

Closing remarks at the 2021 Open Parliament Forum

The Honorable speaker Woods of the Belize House of Representatives;
Honorable Members of parliaments from Mexico, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia;
Secretary-General Lin Jih-jia of the Legislative Yuan;
Dr. Michael Hsiao of the Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation;
Mr. Manpreet Singh Anand of NDI,
distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon!

I am honored to speak at closing ceremony of the 2021 Open Parliament Forum. I would like to thank our partners, including the Legislative Yuan, the National Democratic Institute (NDI), and the Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation for cohosting this monumental event. I am proud that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs can partner with you to make this event a reality.

Open government and open parliament have been important pursuits of democracies for decades. I am proud to say that Taiwan people and government has adhered to the concept and have tried hard to reach the goal. And I am quite happy that Taiwan is the first country that is not a member of the OGP to host this event in Asia.

As Ambassador Mitchell said in the opening ceremony, no democracy is perfect. And we understand our democracy is not perfect, and our government, including our LY, may not be as open and responsible as we desire it to be. But I can tell you that the Taiwanese people don't turn back after we embarked on the road of democratization. We will continue to be sensitive to the problems of our democracy, and try hard to address them. This will be an endless effort, but we have to be relentless, especially when Taiwan has been seriously challenged by authoritarianism, which seemed to be determined to crush our democracy through military coercion and hybrid warfare.

Yes, we are concerned about the threat posed by authoritarianism, which has tried to take advantage of the openness and transparency of our democratic system by infiltration into and

manipulate our society. But we will never give in to authoritarianism. We have confidence that democracy will prevail at the end. And Taiwan will also prevail because we are a democracy, and we are not alone.

Indeed, we are not alone. We have democratic partners around the world who want to strengthen relations with Taiwan, want to support our participation in the international organizations, and want to caution that peace and stability and status quo across the Taiwan Strait must be maintained. We are encouraged by the support and will continue to stand tall at this outpost of democracy. After all, when we look beyond Asia, we have seen great examples in Europe who have endured political pressure and the threat of hybrid warfare by their authoritarian neighbor, but continue to stand tall like moral giants. You are our beacon.

Ladies and gentlemen, the 2021 Open Parliament Forum is drawing to a close. But this is also a new beginning for democracies around the world to work together as one. Trust me, you will have a good friend and reliable partner in Taiwan. Together, we will make a difference.

Thank you!