

**Report by Jaushieh Joseph Wu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China (Taiwan), at the Foreign and National Defense Committee of the Legislative Yuan on March 17, 2022**

Honorable Chairperson, Members of the Legislative Yuan, ladies and gentlemen:

Good morning!

I'm pleased to be here today at the invitation of the Foreign and National Defense Committee to present a briefing on Taiwan's diplomatic work. The following report covers the international developments we have faced in our work, the accomplishments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since the previous Legislative Yuan session, as well as key future directions. Your feedback and suggestions will be greatly appreciated.

## **1. Foreword**

The international situation has undergone drastic transformations in recent years, presenting more challenges but also creating opportunities in our diplomatic work. The Ministry continues to push for steadfast diplomacy; convert challenges into opportunities; do its utmost to safeguard our national sovereignty, dignity, and interests; and advance all aspects of diplomacy. These include consolidating our diplomatic alliances, seeking greater international participation, deepening substantive relations with democratic partners, expanding areas of cooperation, and proactively contributing to the international community as a force for good in the world.

## **2. Major external developments facing Taiwan in its diplomatic work**

### **2.1. Democracies unite to oppose authoritarian expansionism**

With the global pandemic yet to abate, a succession of conventional and

nonconventional threats have arisen. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has not only caused a major humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and Europe, but has also affected the security of all democratic partners and posed a challenge to our beliefs. Nevertheless, we are deeply aware that appeasement will not bring peace. Democratic countries cannot be bystanders. Only by working together in solidarity to defend our shared values can we ensure peace and stability in the region and the world. As an indispensable member of the democratic community, Taiwan will cooperate with other democratic partners to safeguard regional peace and stability and curb authoritarian expansionism.

## **2.2. Indo-Pacific remains globally strategic region; China regarded as the greatest security challenge**

Last year, the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) was rebooted; a trilateral security partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States (AUKUS) was formed; and the United States withdrew from Afghanistan. In recent months, the Russia-Ukraine conflict has escalated; the United States, Japan, and the Republic of Korea held a trilateral ministerial meeting; the QUAD leaders held a meeting; the United States released its Indo-Pacific Strategy; and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited countries in the Asia-Pacific region. These events show that the Indo-Pacific remains a globally strategic hot spot and that China is still viewed as the greatest challenge. Focal international issues such as US-China rivalry, Taiwan Strait security, provocative action in the South China Sea, the China-India border dispute, the Australia-China discord, and wolf-warrior diplomacy are all linked to China.

## **2.3. China's continuous suppression of Taiwan internationally**

The biggest challenge for Taiwan's diplomacy continues to be suppression

and coercion by China in the international arena. In recent years, China has ramped up its rhetorical and military intimidation. It regularly sends military aircraft and vessels into areas around Taiwan and strongly suppresses our international participation. As well as luring diplomatic allies to switch sides, China pressures other countries not to develop bilateral relations with Taiwan or limit the level of exchanges. China excludes Taiwan from the UN system and other international organizations and even diminishes the status and rights of Taiwanese civil society organizations in sports, academia, and other fields. However, these multiple diplomatic challenges only increase our resolve to engage with the international community.

#### **2.4. Security across the Taiwan Strait has received more attention, highlighting Taiwan's geopolitical importance**

Through its malign actions targeting Taiwan, China not only unilaterally disrupts the status quo of stability across the Taiwan Strait but also severely threatens the peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific. In recent years, the importance of cross-strait peace has been reiterated at international events including QUAD, US-Japan, US-EU, EU-Japan, and G7 summits; the Japan-Australia, France-Australia, and UK-Australia 2+2 ministerial meetings; and the Australia-US Ministerial Consultations (AUSMIN). Last year, Taiwan was invited to participate in international democratic events, such as the US Summit for Democracy. This underscores the fact that security across the Taiwan Strait is a focus of international concern. Although we cannot draw direct parallels between Taiwan and Ukraine, the Russia-Ukraine war has increased international discussion on China's ambitions toward Taiwan, once again demonstrating Taiwan's unique strategic position. Taiwan stands on the front line of defense against Chinese authoritarianism. The survival of democratic Taiwan is integral to maintaining a free world. Taiwan's importance in terms of democratic

values, military strategy, and technological and economic security is clearer than ever.

## **2.5. Taiwan continues to expand international virtuous cycle and garner greater support**

As a responsible member of the international community, Taiwan has made concrete contributions to the defense of universal values, preservation of regional peace and stability, antipandemic cooperation, climate change alleviation, sustainable development, good governance, global supply chain security, disaster relief, and women's empowerment. This has brought Taiwan increased international backing and assistance, with more countries voicing support for Taiwan in the international arena. Japan, the United States, and multiple European countries donated COVID-19 vaccines to Taiwan last year. In turn, Taiwan showed its humanitarian spirit this year by donating supplies and sending medical teams to Palau to assist antipandemic efforts. We also donated vaccines to Somaliland, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Saint Lucia. The Ministry recently created a special account to collect donations from the public for Ukraine. Donations have already exceeded NT\$600 million. In addition, a first batch of 27 tons of medical supplies arrived in Poland in early March to be handed to Ukraine. The Ministry also set up an in-kind donation drive to send supplies to European nations taking in Ukrainian refugees. We hope this virtuous cycle will continue.

## **3. Major accomplishments in steadfast diplomacy since the last Legislative Yuan session**

### **3.1. Stable and cordial ties with diplomatic allies**

Taiwan highly values the cordial ties it enjoys with its diplomatic allies and continues to arrange exchanges and mutual visits by high-level officials,

while complying with antipandemic measures. Then Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernández Alvarado, the First Lady, and Foreign Minister Lisandro Rosales visited Taiwan last November to jointly celebrate the 80th anniversary of diplomatic ties between Taiwan and Honduras. Valerie Woods, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Belize, also visited Taiwan in November to attend the 2021 Open Parliament Forum coorganized by the Ministry and the Legislative Yuan.

In late January, Vice President Lai Ching-te visited Honduras as President Tsai Ing-wen's special envoy to attend the inauguration ceremony of President Xiomara Castro. During his visit, he twice met with President Castro, reinforcing Taiwan's strong diplomatic relations with Honduras. In Honduras, Vice President Lai also met with Belizean Prime Minister John Briceño, who recently took up our invitation to come to Taiwan. It was his maiden visit as Prime Minister and came 16 years after his first trip. The visit was of great importance to Taiwan-Belize relations.

Cooperation and exchanges with diplomatic allies are proceeding smoothly. These include a donation of patrol boats to Palau, a coast guard goodwill visit to Palau, and a joint patrol mission in international waters. Taiwan also signed agreements on postpandemic economic recovery, women's empowerment, and public health system enhancement with diplomatic allies including Paraguay and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The governments of Taiwan and Eswatini signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on a reconstruction fund. Taiwan continues to assist its diplomatic allies in combating the pandemic and recovering from natural disasters or social unrest.

The heads of state and prominent political figures of diplomatic allies have

publicly endorsed strong diplomatic ties with Taiwan. In an interview with a British newspaper at the end of last year, President of Guatemala Alejandro Giammattei stated that Taiwan is Guatemala's "only real ally." In January, I held a phone call with new Guatemalan Foreign Minister Mario Búcaro to further deepen bilateral ties.

### **3.2. Steady advances in Taiwan-US partnership**

The comprehensive Taiwan-US partnership is rock solid and developing steadily. We have strengthened our ties in multiple ways and continue to engage in close cooperation.

Vice President Lai made stopovers in the United States on his way to and from Honduras. He had cordial interactions with US Vice President Kamala Harris at the presidential inauguration in Honduras. During his transit in the United States, he had a videoconference meeting with Speaker of the US House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, 18 other members of Congress, and other figures from different fields.

The US government continues to take concrete actions in support of Taiwan. President Joe Biden sent former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Michael Glenn Mullen to lead a high-level bipartisan delegation to Taiwan this month. Coming in the context of the escalation of the Russia-Ukraine situation, this was the second US delegation to Taiwan since April last year and fully demonstrated the importance the United States attaches to Taiwan. In February, the United States announced the sale to Taiwan of equipment and services to maintain the Patriot missile system. The deal was the second arms sale to Taiwan by the Biden administration and a continuation of the policy of recent years to normalize arms sales. The US Indo-Pacific Strategy released last month mentioned Taiwan numerous times, showing the US

commitment to Taiwan. In addition, Minister without Portfolio Audrey Tang and Taiwan's Representative to the United States Hsiao Bi-khim were invited to attend the Summit for Democracy in December last year. The government of Taiwan submitted a written list of commitments to demonstrate its determination to promote democracy with democratic partners. The United States has issued many statements in support of Taiwan. During the Biden-Xi meeting last November, President Biden expressed strong opposition to any unilateral action that would change the status quo or undermine peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. He has also conveyed support for Taiwan on many international occasions, such as the East Asia Summit in the same month and the US-Japan Summit this year. Secretary Blinken reiterated the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait in a meeting with the Australian Foreign Minister this year. Secretary Blinken, National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, and other high-ranking officials have also reaffirmed the US commitment to the Taiwan Relations Act and the Six Assurances.

The US administration staunchly supports Taiwan's international participation. After Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of East Asia and Pacific Affairs Rick Waters in September last year publicly refuted China's misuse of UN General Assembly Resolution 2758, Secretary Blinken issued a statement on October 26 supporting Taiwan's participation in the United Nations. The press statement underscored that Taiwan's participation is not a political issue but a pragmatic one, and demonstrated strong support for our international engagement.

The US Senate and House of Representatives have shown bipartisan support for Taiwan and, in various ways, continue to urge the US administration to upgrade relations with Taiwan. Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) and

Representative Mark Takano (D-CA) separately led successive delegations to Taiwan last November, demonstrating staunch bipartisan support for Taiwan-US relations. Last November, Republican Senator Jim Risch (R-ID), ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and many of his colleagues introduced the Arm Taiwan Act, the Taiwan Deterrence Act, and a resolution commending the government of Lithuania for increasing ties with Taiwan and supporting its firm stance against coercion by China. In February, the House of Representatives passed the America COMPETES Act of 2022, introduced by the Speaker, which includes many components of previous acts backing Taiwan. Last December, President Biden signed into law the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022, which also included wording favorable to Taiwan. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022 that President Biden signed this month similarly contained numerous articles supporting Taiwan.

Taiwan and the United States have steadily broadened and institutionalized cooperation in many areas. For example, the third Taiwan-US Consultations on Democratic Governance in the Indo-Pacific Region and the second Taiwan-US Economic Prosperity Partnership Dialogue were held in November last year. An agreement to establish the Taiwan-US Technology Trade and Investment Collaboration was signed in December to diversify the development of key supply chains. The second high-level dialogue under the Taiwan-US Education Initiative was held in March this year to continue to deepen cooperation in Chinese language teaching. In addition, 13 online events were held last year under the Global Cooperation and Training Framework (GCTF). The United Kingdom, Slovakia, Israel, and Canada cohosted GCTF events for the first time. In other firsts, the Czech Republic, Saint Christopher and Nevis, and Eswatini held GCTF franchise events in their countries. Australia followed Japan by becoming an official



partner, and this month India hosted an overseas GCTF event for the first time. We hope this platform will continue to unite the international community in response to global issues.

In addition, a total of 43 resolutions backing Taiwan were passed in 30 states as well as Guam last year. These actions demonstrate the solid friendship between Taiwan and the United States.

### **3.3. Continued enhancement of Taiwan-Japan relations**

Taiwan-Japan relations are stable and cordial. There is a profound bond between our peoples. Japan has shown greater support for Taiwan in the international arena in recent years. Comprehensive and substantive cooperation continues to deepen. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and other high-ranking officials continue to follow the consistent position of the Japanese government. Cross-strait security has been brought up at various occasions this year, including the Japan-Australia and Japan-US summits and the Japan-France 2+2 meeting. The Japanese government has publicly endorsed Taiwan's participation in the World Health Assembly (WHA) as an observer on numerous occasions, and has welcomed our application to accede to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), making Japan the staunchest supporter of Taiwan among CPTPP members. In addition, a Taiwan policy task force established by the ruling Liberal Democratic Party last year had two 2+2 dialogues with Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party. Former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has shown generous support for Taiwan, stating on several occasions recently that "a Taiwan emergency is a Japanese emergency."

Taiwan and Japan enjoy close exchanges, with parliamentary interactions in particular growing more frequent. In November 2021, for the second time

the Japan-R.O.C. Diet Members' Consultative Council passed a resolution to support our participation in the WHA. The 45th Taiwan-Japan Economic and Trade Conference was held between January and February this year, during which MOUs were signed to promote customs cooperation and youth exchanges. The agreements will deepen bilateral economic and trade cooperation and partnership. The fourth Taiwan-Japan Third Country Market Cooperation Forum was conducted by videoconference in February to exchange views on market and industrial cooperation between Taiwanese and Japanese companies.

While ensuring food safety and adhering to international norms, Taiwan adjusted import restrictions last month on food products from five prefectures affected by the Fukushima disaster. Taiwan and Japan will continue to strengthen food safety cooperation and establish a platform for dialogue. In addition, Japan has donated six batches totaling over 4.2 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine to Taiwan, which is more than any other country. Taiwan in return has donated antipandemic supplies such as oxygen concentrators to Japan, creating a virtuous cycle. The Japan-Taiwan Co-Prosperity Leaders Alliance, formed at the end of last year, called for the institutionalization of bilateral exchanges. The move fully demonstrates the value of the friendship between Taiwan and Japan.

#### **3.4. Steady advancement of Taiwan-Europe relations**

Relations between Taiwan and Europe have maintained a healthy momentum. Taiwan is an important values-based partner for Europe in the Indo-Pacific region. Taiwan and the EU have fortified bilateral cooperation and jointly responded to global challenges through the Human Rights Consultation, the Labor Consultation, the EU Investment Forum, and other platforms.

Last October, President Tsai delivered, via video, an address to share Taiwan's democratic experience at the 25th Forum 2000 Conference held by the Czech Republic. I gave a closing address to the forum. The same month, I visited Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Belgium. During the trip, I delivered a keynote speech at a GLOBSEC conference in Slovakia, visited Czech Senate President Miloš Vystrčil, and addressed the first annual meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China (IPAC) in Rome via video link. Also in the same month, National Development Council Minister Kung Ming-hsin led an economic and trade delegation to the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Lithuania. Eighteen MOUs were signed to deepen economic and trade exchanges with Europe. In November, former Vice President Chen Chien-jen was invited to speak at a democracy forum in Lithuania and also paid a visit to Poland, further demonstrating Europe's recognition of our democracy.

Our European friends have shown their support by visiting Taiwan. Karol Galek, State Secretary of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic, led a delegation to Taiwan last December. He signed the protocol of the first session of the Taiwanese-Slovak Commission on Economic Cooperation and another nine MOUs. A delegation of the heads and members of parliamentary groups for relations with Taiwan from the three Baltic states; a delegation led by Alain Richard, Chairman of the French Senate's Taiwan Friendship Group; and a delegation led by François de Rugy, Chairman of the French National Assembly's France-Taiwan Parliamentary Friendship Group visited Taiwan in quick succession.

Europe has put security across the Taiwan Strait higher on its agenda. The importance of cross-strait peace has been brought up at several international

occasions such as the EU-US, EU-Japan, and UK-Australia summits. The coalition agreement of Germany's new government at the end of last year and a government program statement issued by the new Czech cabinet early this year both included wording in support of Taiwan. UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson publicly underscored the need for peace across the Taiwan Strait. In this cordial atmosphere, Taiwan and Europe have developed substantive relations in various areas. The Taiwanese Representative Office in Lithuania officially began operations last November. It is the first new representative office that Taiwan has set up in Europe in 18 years. Our government launched an investment fund for central and eastern Europe to promote cooperation and development in semiconductors and other sectors. Taiwan and the United Kingdom signed an MOU on the exchange of driving licenses last December. Taiwan and the government of the Flanders Region in Belgium signed a framework MOU on cooperation in January. In addition, the proposed European Chips Act was unveiled by the European Commission in February, marking the second time it had mentioned the desire to strengthen cooperation with Taiwan in an official document.

The European Parliament (EP) and the national parliaments of many European countries have been staunch supporters of Taiwan. Since the beginning of last year, the EP has passed 17 resolutions that are favorable to Taiwan. The *EU-Taiwan Political Relations and Cooperation Report* it adopted last October for the first time called for comprehensive enhancement of bilateral political relations. The EP also passed resolutions last month to adopt annual reports on the implementation of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defense Policy. The reports urge China to stop threatening the peace and stability of the Taiwan Strait and the Indo-Pacific region. Members of the Special Committee on Foreign Interference in all Democratic Processes in

the European Union, including Disinformation visited Taiwan last November, marking the first official EP delegation to Taiwan. Their subsequent report and policy recommendations were adopted in early March. In addition, Formosa Club cochairs from 25 parliaments in Europe as well as 41 EP members representing IPAC sent letters to high-ranking EU officials urging them to support Lithuania in resisting China's coercion. Eight national parliaments, including those in France and the Netherlands, have passed 13 resolutions backing Taiwan since the start of last year.

### **3.5. Further deepening the New Southbound Policy**

The New Southbound Policy is an important regional policy for Taiwan in Asia. Taiwan has achieved considerable success in deepening diverse exchanges with target countries.

In terms of economic and trade exchanges, Taiwan's exports to partner countries reached US\$82.58 billion in 2021, a record high since the New Southbound Policy was launched and representing year-on-year growth of 35.2 percent, exceeding the growth rate of total exports. Two-way investment also expanded significantly. More than 500 cases of inbound investments from these partners were approved, up 162.32 percent year-on-year, while outbound investments rose 105.97 percent. These figures highlight the importance of New Southbound Policy partner countries to future economic recovery and restructuring of global supply chains. Industrial collaboration forums were held virtually with Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam, the Philippines, and India. The 10th Taiwan-India Cooperation Forum was also held online. Promotional activities for the halal industry were held, market needs of New Southbound Policy partners were assessed, and assistance was provided to Taiwanese companies seeking business opportunities overseas.

More than 2,700 individuals on personnel exchanges from New Southbound Policy partner countries remained in Taiwan last year. They include graduates from industrial-academia collaboration programs for international students. Other programs launched by Taiwan include internships for Philippine young farmers and a digital trade skills training program.

With regard to resource sharing, Taiwan has continued to conduct online training, conferences, and keynote lectures that provided training to more than 170 healthcare professionals. Essential medical supplies were also sent to assist the fight against the pandemic. More than 110,000 individuals from New Southbound Policy partner countries came to Taiwan for medical treatment, accounting for roughly half of all recipients of international medical services provided by Taiwan.

Taiwan has continued to demonstrate its commitment to humanitarian assistance by donating US\$500,000 and nearly 100 tons of supplies to the Philippines for postdisaster reconstruction after it was hit by Typhoon Rai last December.

### **3.6. Increasing momentum for Taiwan's international participation**

Owing to China's interference, Taiwan has been unable to participate in the UN system, but the international community widely recognizes that Taiwan can help. An ever-increasing number of nations, including their executive and legislative branches of government, media, and citizens, have acknowledged that Taiwan's appeal for international participation is both appropriate and legitimate. The magnitude of support for Taiwan has increased steadily year after year.

Last October, Secretary Blinken issued a statement endorsing Taiwan's participation in the UN system. The international community continues to back Taiwan's participation in related specialized agencies and mechanisms. Diplomatic allies, including Paraguay and the Marshall Islands, endorsed Taiwan's participation in the World Health Organization (WHO) by giving speeches, submitting written statements, or sending letters to the WHO Director-General during the 150th session of the WHO Executive Board earlier this year. The United States, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the EU also echoed the appeal for Taiwan to join WHO. The parliaments of Canada, France, Italy, Argentina, and other countries have publicly supported Taiwan's participation in the 41st International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Assembly, which will be held in September, as well as other technical meetings. Taiwan's ICAO bid received additional public backing from Secretary Blinken. Following past precedents, Taiwan participated as a nongovernmental organization delegation in the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change last November. Diplomatic allies and parliamentarians of eight friendly nations sent letters or gave remarks calling for Taiwan's participation. During COP26, Taiwan held 30 bilateral meetings with 11 countries, including diplomatic allies, the United States, and the United Kingdom, and attended 14 side events. The Ministry also released a short film, *A Green Promised Land*, and held a Taiwan Day activity.

Taiwan continues to bolster its participation in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. Leader's Representative Morris Chang attended the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting and the Leaders' Dialogue with the APEC Business Advisory Council last November. During the meetings, he sought the support of APEC members for Taiwan's

participation in the CPTPP. Between late October last year and mid-February this year, Taiwan attended six APEC meetings for senior and higher-level officials—two Senior Officials’ Meetings, the Small and Medium Enterprises Ministerial Meeting, the Finance and Central Bank Deputies’ Meeting, the Finance Ministers’ Meeting, and the APEC Ministerial Meeting. During this same period, we hosted eight APEC seminars and activities. Taiwan donated a total of US\$1.5 million to APEC last year.

Taiwan continues to push for participation in many other international organizations. We established the Taiwan-Central American Bank for Economic Integration Partnership Trust Fund last November. We were reelected to the Executive Committee of the African-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO) and elected to the Management Committee of the AARDO Corpus Fund. During the 89th INTERPOL General Assembly, the administrations of diplomatic allies and numerous friendly nations as well as over 860 parliamentarians, local councilors, and representatives from 44 countries and multilateral organizations expressed support for Taiwan in various ways.

### **3.7. Taking proactive steps to make our voice heard internationally**

The Ministry continues to employ a variety of approaches to speak to the international community, including arranging interviews for President Tsai with the international media. Dating back to last year, I have given nearly 40 interviews to international media outlets, which were widely reported in print and electronic media. We provided assistance to journalists dispatched or relocated to Taiwan by eight news outlets, including the US-based ABC News and Japan-based *Nikkei Asia*. A total of 75 international media outlets are currently registered in Taiwan. We have also collaborated with the



international media to promote a positive image of Taiwan. The fourth series of the *Embracing Taiwan* program, produced and broadcast in partnership with television companies in New Southbound Policy partner countries, reached nearly 190 million viewers.

The Ministry's official Facebook page has attracted more than 230,000 followers since its launch, and the Facebook pages of our overseas missions have a combined total of nearly 720,000 followers. The 106 Facebook accounts and 230 websites of these overseas missions help promote our key interests. Meanwhile, our official Twitter account has reached more than 230 million users, effectively raising Taiwan's international visibility.

#### **4. Further advancing steadfast diplomacy**

The Ministry continues to forge ahead with steadfast diplomacy, focusing on the following priorities:

##### **4.1. Consolidating ties with diplomatic allies**

We are doing our utmost to consolidate relations with diplomatic allies. With due adherence to pandemic prevention regulations, we continue to promote high-level mutual visits and expand bilateral cooperation. We will also work with democratic partners to support our allies. However, Taiwan will not engage in a pointless game of checkbook diplomacy with China. When Taiwan and Nicaragua terminated diplomatic relations, more than 100 prominent political figures from the United States, Japan, European countries, and diplomatic allies expressed support for Taiwan. This has strengthened our belief that consolidating ties with diplomatic allies based on the principle of mutual assistance for mutual benefit is the right way forward.

#### **4.2. Deepening relations with like-minded and friendly nations**

We will make good use of the favorable international climate, align with friendly forces worldwide, and continue to bolster partnerships with such like-minded nations as the United States, Japan, European countries, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand to jointly counter threats and challenges and advance regional peace, stability, and prosperity.

#### **4.3. Increasing international participation and making proactive contributions**

Based on the principles of professionalism, pragmatism, and making contributions, we will combine public- and private-sector resources and strengths to expand international participation through various means, while safeguarding our rights and interests in organizations to which we already belong.

#### **4.4. Strengthening implementation of the New Southbound Policy**

To implement this policy, our government is focusing on four pillars: economic and trade cooperation, personnel exchanges, resource sharing, and regional connectivity. Taiwan's soft power is creating new mutually beneficial cooperation models as we seek to make substantive contributions to regional development.

#### **4.5. Endeavoring to join regional economic integration mechanisms and strengthening regional cooperation**

Our highest priority is joining the CPTPP. Our government officially submitted an application for accession last year. The Ministry will continue to actively seek the support of CPTPP members through bilateral and multilateral channels. Japan has already said that it welcomes our bid.

#### **4.6. Making our voice heard internationally**

We continue to employ diverse approaches to communicate our message to the international community so that the world can better understand and further support Taiwan. In particular, we will arrange foreign media interviews and increase our use of new media platforms to highlight a positive image of Taiwan.

#### **4.7. Fulfilling our international responsibilities**

Taiwan works closely with friendly countries to respond to changes in the international landscape, upholds international norms, and takes action to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals. We will staunchly uphold the worldwide consensus on maintaining the status quo of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and safeguard democratic values and the rules-based international order.

#### **4.8. Improving public services and facilitating greater travel convenience**

The Ministry continues to improve public services and facilitate greater travel convenience. During the pandemic, the Ministry has provided a wide range of services and travel updates to expatriates and has flexibly processed marriage visa interviews. We have also employed diverse channels to provide travel safety advice. Furthermore, we have proactively promoted international recognition of Taiwan's digital COVID-19 vaccination certificate, which is now connected to the EU Digital COVID Certificate system.

### **5. Conclusion**

I would like to once again thank the Legislative Yuan and the distinguished members of the Committee for the support and encouragement you give to the Ministry. Despite formidable changes to the international landscape, challenges

to regional security, and threats from China, the Ministry will forge ahead with our promotion of steadfast diplomacy; resolutely engage with the international community; fully demonstrate Taiwan's vitality, professionalism, and resilience; safeguard Taiwan's sovereignty, dignity, rights, and interests; and protect the values of democratic freedom. We very much look forward to your continued support and assistance. Thank you!