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[Text of speech by Qian Qichen, entitled: "Adhere to the Basic Policy of 'One Country, Two Systems' and Strive to Promote the Development of Cross-Strait Relations" -- at a Discussion Meeting to Mark the Seventh Anniversary of the Important Speech Made by President Jiang Zemin on Promoting the Great Cause of the Reunification of the Motherland" (24 January 2001)]

Beijing, 24 Jan (Xinhua) - Comrades and friends:

On 30 January 1995, President Jiang Zemin delivered an important speech entitled "Continue to Fight for Promoting Accomplishment of the Great Cause of the Reunification of the Motherland." It is very meaningful when we gather here today to restudy this important speech, review the development of cross-strait relations in the past year and look forward to peaceful reunification of the motherland. During the past year, owing to joint efforts of compatriots on both sides of the strait, there was a new upsurge and progress in contacts, exchanges and cooperation between people on both sides in economic, trade, cultural and other fields.

Meanwhile, there were noticeable changes of situation on the island. By looking at the overall situation, we can see that the basic pattern and trend of development of cross-strait relations have not changed. The basic framework of universal recognition of one China is stable and the Taiwan authorities' separatist activities in the international community have suffered repeated setbacks. Seeking peace, stability and development is the mainstream of public opinions in Taiwan. People can see economic development and political and social stability in the mainland of the motherland. China's international position has been strengthening continuously with full vigor and vitality. It will be good for both sides if we work together but will suffer if we divide. This is being understood by more and more Taiwan compatriots. Opposing each other will not have benefit, and practicing "Taiwan independence" has no way out. We are full of confidence in the prospects of the development of cross-strait relations and the peaceful reunification of the motherland.

In the new year, we should strive to eliminate the existing obstacles in the development of cross-strait relations, maintain peace in the Taiwan

Strait, promote contacts of people between the two sides of the strait and exchanges in economic, cultural and other fields, strive to realize the direct "three links" between the two sides, and promote a stable development of cross-strait relations. This is still the common task faced by Chinese people on both sides of the strait. We will continue to adhere to the basic principle of "peaceful reunification and one country with two systems," fully implement the eight-point proposal put forward by President Jiang Zemin on developing cross-strait relations and promoting the course of peaceful reunification of the motherland for the present stage, and strive to promote the development of cross-strait relations in the direction of peaceful reunification.

The mainland and Taiwan both belong to one China. Although the two sides are not unified, both sides should actively create conditions and strive to reduce contradictions, improve relations between the two sides and break through the political stalemate. The consensus reached by the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits [ARATS] and Taiwan's Strait Exchange Foundation in 1992 on each side may orally interpret "both sides of the strait adhere to the principle of one China" has demonstrated the political wisdom to properly handle their differences and effectively break away deadlocks. The important significance is: Both sides can in this way show consideration for the interests of the other side, use flexible methods to seek common ground while reserving differences, establish mutual confidence, hold practical talks, and face the future. The hard-earned achievement still has great significance to current relations between the two sides of the strait and should be protected. President Jiang Zemin stressed that, "on the premise that there is only one China, we are prepared to talk with the Taiwan authorities about any matter, we mean naturally that all matters of concern to the Taiwan authorities are included." On the issue of promoting the resumption of cross-strait dialogs, we are most sincere and have the maximum tolerance. The refusal to accept the principle of one China and recognize the "1992 consensus" by the leader of the Taiwan authorities is the crucial reason leading to a deadlock in cross-strait relations and also the root cause of instability of the situation and possible danger in the Taiwan Strait. We have said many times that there is only one China in the world, that the mainland and Taiwan both belong to one China, and China's sovereignty and territorial integrity brook no separation. This is the common basic point in adhering to the principle of one China by both sides of the strait. It is hoped that leaders of the Taiwan authorities will be courageous to face the reality and adopt serious, positive and practical steps in the issue of recognizing the "1992 consensus" for the stability and development of Taiwan's society. Resuming dialogs and negotiations by both sides on this basis will be favorable to promoting stability and

development of cross-strait relations. This not only accords with interests and expectations of compatriots on both sides of the strait but will also benefit peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. The two sides of the strait have successively joined the World Trade Organization. This is a major event for both sides and also a new opportunity for further development of economic and trade relations between the two sides. At present, the extent of economic globalization is being deepened and the trend of regional economic cooperation has become more conspicuous. Both sides are facing great opportunities of development and considerable extent of challenges. In the face of common opportunities and challenges, compatriots on both sides should share the joys and sorrows and help each other. Since last year, our Taiwan compatriots have suffered from both economic recession and natural disasters, we feel as if we have experienced those sufferings ourselves. We hope Taiwan will enjoy social stability and economic prosperity and people in Taiwan can live and work in peace. Further developing economic relations between the two sides is the objective trend and the desire of compatriots of both sides of the Strait as it will benefit both sides. We hold that political differences must not interfere with economic and trade exchanges between the two sides of the strait. Artificial obstacles that limit economic cooperation between the two sides should be removed as quickly as possible. Economic and trade issues between the two sides should and can totally be solved between the two sides. The realization of direct "three links" between the two sides must be done. Prompt realization of direct navigation between the two sides is the earnest expectation of the broad masses of Taiwan compatriots, especially in the business circles. At present, we can let non-government organizations of the two sides hold negotiations on matters regarding direct navigation so as to reach an agreement and implement direct navigation as quickly as possible. In order to promote cross-strait economic relations to a new and higher level, we are willing to hear opinions and suggestions from people of various circles in Taiwan on the establishment of economic cooperation mechanism and the promotion of economic relations between the two sides.

Compatriots on both sides of the strait are linked by blood like brothers and sisters. The five thousand years of brilliant civilization is forever the spiritual link for all Chinese people. Compatriots on both sides of the strait should jointly carry forward and develop the outstanding tradition of Chinese culture and make Chinese culture more brilliant in the new period. The Youths are the future of our country. Youths on both sides of the strait should strengthen contacts and enhance mutual understanding. We welcome more youths from Taiwan to visit the mainland of the motherland for study or business endeavors and give full

play to their talents.

For a long period, compatriots in Taiwan have made strenuous efforts to get rid of colonial rule and resist totalitarian oppression in order to realize their desire to be the masters of the country. We fully understand their complicated state of mind formed under special historical background, and fully respect their desire and demand. The broad masses of Taiwan compatriots want to be the masters of their country and they are in essence different from a small number of people who practice "Taiwan independence." The "Taiwan independence" separatist forces have stimulated contradictions between people from different provinces under the banner of "Taiwanization," caused social disputes, carried out separatist activities, and created division and opposition among people and instability in Taiwan's society. The broad masses of Taiwan compatriots must heighten their vigilance against the separatist forces. We sincerely hope that Taiwan compatriots will live in harmony and work for joint development regardless of which province they come from.

In his eight-point proposal, President Jiang Zemin stressed that we "hope that all political parties in Taiwan will adopt a sensible, forward looking and constructive attitude and promote the expansion of relations between the two sides. All parties and personages of all circles in Taiwan are welcome to exchange views with us on relations between the two sides and on peaceful reunification and are also welcome to pay a visit and tour places." In recent years, despite changes of the political situation in Taiwan, this basic policy has not changed. We will as always strengthen contacts and hold dialogs with various political parties and factions and people of various circles who uphold the principle of one China and are in favor of developing cross strait relations. Such contacts and dialogs will enhance mutual understanding between compatriots on both sides and are conducive to alleviating tension between the two sides and promoting stability of situation in the Taiwan Strait. This is also favorable to protecting the interests of Taiwan compatriots. On the other hand, restricting contacts and rejecting dialogs with a narrow, stilted and contentious mind will only aggravate opposition and tension and bring all kinds of harm with no benefit to the Taiwan compatriots. The Democratic Progressive Party [DPP] should think more about the welfare of people in Taiwan, thoroughly discard its "Taiwan independence party platform," and develop cross-strait relations with a truthful and sincere attitude. We are convinced that the broad masses of DPP members are different from the small number of stubborn "Taiwan independence" elements. We welcome them to come for sightseeing and visit in appropriate status and increase their understanding.

We always maintain a high degree of vigilance against "Taiwan independence" activities by the separatist forces. Practicing separatism cannot enjoy popular support. The parent body and core of Taiwan's culture are Chinese culture. The "Taiwan independence" forces attempt to poison Taiwan's ideological, cultural and educational field, separate Taiwan's culture from Chinese culture, set Taiwan's culture against Chinese culture, and destroy the consciousness of the Chinese nation from the minds of Taiwan compatriots. Taiwan compatriots have clearly seen that the separatist forces are using gradual tactics to promote "Taiwan independence." We have also clearly seen this. The perverse action of Taiwan's separatist forces is being resolutely opposed by compatriots on both sides of the strait and by all people of Chinese descent.

The Taiwan authorities have spent a huge amount of funds to procure advanced weapons and military equipment on a massive scale and attempted to seek "Taiwan independence" by relying on the military support of outside forces. This will not bring security to Taiwan. On the contrary, it will further aggravate tension in the Taiwan Strait and eventually harm the fundamental interests of Taiwan compatriots.

We have smoothly solved the Hong Kong issue and the Macao issue by following the basic principle of "peaceful reunification and one country with two systems." We will also follow this principle to solve the Taiwan issue. We fully pay attention to the different situation between Taiwan and Hong Kong and Macao and will implement more loose [kuan song di] policies toward Taiwan than those toward Hong Kong and Macao within the framework of "one country, two systems." After the reunification, Taiwan compatriots' existing rights and benefits will be effectively respected and protected and their desire for other rights and benefits will also be fully realized. Realizing peaceful reunification and implementing "one country, two systems" will be able to avoid disasters of war touched off by "Taiwan independence" separatist forces and enjoy peace permanently. Taiwan compatriots will truly realize their desire of being the masters of the country, enjoy a high degree of autonomy, and fully exercise their right of selecting their social system and way of life. The history of Taiwan's being subjugated and colonized will not happen again. A dictatorial regime against the will of Taiwan compatriots will not reemerge. Taiwan's economy will have a great development space by truly using the mainland as its hinterland. Taiwan can realize the improvement of economic structure and enjoy long-term prosperity. The broad masses of Taiwan compatriots will be able to more extensively and directly take part in administering state affairs and to jointly work for peace and development of the country. Taiwan compatriots will join compatriots in the mainland to enjoy international dignity and honor of the

great motherland. We are willing to extensively hear and fully respect the opinions of the broad masses of Taiwan compatriots for realizing this goal.

There is only one China in this world and this is a fact universally recognized by the international community. The Chinese Government and all Chinese people will protect their state sovereignty and territorial integrity and strive to promote the cause of peaceful reunification. We have received understanding and support from more and more countries. This is the trend and tide. The Taiwan separatist forces attempt to create "two Chinas" or "one China and one Taiwan" in the world. Their attempt has no way out. We resolutely oppose foreign countries to sell advanced weapons to Taiwan and resolutely oppose any outside force to intervene and obstruct China's peaceful reunification with any pretext.

The accomplishment of the reunification of the motherland is the firm and unchangeable determination of the Chinese people and is our sacred historical mission. If compatriots on both sides of the strait join hands and struggle hard, we can certainly realize the complete reunification of the motherland and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation at an early date. A unified and powerful China will make Chinese people on both sides of the strait feel proud among various nations in the world and will certainly make greater contributions to promoting world peace and development.

The traditional Spring Festival of the Chinese nation will soon come. I wish to take this opportunity to extend my cordial festival greetings to Taiwan compatriots and all friends who have worked for developing cross-strait relations and supported the reunification of the motherland. I wish you and all families have a happy Spring Festival!