

**Recorded video remarks
by H.E. Joseph Wu, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Taiwan
for the conference on the Challenge of China**

**Human Rights Research and Education Centre (HRREC)
University of Ottawa
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Professor Simon, Professor Mendes, and Director Chou;
Dear friends and colleagues;
Ladies and gentlemen:

It is a great honor to be invited to this remarkable event. I would like to congratulate the Human Rights Research and Education Centre on its 40th anniversary. Throughout the last four decades, the Centre has been a leader in supporting and advancing human rights worldwide.

I think we can all agree that we are in a time of rapid change. Many of the emerging changes create challenges to stability; to the rules-based international order; and to our shared values of freedom, democracy, and human rights. And most of the new challenges that we face today have one common component. That is China.

In recent years, the Chinese communist regime has

accelerated its authoritarian agenda both at home and abroad. We have seen distressing images of Shanghai citizen's inhumane suffering during the zero-Covid lockdown. We have all heard the many tragic stories from Xinjiang and Tibet. And we all witnessed the brutal enforcement of the National Security Law in Hong Kong in 2020, which has totally ruined its freedom and openness.

And we don't need to be reminded that the day after tomorrow is June 4. The authoritarian regime that wrote the bloody history of the Tiananmen massacre 33 years ago is no better today than it was back then. In fact, it is now stronger, smarter, more ruthless, and better equipped with economic power and high-tech capabilities.

Beijing is using its increased influence to undermine democracies around the world. It exerts diplomatic, military, trade, and technological coercion. It exploits freedom of speech in democracies to flood us with propaganda and fake news. And it weaponizes economic power to target our free market systems. It is now all too clear that China is exploiting the openness of democracy to destroy the rules-based international order and establish an alternative set of rules that serves its own political

agenda. And that, my dear friends, is what we must stand up against, because human rights is anathema to authoritarianism. Free and open democracy is what we need to nurture humanitarianism.

The conflict between authoritarianism and democracy has been brought into sharp focus by the war in Ukraine. In the early days of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, social media posts by Chinese diplomats on U.S. platforms almost exclusively blamed the U.S, NATO and the West for the conflict. And just two weeks ago while U.S President Biden was visiting Japan, China and Russia conducted a joint patrol of strategic bombers in the Sea of Japan. These two cases clearly shows that China is collaborating with Russia, and threatening the security of the region.

The people in Taiwan understand all too well what it is like to be bullied by an authoritarian aggressor, and we have supported Ukraine from day one through a number of concrete actions. Since the early stages of the conflict, Taiwan has shipped medical and humanitarian relief supplies to Ukraine and other neighboring countries for prompt delivery. A substantial part of these donations were

generously offered by the Taiwanese people on their own initiative. We also provided approximately 33 million US dollars in financial assistance.

We are glad to see that Canada has remained on high alert against the mounting security threats and has led countermeasures to oppose authoritarian expansion. In the fight to safeguard democracy, Taiwan will always be your most loyal partner. For decades we have stood strong, safeguarding freedom and prosperity in the center of East Asia. In cooperation with Canada and other like-minded countries, Taiwan defends the universal values of democracy, freedom, and human rights—despite nonstop coercion from China.

Taiwan is also an indispensable economic partner. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the vulnerability of global supply chains. Taiwan's high-tech capability and expertise in the semiconductor industry is what the world needs in the process of restructuring and establishing secure, reliable and resilient global supply chains.

And, most notably, Taiwan has valuable experience of

countering China's coercion. Having long faced multiple threats from the Chinese government, Taiwan has developed various means to counter the challenges of military pressure, nontraditional security threats, economic coercion, cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns, and cognitive and hybrid warfare tactics. As authoritarian regimes are becoming more skillful in maneuvering in the gray zone, we would like to share such experience with partner democracies.

Taiwan and Canada share common strategic goals and universal values. We are glad to see that the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait has been reiterated in G7 summit communiqués. We also appreciate that over the past few years Canadian naval ships have conducted freedom of navigation operations in our region. We are grateful to the Canadian government for expressing staunch support for Taiwan's participation in international bodies, including the World Health Assembly and the International Civil Aviation Organization.

As recent geopolitical developments show, economic

resilience is also key to sustaining the free world. Taiwan is a major trade and investment partner for Canada, and we have served as a responsible member of the WTO and also meets the high standards of the CPTPP. Taiwan's accession to the CPTPP would benefit the region. We therefore urge Canada to support our application to join the trading block.

In closing, I would like to salute the HRREC and all participants here today for your efforts in protecting and promoting human rights worldwide. Taiwan and my ministry stand ready to work with you in every way possible to advance our shared cause. By working together, we can deter the challenge of authoritarianism, safeguard democracy and human rights, and build a more stable and prosperous world.

Thank you.