to restrict fishing.

"We'd continue to work with (OWASA)," Shannon said. "We'd try to convince them. They're entitled to their

opinion but we're going to try and convince them of ours."

Pennsylvania native Hal Hopper, who has fished at University Lake, said he would rather PETA focus on other issues and leave fishing alone.

"I don't have a lot of sympathy for PETA," he said, adding that he is both a fisher and a hunter.

Meanwhile, Tim Willink helps Pablo take the crappie off his hook and throw

it back into the water. The fish disappears into the dark water.

"We talk about respecting everything," Tim Willink said. "We put everything back."

"It's the approach you take. If you respect wildlife, then I don't see a problem with it."

The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.

VINROOT

From Page 3

Errol Guillory, the director of UNC's Program on Southern Politics, Media and Public Life, said both Vinroot's strengths and weaknesses come from his experience running for governor.

"I guess one of his strengths is that he's run for statewide office," Guillory said. "Then again, people might remember that he's run for statewide office and lost."

"It's kind of a double-edged sword," Guillory also said that while some issues will remain similar to those in gubernatorial races — such as education and the environment — the focus of the

topics could change. "Senate issues — national issues — tend to be more idealistic than state issues," Guillory said.

One advantage that Vinroot has is that he already has a foundation in place to run for office, Guillory said.

"Vinroot did run a pretty potent statewide race for governor," he said. "And he already has a network in place of people that support him."

But Barbara Allen, chairwoman of the N.C. Democratic Party, said she doesn't expect Vinroot to be a serious threat to potential Democratic candidates.

"Vinroot didn't give us too much trouble in the gubernatorial election," Allen said. "I don't see why things will be any different this time around."

Democratic Secretary of State Elaine Marshall, who announced her intention to seek the Senate seat last spring, is the only other candidate to officially announce her candidacy.

But two other Democrats — N.C. Rep. Dan Blue, D-Wake, and Charlotte businessman Mark Erwin — have been named as potential candidates.

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RETIREMENT

From Page 3

Kitty McCullom, UNC-system associate vice president of human resources, said the retirement incentives could be used by the university to generate turnover in the faculty. "I think it's advantageous for the employer and the employee," McCullom said of the phased-retirement program. "We might be able to keep a tenure-track faculty member while at this same time recruiting a new one."

The study indicated that the most common practices in place include offering cash buyouts, increasing retirement benefits for older faculty members who agreed to retire and phased-retirement plans, which are available to faculty members at all 16 UNC-system schools.

The program, adopted in 1997 by the Board of Governors, allows faculty members to voluntarily retire and relinquish their tenure in exchange for teaching on a part-time basis for three years.

The Older Workers Benefits Protection

Act, through a temporary amendment passed by Congress in 1986, once allowed academic institutions to legally force older tenured faculty members to retire.

But when that amendment expired in 1994, institutions of higher education were forced to find other ways of encouraging faculty members to step down.

Nora Robbins, senior director of human resource services at UNC-Chapel Hill said she was surprised by how many people took advantage of the early retirement incentives.

"We thought people wouldn't retire," Robbins said. "That hasn't been the case. In fact, we've had more people retire than we expected."

And the systemwide phased retirement program could be one reason. More than a dozen faculty members participate in the program at UNC-CH each year.

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SCHOOLS

From Page 3

tioning cutbacks in proposed elementary school funding included in the bond package.

The school system originally requested \$13 million to build one elementary school and \$14 million for another. The

figures were reduced to \$13 million each. Superintendent Neil Pedersen said he fears the funding will be reduced further before the referendum goes before voters.

Pedersen said, "It's just a question of the commissioners finding the right mix and finding the right priority."

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