

The Japan-Taiwan Forum 2011 in Tokyo

The Japan-Taiwan Forum 2011 in Tokyo was jointly staged by the Institute for International Policy Studies (IIPS) and Taiwan's Cross-Strait Interflow Prospect Foundation, and took place on October 19 and 20, 2011. This year's event marked the tenth meeting of the forum. Every year since 2002, experts from Japan and Taiwan have engaged in reciprocal visits for the purpose of conducting free and wide-ranging discussions on politics, economics, and security, with the venue alternating between the two locations.

With "the outlook for East Asia" as the overall theme of the event, the forum was held during a period in which—from the Japanese perspective—the extensive support received from Taiwan in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake was still fresh in the mind, and a new Democratic Party of Japan administration led by Prime Minister Noda had just assumed office. From Taiwan's perspective, the forum was taking place in the run-up to the general election of January 2012.

The opening ceremony took place on October 19 and featured remarks by Mr. Ken Sato, IIPS President, and Mr. Tzen Wen-Hua, Taiwan's Cross-Strait Interflow Prospect Foundation Chairman, as well as by two guests, Mr. Atsushi Hatakenaka, Chairman of the Japan Interchange Association, and Mr. Feng Chi-Tai, Representative at the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in Japan. Mention was made of the strong bonds between Japan and Taiwan, as evidenced after the Great East Japan Earthquake, and hopes were expressed that the interchange between Japan and Taiwan in various fields would broaden and strengthen in the future.

In session one, the first topic discussed was the cooperative relationship between Japan and Taiwan. With regard to maritime issues, the Taiwan delegates expressed the view that Taiwan ought not to be excluded from bilateral negotiations between Japan and China over the Senkaku Islands issue. It was also pointed out that there is ample scope for cooperation between Japan and Taiwan in the face of China's all-out maritime expansion, and that Japan and Taiwan should attempt to develop a framework for high-level bilateral dialogue in response to major changes in the situation in East Asia. In terms of the economic relationship between Japan and Taiwan, speakers advanced the notions that Taiwan represents a fitting partner for Japan as Japanese companies advance into the Chinese-speaking world, and that, as the working-age population in Asia increases, future cooperation between Japan and Taiwan could take the form of joint initiatives in other Asian countries and reciprocal investment incentives.

In the second session the delegates exchanged views on the shifting situation in East Asia. The consistent point of discussion was that, in the future, the situation in East Asia would be determined by the actions of the USA and China. Specific highlights of the session were the views expressed on how the issue of the relocation of Futenma Air Station might unfold, the extent to which the USA's economic difficulties will impact the re-alignment of US forces in East Asia, whether China's so-called A2AD strategy will succeed in the future, and whether it will be possible to establish a framework for consultation on freedom of navigation through the South China Sea (plus the extent to which the USA and China might be able to participate in this).

On October 20, a public symposium based on the results of discussions during the sessions was held. With Mr. Yoshio Okawara, Special Adviser of IIPS, and Mr. Tzen Wen-Hua, Chairman of the Cross-Strait Interflow Prospect Foundation, serving as joint moderators, two panelists each from Japan and Taiwan delivered presentations. Among the views expressed at the symposium were that, with the conclusion of an investment agreement between Japan and Taiwan in September, Japanese companies with well-established brands and advanced

technology should aim to establish a new international division of labor by engaging in joint ventures with Taiwan, one of whose strengths is mass production, and that Japan should cooperate more closely with Taiwan to maintain the sea lanes that are of vital importance to Japan. The presentations were followed by fruitful and lively debate, which included panelists' responses to questions from the floor.

The forum was attended by a 15-member delegation from Taiwan, which included Mr. Tzen Wen-Hua, Chairman of the Cross-Strait Interflow Prospect Foundation; Mr. Hung Chien-Chao, Advisor to the Central News Agency; Mr. Lee Chia-Chin, member of the National Security Council's advisory committee; Professor Chiu Kun-Shuan of the Graduate Institute of East Asia Studies at National Chengchi University; Professor Ho Szu-Shen of the Department of Japanese Language and Literature at Fu Jen Catholic University; Professor Tsai Ming-Yen of the National Graduate Institute of International Politics at Chung Hsing University; Deputy Professor Tsai Hsi-Hsun of the Japanese Studies Division of the Graduate Institute of Asian Studies at Tamkang University; and Deputy Professor Tso Chen-Dong of the Department of Political Science at National Taiwan University. The Japanese participants were Mr. Naoki Kazama, member of the House of Councillors; Mr. Nobuo Kishi, member of the House of Councillors; Mr. Takashi Shiraishi, President of the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies; Mr. Yutaka Taka, Advisor to the Association for Taiwan-Japan Cooperation on Industrial Technology; Professor Takashi Kawakami of Takushoku University; Mr. Takao Kitabata, former Vice Minister of Economy, Trade, and Industry; and Associate Professor Shin Kawashima of the University of Tokyo.