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January 12, 2006

Dr. Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
US Department of State

Dear Madam Secretary of State,

On behalf of the leading association of Taiwanese-American scholars in the US, I write to applaud the clarity in which our government acknowledges that the people of Taiwan have the right to exercise referenda or constitutional reforms. The statement issued by your Department spokeswoman Janelle Hironimus on January 1, 2006 on this point reaffirmed the core democratic value shared by all citizens of any free society. Regrettably, in the same statement, President Chen Shui-bian of Taiwan was urged to adhere to the so-called "Four-No's" pledge ignoring the fact that the pledge was predicated on the absence of China's military threat against Taiwan. Contrary to its pledge to "peaceful rise", China has positioned over 700 missiles targeting Taiwan and others in the region. Furthermore, China had enacted the so-called "anti-secession law" in early 2005. All these have clearly made our government's recent reference to the "Four-No's" pledge utterly nonsensical.

As President Bush stated in Tokyo late last year, Taiwan is a model of democracy for China. A democratic Taiwan is a Taiwan for the Taiwanese, of the Taiwanese, and by the Taiwanese. Our anachronistic "One China" policy is inconsistent with the President's stated objective of promoting democracy everywhere in the world, as such a policy has the consequence of preventing democratic Taiwan from participating in international affairs as a responsible member of the international community.

My colleagues and I sincerely hope that the Bush administration recognizes that the notion of a "peaceful rise" of China will be a myth until China learns to respect the wishes and the rights of the Taiwanese to freely choose their own government and their own political future. It is our view that replacement of the three-decade old "One China" policy with "One China, One Taiwan" policy will better serve our long-term national interest.

Sincerely Yours,

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