US must beware of being dragged into act of folly: China Daily editorial

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Given the global significance of China-US relations, it is natural that they should be constantly in the spotlight. So it is not surprising that the visit of US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to China, which begins on Thursday, has grabbed worldwide attention. Especially as it comes just two days after the historic Singapore meeting between US President Donald Trump and Democratic People’s Republic of Korea top leader Kim Jong-un.  
Aside from allowing them to compare notes on the summit and further coordinate their stances so that the current desirable momentum on the Korean Peninsula can continue, Pompeo’s visit also provides a good opportunity for Beijing and Washington to air their differences on a variety of bilateral issues such as trade, the South China Sea and Taiwan.  
While the world’s two largest economies are now deep in negotiations on trade, seeking to avoid a trade war, the frictions between Beijing and Washington over the South China Sea and Taiwan keep sparking heated words.  
Washington’s frequent sending of warships and warplanes to sensitive waters has drawn much ire from Beijing, which sees it as a provocation to its sovereignty and security. And the Trump administration’s growing penchant for playing the Taiwan card is also irking Beijing.  
On Tuesday, Marie Royce, US assistant secretary of state for educational and cultural affairs, attended a ceremony in Taipei, which marks the unveiling of a new office complex for the American Institute in Taiwan, which has served as the US representative office after Washington severed “diplomatic ties” with the island in 1979.  
The opening, together with the US’ new “Taiwan Travel Act”, shows Washington is now eying a bigger US presence on the island and using Taiwan as a linchpin in its overall containment strategy toward China. But what end is served by such a strategy? It is not good news for China-US ties, the US, or the world, since it only provokes more confrontation between the two sides.  
Taiwan remains the most sensitive issue in China-US relations, and Washington should handle the issue with wisdom and dexterity.  
Although it can’t be expected to resolve all the issues standing between the two countries, Pompeo’s visit signals that Beijing and Washington are committed to high-level communication to shore up ties. And as long as the two sides discuss their differences in good faith there is no reason why they should not find solid ground on which to do so.

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