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One must be honest and credible, and the same is true for the government of a country.

On September 14, 1991, China and Lithuania established ambassadorial-level diplomatic relations. The two sides clearly wrote in the joint communique on the establishment: “the government of the Republic of Lithuania recognizes the government of the People’s Republic of China as the only legitimate government of China, and Taiwan is an indispensable part of Chinese territory. The government of the Republic of Lithuania promises not to establish official relations or conduct official exchanges with Taiwan”. The year 2021 marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries, which should be jointly celebrated as a historical moment. However, due to a series of recent actions by the Lithuanian government, the atmosphere is mixed with some discords.

Recently, despite China’s repeated negotiations, Lithuanian government announced that it would allow Taiwan authorities to set up “representative offices” in the name of “Taiwan” in Lithuania. This is a blatant transgression of the aforementioned communique and seriously damages China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. Chinese government firmly opposes. On August 10, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs decided to recall China’s ambassador to Lithuania and asked the Lithuanian government to do the same.

The Lithuanian Foreign Ministry expressed regret over China’s decision, saying that Taiwan has set up representative offices in 74 countries, out of which 18 are in the EU, so as to show the so-called legitimacy of setting up “representative offices”

mutually. However, in countries that have established diplomatic relations with China, Taiwan can only set up representative offices in the name of “Taipei”. The fact that Lithuania allows the establishment of representative office in the name of “Taiwan” is totally different in its nature from other countries, and is far beyond the economic and culture exchanges.

The Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs seems to be cunningly blurring the line: on the one hand, it claims to abide by the One China Policy; on the other hand, it misinterprets the common concept so as to help Taiwan achieve a diplomatic “breakthrough”. This is a blatant challenge against China’s red line: sovereignty and territorial integrity. In contrast to the Communique on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations with Lithuania, the Lithuanian government’s actions were neither honest nor credible. Without doubt, Chinese government’s firm objection is reasonable.

Since the Opium War, China had suffered dire humiliation in 100 years, and Lithuania had been bullied on sovereignty and territorial issues for nearly a century. After the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, Chinese people has stood up on the world stage, and Chinese government has always upheld that all countries are equal despite their size. As a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, China fully supported Lithuania to become a full member of the United Nations shortly after the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations.

Taiwan is a part of China. Solving the Taiwan issue and realizing the reunification is China’s internal affairs, and it will not be interfered by any foreign forces. Lithuanian government’s agreement to set up a representative office in the name of “Taiwan” is an open support for Taiwan independence forces. By doing so, Lithuania has become an accomplice of the Taiwan independence forces to split China, which is contrary to the norms of the basic relations between countries. Lithuania also violates commitment to the principle of establishing diplomatic relations with China and hampers its own credibility.

Chinese people often say that one should learn from history, while Lithuanians also say “Istorija yra gyvenimo mokytoja” (history is the teacher of life). Complacency of tiny gains rendered from slyness and dishonesty may end up in being punished,

which is often seen in history. Small countries are easy to become pawns in the game among big countries and victims of geographical competition. If a small state involves to become an accomplice, overestimates its strength or even tries to kidnap a large country, it is quite clear who will prevail in the end.

It is believed that Lithuanian public will not allow some politicians' malicious consumption on the country's reputation. The literal tiny difference between Taipei and Taiwan could lead to serious consequences. If Taiwan authorities do not and dare not make it clear to the Lithuanian government, here it is: any action embroiling Taiwan independence will end up in a heavy cost in front of the Anti-Secession Law of the People's Republic of China.

Lithuania is a small economy, with a limited trade and investment scale with China, and accounts for a small proportion in the overall China-EU economic and trade cooperation. At present, the trade dependence between China and Lithuania is not high. However, this must not be the starting point for Lithuanian politicians to undermine the bilateral relations.

In recent years, China-Lithuania trade has continued to grow year by year, with 16.9% increase in first six months of 2021. It is quite an establishment in the backdrop of global combat against the Covid-19 pandemic. Lithuanian enterprises have explored Chinese market successfully through participating in fairs such as China International Import Expo and China-CEEC Expo. In addition, Lithuania plays an increasingly important role in deepening China-EU inter-connectivity cooperation. Given the abovementioned achievements, China and Lithuania should further explore each other's market to enlarge the bilateral trade and investment, bringing more benefits to the enterprises and people of the two countries.

China is the world's second largest economy, one of the world's largest and fastest-growing consumer markets, and one of the leaders in digital economy and largest green-development economies. Lithuania is promoting green and digital economy under the EU initiatives. For Lithuania, to make concerted efforts with China comprises great potential and opportunities for cooperation and development. Lithuanian government should abide by its commitments, focus on cooperation and

jointly create a favorable environment for the healthy development of China-Lithuania relations.

(Translated by SONG Dayang)