

# International Intelligence

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## ***Kuomintang Leaders Make Historic Visit to China***

Leaders of the Kuomintang (KMT) Party in Taiwan on March 28 began their first official visit to Mainland China since 1949. Party vice-chairman Chiang Pin-kun led a 30-member delegation in a five-day visit to Guangzhou and Nanjing, and then Beijing, to pay respects to Dr. Sun Yat-sen, founder of the Chinese Republic, and to the KMT martyrs of the April 1911 Huanghuagang Uprising, which was led by Dr. Sun. The delegation was visiting to mark the Qingming Festival, which is the time to pay respects to the dead. After Guangzhou, they planned to go to the beautiful Mausoleum of Sun Yat-sen in Nanjing, the *China Daily* reported.

This is the first visit of KMT officials since the Revolution of 1949, when the Peoples' Liberation Army defeated the KMT forces in China. The KMT is now leading the opposition in Taiwan, and this visit is intended to ease relations across the Taiwan Straits. On his arrival, Chiang Pin-kun said: "We hope to help ease cross-strait tensions to ensure people's well-being, . . . [and] to do what the government [led by the pro-independence DDP] does not do and cannot do." Before he left Taiwan, Chiang said: "We oppose Taiwan independence. We advocate peace across the Strait and oppose the mainland using force."

In Beijing, the KMT delegation was scheduled to meet senior Communist Party leaders, and was expected to discuss the possible visit of KMT leader Lien Chan to mainland China. In Guangzhou, the delegation visited the Huanghuagang Martyr Cemetery, where 86 of the supporters of Sun Yat-sen, killed in the uprising, are remembered.

A leading issue of Chiang Pin-kun's visit was improving economic relations. On the agenda were expanding exports of Taiwan agricultural produce to the mainland, and increasing direct air links across the Taiwan Straits. During the Spring Festival this year, direct charter flights were started for the first time, and these may be expanded to other festivals and even regular weekend service. Chiang also wants to negotiate

opening direct cargo transport links, since so many Taiwanese have set up manufacturing facilities on the mainland. In Guangzhou, the biggest center of Taiwanese investment in China (worth some US\$35.6 billion), Chiang met with leaders of the Taiwanese community. The *China Daily* quoted Frank Tsai, executive director of Airmate Electrical (Shenzhen) Co. Ltd., saying that "As a leader of Taiwan, [President and DDP leader] Chen Shui-bian should focus his efforts on boosting economic development and trying to ensure Taiwanese people live better lives, instead of frequently challenging the mainland's bottom line."

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## ***Kofi Annan Outlines Plan for UN Reform***

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on March 21 called on world leaders to approve the most sweeping changes of the United Nations since it was founded 60 years ago.

The recommendations for these changes were contained in a 62-page report entitled "In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All," and was released on March 20, six months before world leaders meet at the UN headquarters for a summit called by Annan.

In presenting the report to the 191 members of the UN General Assembly, Annan stated that the reform proposals were a package, and not an *à la carte* menu, from which nations could choose only those aspects they fancy. "This hall has heard enough high-sounding declarations to last for some decades to come. We know what the problems are, and we all know what we have promised to achieve. What is needed now is not more declarations, but action to fulfill the promises already made."

The report calls for revitalizing the General Assembly. One of the proposals is for the creation of a Human Rights Council, elected by two-thirds of the General Assembly, to replace the Geneva-based Commission on Human Rights. Another key proposal calls for an expanded, more representative Security Council, and two op-

tions in this regard are proposed. One would add six new permanent members (expanding the Council from 15 to 24 members), and the other would create a new tier of eight semi-permanent members: two each from Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas.

The report outlines three pillars that Kofi Annan believes are required in the coming ten years; Freedom From Want; Freedom From Fear; and Freedom To Live in Dignity. The report concludes: "To make the right choice, leaders will need what the United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt, whose vision was so central to the founding of the United Nations, called 'the courage to fulfill their responsibilities in an admittedly imperfect world.' "

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## ***Right-Wing Rabbis Put 'Denura' Curse on Sharon***

Israel's Yosef Dayan, former close advisor to the late Jewish terrorist Meir Kahane, has been given permission to enact a *pulsa denura*—Aramaic for "lashes of fire"—or curse of death on Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, the *Jerusalem Post* reported on March 30. It was Dayan who had pronounced such a curse prior to the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995. He was given permission by Yeshua Ben Shushan, a cabbalistic rabbi who in 1980 was arrested for being part of a plot to blow up the Dome of the Rock on the al-Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

Dayan and Ben Shushan both believe in creating an Israeli monarchy, and since Dayan claims a lineage that goes back to King David, one may surmise whom he would like to be king.

Ben Shushan is one of the leading lights of the Israeli right wing. When he is not plotting to blow up mosques, he spends his time looking for a red heifer, so he and his crowd can start building the Third Temple in Jerusalem. According to him, it was the lack of a red heifer which was one of the "spiritual difficulties" which led to the failure the earlier plot to blow up the Dome of the Rock, one of Islam's holiest sites.