



CALD Statement No. 1 S. 2014

CALD Statement on the Railroading of Taiwan's Trade Pact with China

The Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats (CALD) is extremely concerned with and alarmed by the manner Taiwan's trade pact with China was passed.

On March 17, the Kuomintang (KMT) party decided to cut-short a vital deliberation process in the Legislative Yuan concerning the controversial Cross Strait Services Trade Agreement (CSSTA) that would open up trade in services between Taiwan and China. As a result, a multi-sectoral coalition led by student groups occupied the parliament on March 19 calling for Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou to hold an inclusive citizens constitutional conference, for the legislature to reject the CSSTA in lieu of a monitoring mechanism for cross-strait agreements, to pass a monitoring mechanism for Cross-Strait Agreements in the current legislative session, and for legislators from both parties to address the people's demands. On March 23, the riot police started a crackdown of the protesters.

While the quest for greater economic integration is beneficial, CALD believes it is vital and necessary to respect parliamentary procedures and inclusive deliberations before policies are enacted. Transparency and accountability are prerequisites of a truly democratic government, and therefore any negotiation and consultation done behind closed doors or with undue haste is a violation of democratic principles.

CALD therefore condemns actions of the KMT government that weaken democratic institutions and processes and undermine the voice and rights of the people. CALD also calls for a peaceful resolution of the crisis in Taiwan and implores the government to implement maximum restraint in diffusing the tensions in the protest areas.

Finally, CALD supports and reiterates the call of its member-party, the Democratic Progressive Party of Taiwan (DPP), regarding the four principles that must be present in the Cross Strait Services Trade Agreement: "equal opening, fair competition, safeguard people's livelihood and ensure national security."

For the Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats:

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25 March 2014