



China and Taiwan

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A historic event involving China and Taiwan will take place today, Saturday, November 7th. Chinese president Xi Jinping and Taiwan president Ma Ying-Jeou will meet for discussions in Singapore. It is the first summit at presidential level to take place between China and Taiwan since the end of the Chinese civil war in 1949. Taiwan is just 180 km from China but their relations have remained cautious and, at times, frosty for decades. China considers Taiwan as part of its territory and therefore does not regard it as a separate nation. Only 22 foreign governments recognise Taiwan as an independent country. The status of Taiwan is one of the more difficult problems in international politics to find a solution to.

The meeting between the two leaders is a major stepping stone to repair decades-old divisions. It could pave the way for similar meetings in the future. Special etiquette is already in place for the milestone encounter. The two parties have decided not to use the term "president" to address each other. Instead, they will use the word "mister". Further, the two leaders will not sign any agreements. Neither will they issue any joint statements or hold a joint press conference. A Chinese official said the meeting is to, "exchange views on promoting the peaceful development of [our] relations". A spokesman for Mr Ma said the talks, "aim to solidify relations between the two sides and keep the status quo".

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New Words or Phrases

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