

Foreign Policy Report, 8th Congress of the Legislative Yuan, 8th Session

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I. Foreword

Honorable chairperson, members of the Legislative Yuan, ladies and gentlemen:
good morning!

It is an honor to brief the Legislative Yuan's Foreign and National Defense Committee on the recent undertakings of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). On behalf of my colleagues, I would like to extend my appreciation to President Wang Jin-pyng, Vice President Hung Hsiu-chu, and the other members of the Legislative Yuan for their support and enthusiastic participation in parliamentary diplomacy.

Lately, the South China Sea issue has caught a great deal of international attention. However, our sovereignty over the islands and surrounding waters is indisputable. At the opening ceremony of the 2015 ILA-ASIL Asia-Pacific Research Forum on May 26 this year, President Ma Ying-jeou noted proposed that the East China Sea Peace Initiative, which we proposed three years ago, has greatly assuaged tension in the area. Subsequently, we signed a fisheries agreement with Japan. Based on the same spirit, this year we put forward the South China Sea Peace Initiative, calling on parties concerned to shelve sovereignty disputes and jointly develop resources, so as to resolve issues peacefully and make this body of water a sea of peace and cooperation. The initiative was welcomed by the United States and the European Parliament, affirming once again our proactive role as a peacemaker in the Asia-Pacific region.

MOFA has continued to promote policies that gain the approbation of the people. This year, eight more countries and territories, including the Philippines, Myanmar, India, Iran, and Qatar, have extended more convenient visa treatment

to our nationals, resulting in 148 jurisdictions in the world that now offer us either visa waivers, landing visas or visa conveniences. This number represents 98 percent of the countries most frequently visited by our nationals. Also, the power ranking of ROC passports is among the world's top 30, indicating that our nationals now enjoy greater conveniences when traveling overseas and that our country's international status has been raised substantially.

Following the Formosa Fun Coast water park powder explosion in late June, over 30 countries expressed concern and condolences. Johns Hopkins Burn Center in the United States also offered assistance. MOFA then quickly helped arrange for five of their burn experts to fly here in mid-July on the special charter flight on which President Ma was returning from his visit to allies in the Caribbean and Central America. These experts proceeded to help with the victims of the explosion and discuss burn treatments with our medical teams. During this time, Japan not only dispatched critical care experts to share their experience and new technologies with our medical personnel, but also delivered donated skin grafts and medical equipment. The Netherlands-based Euro Skin Bank also donated skin grafts, and Israel donated medical equipment. The ROC government has expressed its sincere appreciation for all the assistance from overseas.

This year happens to be the 70th anniversary of the end of the World War II, victory in the War of Resistance against Japan, and Taiwan's subsequent retrocession. This July we held a series of activities as part of the Executive Yuan's integrated efforts to commemorate the 70th anniversary, like the governments of many other countries. For instance, MOFA invited foreign guests to visit Taiwan and participate in international conferences and commemorative events, created film clips for foreign audiences, and held

concerts. Descendants of three former US presidents (Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry Truman, and Dwight Eisenhower) were invited to Taiwan to highlight the close alliance between the ROC and the United States in the War of Resistance against Japan. During their visits, they also learned more about the role that the ROC played in the War of Resistance, and its contributions to maintaining world freedom, democracy and peace.

Next I will report on the international landscape, our current foreign policy and recent results, and our prospects and future directions. Any comments and suggestions would be highly appreciated.

II. Current international landscape

A. The impact of South China Sea disputes on international relations

Recently the situation in the South China Sea area has been volatile. Although the United States takes no official stance on the issue of sovereignty, it stresses protection of the freedom of navigation and overflight in this area, as well as the importance of peaceful resolutions to related disputes. At the end of May during the Shangri-La Dialogue 2015 in Singapore, US Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter expressed serious concern to mainland China, demanding “an immediate and lasting halt to land reclamation” and opposing “any further militarization of disputed features.” In August at the ASEAN Regional Forum and its related Ministerial Meetings, US Secretary of State John Kerry also expressed concern over mainland China’s land reclamation in the South China Sea.

The Permanent Court of Arbitration held a closed door hearing between July 7 and 13 on the arbitration filed against mainland China by the Philippines regarding the latter’s South China Sea claims. It is reviewing whether it has jurisdiction and admissibility over the case, and is expected to reach a decision

by the end of the year. As the decision is pertinent to territorial dispute developments in the South China Sea, the ROC and the rest of the international community are watching it closely.

B. Current Asia-Pacific security

Mainland Chinese leader Xi Jinping is making an official visit to the United States, and will meet September 25 with President Barack Obama, who will also host a state dinner for him. The two sides highly value this visit. Before Xi's official trip, US National Security Advisor Susan Rice went to mainland China in August to discuss Xi's visit, and Meng Jianzhu, a Politburo member in charge of state security, went to the US as Xi's special envoy. Discussions during Meng's trip focused on cyber attacks against the United States. The two sides have tried to maintain a positive atmosphere for Xi's visit and have looked forward to securing concrete progress regarding a bilateral investment treaty (BIT) and climate change. However, their differences of opinion and engagements on the issues of Internet security, the South China Sea, RMB exchange rates, and human rights continue to be points of interest throughout the international community.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe paid a state visit to the United States in late April, becoming the first Japanese prime minister to address a joint session of Congress. During his trip, Abe also signed the new US-Japan defense guidelines to further enhance bilateral military and security cooperation. The United States also hopes that Japan will play a more active role in international and regional affairs, such as through peace-keeping missions, humanitarian aid, and disaster relief.

Relations between mainland China and Japan seem to be improving, as can be

seen from the Xi-Abe meeting at the 60th anniversary of the Asian-African Conference, also known as the Bandung Conference, in Indonesia this April. However, mainland China reacted strongly to Japan's concerns over the South China Sea issue and the possibility of its Maritime Self-Defense Force participating in patrols of the area. In addition, on September 19 the Upper House of Japan's Parliament approved new national security bills passed by the Lower House on July 16. This also incited heated responses from mainland China. In recent years, the two have been at odds over competing sovereignty claims over the Diaoyutai Islands, the Japanese prime minister's visit to Yasukuni Shrine, and mainland China's East China Sea Air Defense Identification Zone. The South China Sea and the new Japanese national security Act have complicated their bilateral relations even more.

C. Current global security

The nuclear development in Iran has long plagued the Middle East and has impeded its foreign relations with other countries. On July 14, Iran, the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, and Germany (P5+1) completed their final talks in Vienna, reaching an agreement called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Iran reiterated its plan to abandon its nuclear development ambitions, and the United Nations Security Council, as well as related regional international organizations and countries, agreed to lift economic and trade sanctions against Iran. This historic agreement has received wide affirmation from the international community. The ROC government also praised the efforts of these seven countries to complete the negotiations, and expressed the hope that the agreement could be realized as early as possible so as to facilitate peace and stability in the Middle East.

As Islamic State (ISIS) continues its reign of terror, the resultant turmoil has

forced millions of people to flee their homes and become refugees. Under the circumstances, the people of Syria are suffering the most, as they are hit with both a civil war and ISIS attacks. As a result, refugees have surged into Europe, leading to serious problems in the provision of humanitarian aid and causing the EU to fast track related responses. However, European countries have varying degrees of economic development and face strong domestic and external pressures, with refugees deeply impacting each country's social welfare policies.

D. Economic integration developments in the Asia-Pacific

The Articles of Agreement for the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), initiated by mainland China, were signed in Beijing on June 29 by 51 of the 57 prospective founding member states. The organization is expected to start operations by the end of 2015. Mainland China has multifaceted goals to launch the AIIB. For instance, the bank can help enhance mainland China's economic and trade cooperation with countries related to its One Belt, One Road initiative, thereby increasing its influence and that power of its discourse in Asia, Europe, and Africa. It could also better export its infrastructure construction capabilities and surplus production, while internationalizing the renminbi as the AIIB develops. To strengthen our trade and financial footing, expand our international participation, and explore related business opportunities, in the future MOFA will cooperate closely with related government agencies to gain AIIB membership while ensuring our dignity, equal standing, and appropriate appellation.

As for negotiations on economic and trade agreements in the Asia Pacific, those for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) were expected to be completed during the ministerial meeting held in Hawaii this past July. However, since major countries, including the United States, Japan, New Zealand, Malaysia, Australia,

and Canada, made little progress in talks on various issues, such as dairy market entry and drug patent expiration, the results were rather lackluster. The economic and trade ministers of the 12 TPP member states did issue a joint statement expressing pleasure at achieving major progress and confidence in reaching an agreement. However, under US federal trade promotion authorization (TPA) laws, the US president has to inform Congress 90 days before signing a trade pact. As President Obama has yet to inform Congress of his intent to sign the TPP, the possibility of the member states signing the TPP at the 2015 APEC leaders' summit on November 18 and 19 has decreased dramatically. In addition, Canada is scheduled to hold a federal election on October 19 and the United States is entering into a hot election season, which will all affect the process and progress of the final negotiations on the TPP. Aside from paying close attention to TPP developments, MOFA will continue to express to member states Taiwan's willingness and determination to join the platform with the hope to be included in the second-round of TPP accession negotiations soon.

As to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which has held nine rounds of negotiations, its third ministerial-level meeting took place in Kuala Lumpur on August 24. The participants apparently have reached consensus for the most part on chapters regarding modalities for goods in trade. They hope to complete substantive negotiations before the end of the year and resolve other technical issues as early as possible next year. The RECP member states widely differ in their economic development stages, causing great challenges to the negotiations. Whether these negotiations can be completed by year's end remains to be seen, so we will continue to observe their progress closely.

III. Viable diplomacy: policy and its achievements

A. Strengthening exchanges and cooperation with allies

(1) Enhancing exchanges between senior officials to deepen friendships

- i. From July 11 to 18, President Ma Ying-jeou visited three diplomatic allies—the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Nicaragua. It was his second visit to Haiti and Nicaragua, and third to the Dominican Republic. Besides meeting with the heads of state of these three allies, President Ma addressed a joint session of the Dominican Republic National Congress, partook in the inauguration ceremony of the Haitian Supreme Court building with President Michel Joseph Martelly, and toured a joint project on product display and sales area for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises in Nicaragua.
- ii. Between July 21 and 27, I personally led a delegation to our Central American ally El Salvador. During this time, I had an audience with President Salvador Sanchez Ceren and met with the country's vice president, foreign minister and other high ranking officials. I also attended the eighth Ministerial Conference Community of Democracies, where I delivered the speech “Democracy and Development—The Experience of Taiwan,” illustrating our democratic achievements, and exchanged views with representatives of other countries.
- iii. Since March, several heads of state and high-ranking officials from our allies have led delegations to the ROC, including Swaziland King Mswati III and Queen Inkhosikati Make LaMotsa; Honduras President Juan Orlando Hernández and Mrs. Hernandez; El Salvador Vice President Oscar Samuel Ortiz Ascencio; St. Lucia Prime Minister Kenny Davis Anthony; St. Christopher and Nevis Prime Minister Timothy

Sylvester Harris; Belize Governor-General Sir Colville Young; Republic of Haiti Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship Pierre-Duly Brutus and Mrs. Brutus; Dominican Republic Minister of Foreign Affairs Andres Navarro Garcia and Mrs. Navarro; Dominican Republic Senate President Cristina Lizardo Mezquita; Nicaragua Chief of General Staff Headquarters of the Ministry of Defense Oscar Salvador Mojica Obregon; São Tomé and Príncipe Minister for Foreign Affairs Manuel Salvador dos Ramos and Mrs. Ramos; São Tomé and Príncipe National Assembly President José da Graça Diogo and Mrs. Diogo; Belize Speaker of the House of Representatives Michael George Peyrefitte; Paraguay Chamber of Deputies President Hugo A. Velázquez Moreno and Mrs. Velazquez; Panama Minister of Interior Milton Herizuez and Mrs. Herizuez; President of the Commission for Public Infrastructure and Canal Affairs of Panama's National Assembly Jose Antonio Dominguez; Burkina Faso's National Transition Council President Chériff Sy and Mrs. Sy; Central American Parliament President Armando Bardales Paz and Mrs. Bardales; Palau Senate President Camsek Chin; Palau Minister of State Billy Kuartei; Palau Minister of Education Sinton Soalablai; Nauru Parliament Speaker Ludwig Scotty and Mrs. Scotty; Kiribati Minister for Lines and Phoenix Islands Development Tawita Temoku; and Kiribati Minister for Communication, Transportation, Tourism and Industry Development Rimeta Beniamina and Mrs. Beniamina. Their visits have helped foster mutual understanding and cordial relations.

(2) Institutionalizing foreign aid for the benefit of ROC allies

- i. Upholding three foreign aid policy principles

To help our diplomatic allies improve their basic infrastructure, national development, health and educational standards, and living conditions, we carry out our foreign aid policy in accordance with three principles—seeking proper goals, acting lawfully, and exercising effective administration—and the spirit of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. As of July 2015, the ROC had dispatched 15 technical, medical, industrial service, and investment and trade missions, comprising a total of 142 experts, technicians, and project managers. They carried out 70 joint projects in the areas of agriculture, fisheries, horticulture, animal husbandry, handicrafts, healthcare, water resources management, transportation, information and communication technology, industrial service, Chinese language education, volunteer work, and trade and investment. These have benefited the peoples of 32 countries in the Asia-Pacific, West Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America.

ii. Raising transparency

MOFA continues to use the Official Development Assistance database to compile our foreign aid statistics and file them with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. A related report, the 2014 Annual Report of the International Cooperation and Development Fund (TaiwanICDF), was prepared this April, submitted to the Executive Yuan, and forwarded to the Legislative Yuan for its reference. These efforts have improved the transparency of our overseas humanitarian assistance.

(3) Interacting with diplomatic allies

i. In the Asia-Pacific

The ties we maintain with six allies in the region are sound. These diplomatic partners have always supported our efforts to participate in the World Health Assembly and other international organizations. Here are a few examples of our substantive developments in bilateral exchanges and cooperation since our last report:

- (a) Palau's Senate President Camsek Chin led a delegation to Taiwan between March 21 and 27. During this time, they called on the Kaohsiung City government to talk about the establishment of sister city ties between it and Palau's Angaur state.
- (b) David Adeang, concurrently Nauru's Minister Assisting the President and Minister for Finance and Minister for Justice and Border Control, and Lionel Aingimea, Secretary for Justice and Border Control, visited Taiwan between June 6 and 8. Minister Adeang and Minister of the Interior Chen Wei-zen signed the Agreement between the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of China and the Ministry for Justice and Border Control of the Republic of Nauru Concerning Cooperation in Immigration Affairs and Human Trafficking Prevention. This pact benefits bilateral cooperation on human trafficking and crime prevention.

ii. In Europe

- (a) The ROC and the Holy See maintain close interaction, and a few important persons from the Vatican came to Taiwan during the past six months. For instance, Archbishop Savio Hon Tai-Fai, S.D.B., secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, visited Taiwan in May. On his trip, he also attended the 90th anniversary activities for Fu Jen Catholic University. In addition,

Rev. Prof. José María La Porte, Dean of the School of Church Communications at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, came here this past August to engage in academic, cultural, and religious exchanges.

- (b) We have also participated in various international humanitarian aid activities. In response to Pope Francis's call to provide humanitarian aid to Nepali earthquake victims in April, Taiwan offered assistance through the Holy See's Pontifical Council Cor Unum for Human and Christian Development. In addition, our embassy to the Holy See worked with the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta to carry out a humanitarian healthcare program for leprosy patients at hospitals in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

iii. In Latin America

- (a) We maintain stable and friendly ties with 12 diplomatic allies in Latin America, enjoying frequent bilateral high level visits. We continue to promote programs in such areas as transportation, public order, agriculture, fisheries, medical care, drinking water, disaster prevention, tourism, vocational training, and green energy to help improve the livelihood of allied countries. Our efforts have been lauded by their people across the political spectrum. In addition, through La Comisión Mixta de Cooperación entre la República de China (Taiwan) y Países del Istmo Centroamericano (Mixed Commission for Cooperation between Countries of the Central American Isthmus and the ROC) and the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, we have provided loans and

resources for projects associated with the Central American Integration System. We have also helped our diplomatic allies explore opportunities for their products in the markets of Taiwan and other Asia-Pacific countries so as to add impetus to their economic development.

(b) Saint Lucia, one of our allies in the Caribbean, set up an embassy in Taipei this June, the nation's first in Asia. The unveiling ceremony of the embassy was presided over by Prime Minister Kenny Anthony of Saint Lucia.

(c) During his visit in September, El Salvador Vice President Oscar Samuel Ortiz Ascencio presided over the opening of an economic office under the Embassy of the Republic of El Salvador in the ROC.

iv. In Africa

We continue to strengthen our diplomatic relations with Burkina Faso, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Swaziland, as follows:

(a) Political instability in Burkina Faso has gradually abated since the end of 2014, paving the way for the presidential and congressional elections scheduled for this October. I personally conducted a working visit there in February to bolster high-level contacts and channels. However, a coup broke out there on September 16, resulting in the kidnap of the interim president, prime minister, and some ministers by the presidential guards. At present, our embassy staff members, their families, and other compatriots there are safe. We are closely monitoring the situation and developing contingency plans in the event of changes.

(b) On behalf of the ROC, I attended the 47th birthday of His Majesty King Mswati III of Swaziland in April, and I was accorded a high level of courtesy during my visit.

(c) Likewise, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Simon Ko went to offer São Tomé and Príncipe our sincere congratulations on its 40th anniversary of independence this July.

In addition, we continue to advance bilateral cooperation and exchanges with our allies, offering a variety of scholarships to help cultivate their human resources. Meanwhile, they have shown firm support of our efforts to attend the meetings of UN specialized agencies, and have spoken out for us at appropriate occasions.

B. Bolstering substantive relations with other partner countries

(1) The United States

i. High ranking US officials call Taiwan an important security and economic partner.

(a) In his response to a written House of Representatives interpellation this April, US Secretary of State John Kerry stated that Taiwan is an important security and economic partner and plays a key role in America's rebalance towards the Asia-Pacific region.

(b) In her address on May 21, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Susan Thornton stressed again the comprehensive, durable, and mutually beneficial partnership between Taiwan and the United States, and called our country a vital partner of the United States in East Asia.

(c) At a ceremony for the ROC government's donation to the Pan American Development Foundation on March 11, Andrew Weber,

former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Defense Programs and the current Deputy Coordinator for Ebola Response at the US Department of State, said that relations between Taiwan and the United States are more stable than ever. Speaking at the launch of the first course held by the Ebola Prevention Training Center in Tainan on March 18, Chris Castro, director of the Office of Taiwan Coordination at the US Department of State, pointed out in Chinese that our bilateral relations have never been stronger and friendlier.

ii. Substantive bilateral cooperation continues to deepen and expand.

(a) In May, US Senior Official for APEC Robert Wang came to Taiwan to attend the Conference on Next Generation Power in Asia, where he made a keynote speech to participants, including various professionals and 30-plus senior government officials from seven Southeast Asian countries, further demonstrating the close cooperation between Taiwan and the US on regional issues.

(b) US Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs Charles Rivkin visited the ROC this past June to kick off the establishment of the US-Taiwan Digital Economy Forum and the IP and Innovation Joint Workplan, bearing testament to our deep bilateral exchanges in economy and trade.

(c) The ROC and the US established the Global Cooperation Training Framework (GCTF). The two of us announced the establishment of the framework on June 1 with Assistant Secretary Rivkin, who was visiting Taiwan at that time. The purpose is to use the achievements of bilateral cooperation on global issues as models for other nations

in the region. The two sides also held a workshop this past August in Tainan on the testing and diagnosis of Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS)—our first international training program since the establishment of the GCTF. The results of the workshop earned accolades from the US and many other countries.

- iii. US Congress members extend strong friendship to President Ma during his transits in the US.

President Ma Ying-jeou made a stopover in Boston on his way to visit three of our allies in Central America this July. He was warmly greeted by Representatives Blake Farenthold and Stacey Plaskett at Logan International Airport. President Ma also made a stopover in Los Angeles on his return to Taiwan. During the two transit stops in the US, President Ma interacted with 10 US senators and 16 representatives at airports, gatherings held for ROC compatriots, or through direct phone calls. Of his US transit stops since taking office in 2008, this one involved contact with the largest number of members of Congress, indicating the deepening friendship and firm support of the US Congress.

- iv. US arms sales to Taiwan approved by Congress.

Both the US Senate and the House of Representatives included wording friendly to Taiwan in their respective reports on the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 this past May:

- (a) Reiterating that the Taiwan Relations Act is the cornerstone of Taiwan-US relations
- (b) Supporting Taiwan's efforts in integration, innovation, and asymmetrical measures
- (c) Inviting Taiwan to participate in US military training exercises and

drills, including Red Flag training exercises

(d) Promoting high level, bilateral military exchanges

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 provides legal support for Taiwan's participation in US multilateral military security activities and national defense, and bilateral military exchanges.

v. US welcomes our TPP participation and stresses our importance to its rebalance to Asia policy.

(a) Since 2014, senior officials at the US Department of State have openly welcomed Taiwan's interest in joining the TPP. In April, Secretary of State John Kerry noted this in two written responses to congressional interpellations. He also pointed out that US government agencies already share information with Taiwan on TPP goals and standards, as well as certain needed amendments before we can join. In May, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Daniel Russel testified at a hearing of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs that the US and the other 11 TPP members will give Taiwan serious consideration as a candidate for TPP membership. At the same hearing, Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs Charles H. Rivkin also stated that the US welcomes Taiwan's interest in joining the TPP. He reiterated this position when visiting Taiwan in June.

(b) As of this August, 21 state legislatures had passed a total of 28 resolutions endorsing Taiwan's participation in the TPP, thereby improving the conditions for us to join the TPP.

vi. Mutual recognition of driver's licenses has made inroads.

Since 2013, MOFA has reached agreements on the mutual recognition of

driver's licenses with 12 US states. Three new additions for this year thus far are West Virginia, Arizona, and South Carolina. In the future, we will work with other states on this goal to make travel in the US even easier for ROC citizens.

vii. Frequent visits by high-ranking US officials

Between March and August of 2015, 58 delegations consisting of 430 US officials visited Taiwan. They included 13 members of the House of Representatives, such as members of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs Chairman Ed Royce, Lois Frankel, Steve Russell, and Steve King; Senator Tom Cotton; Kentucky Governor Steven Beshear; New Mexico Lieutenant Governor John Sánchez; former Vice President James Danforth Quayle; Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs Charles H. Rivkin; David Balton, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Fisheries of the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs; Senior Official for APEC Robert S. Wang; Chairman of the American Institute in Taiwan Raymond F. Burghardt; and former chairman of the US Federal Reserve Ben Bernanke.

(2) European Union

i. The ROC employs a multifaceted, multilayered, and multichannel strategy to deepen and widen its relations with the EU and its member nations. The two sides have engaged in various forms of cooperation through institutionalized bilateral consultations, which has steadily improved Taiwan-EU relations.

(a) Efforts to promote the signing of a BIA and an ECA

We have used a building block approach to establish a concrete

foundation on which to sign economic cooperation agreements (ECAs) and have made the launch of consultations on a Taiwan-EU bilateral investment agreement (BIA) a major goal. In recent years, the European Parliament (EP) has passed three resolutions favorable towards Taiwan, including one that supports the signing of an ECA. European Commissioner for Trade Anna Cecilia Malmström has publicly expressed support for the signing of a BIA with Taiwan at an appropriate time. Certain parliamentarians in the EP, Italy, Czech Republic, and France have jointly signed a letter calling for administrative bodies to openly support the signing of a Taiwan-EU BIA at EU venues, thereby promoting this goal.

(b) Positive EU statements

Speaking on behalf of the EU on March 4 and May 25, the spokesperson for Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, issued statements to welcome the cross-strait agreement on mainland China's new M503 flight route and the third meeting between the heads of their competent authorities in charge of cross-strait affairs, held in Kinmen. Since President Ma took office in 2008, the EU and EP have passed nine resolutions and issued 18 statements in favor of the ROC, and have backed the signing of an ECA and BIA with the ROC. They have also voiced support for the deepening of bilateral cooperation in all aspects and Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organizations. In addition, they have paid close attention to the peaceful development of cross-strait relations and domestic affairs. These actions demonstrate our ever

deepening friendship and encourage the 28 EU member states to boost their relations with us.

(c) Institutionalized consultations with the EU and member states

A Taiwan-EU Annual Consultation mechanism is currently the most important communication framework between the two sides. Rotating between Taipei and Brussels, the annual conference has been held 26 times. In many respects, ROC-EU cooperation unrelated to economic and trade have made substantial progress through this platform. This March, several meetings took place in a row, including a sideline meeting of the 26th Taiwan-EU Consultation Meeting (Non-Trade), the 1st Taiwan-EU Meeting on Human Rights Cooperation, and the EU-Taiwan Bilateral Consultations on Cooperation on Combating IUU Fishing. As you can see, bilateral exchanges and cooperation are close and frequent. In addition, we have established an institutionalized consultation mechanism for senior and top level officials of Taiwan and many EU member states, so as to better deepen and broaden our substantive relations with the EU and its member nations.

(d) Cooperation agreements signed with European nations from March to August

Recently we have signed many agreements with EU members. With Poland, we entered the Agreement between the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Warsaw and the Warsaw Trade Office in Taipei on Air Transport. With Austria, we signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the Ministry of Science and Technology,

Taiwan, ROC and the Austrian Research Promotion Agency, Austria. With Slovakia, we concluded the Agreement between the Taipei Representative Office, Bratislava and the Slovak Economic and Cultural Office in Taipei in the Field of Science and Technology. With Hungary, we signed the Memorandum of Understanding Between the National Central Library, Republic of China (Taiwan) and National Széchényi Library, Hungary. With France, we entered the Memorandum of Cooperation between the National Central Library, Republic of China (Taiwan) and the Lyon Public Library, France, and the Memorandum of Understanding Between the National Central Library, Republic of China (Taiwan) and the Jean Moulin Lyon 3 University, France. With the United Kingdom, we signed the Memorandum of Cooperation between the National Central Library, Republic of China (Taiwan) and the University of Oxford Libraries, UK, and the Memorandum of Understanding Between the National Central Library, Republic of China (Taiwan) and the University of Oxford Libraries, UK, and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Anti-Money Laundering Division, Investigation Bureau, Ministry of Justice, Republic of China (Taiwan) and The Financial Intelligence Service, Financial Investigation Unit, Guernsey Border Agency Concerning Information and Financial Intelligence Exchange Cooperation related to Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing.

ii. Bilateral relations with European nations

(a) Upgraded name of UK representative office

This May the United Kingdom changed its representative office's name from the British Trade and Cultural Office to the British Office Taipei, indicating the positive development of our bilateral relations and reflecting the office's substantive operations.

(b) Mutual visits by high-ranking officials

Between March and August this year, 67 delegations consisting of 264 important persons from Europe visited Taiwan. They included Hans-Adam II, reigning prince of Liechtenstein; Pascal Couchepin, former president of the Swiss Confederation; Suma Chakrabarti, president of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD); and parliamentarians from Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Portugal, Denmark, Greece, Germany, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Spain, Poland and France, as well as the European Parliament. Other important political figures from the Holy See, Germany, Italy, the Czech Republic, Finland, and the Netherlands also visited Taiwan.

High ranking ROC officials paid 30 visits to Europe to attend important bilateral meetings and international conferences. They included members of the Legislative Yuan; ministers and vice ministers of foreign affairs, education, justice, economic affairs, transportation and communications, health and welfare, culture, science and technology, and agriculture; as well as representatives of the Mainland Affairs Council, Financial Supervisory Commission and the National Communications Commission.

(c) Other important exchange activities

(i) Hans-Adam II, reigning prince of Liechtenstein, visited

Taiwan in April to attend the opening ceremony of the exhibition *Crown of the Alps: Masterworks from the Collections of the Prince of Liechtenstein*, which was co-organized by his country's royal collection and our National Palace Museum. The exhibition, which lasted until the end of August, has been instrumental to our artistic exchanges with Europe.

- (ii) Professor Dr. Thomas Rabe, grandson of the late German businessman John Rabe, visited Taiwan from August 10 to 15, 2015, to attend activities commemorating the 70th anniversary of victory in the War of Resistance Against Japan. He also accepted a tribute from President Ma Ying-jeou that highlights his grandfather's good deeds in protecting over 200,000 ROC nationals during the Nanjing massacre by establishing the International Committee for the Nanjing Safety Zone.
- (iii) MOFA invited Taiwanese artist Kang Muxiang to attend activities celebrating the 300th anniversary of the founding of Karlsruhe, a major city in southwestern Germany, in particular the donation ceremony for his steel cable-made sculpture entitled *Taiwan Ruyi*. Kang also put on live sculptural demonstrations while there. His contributions have helped promote our cultural relations and soft power, highlighting Taiwan on the international stage and advancing Taiwan-Germany cultural exchanges.

(3) Japan

- i. Close exchanges and frequent mutual visits

Between March and August, 72 important Japanese delegations consisting of 680 members came to Taiwan. The members included Kouzo Yamamoto, Katsuhiko Eguchi, and Nobuo Kishi of Japan's House of Representatives; Iwao Horii, Yasuyuki Sakai, and Tsuneo Kitamura of the House of Councillors; Governor Ikuo Kabashima of Kumamoto Prefecture; Governor Keizō Hamada of Kagawa Prefecture; Governor Takeshi Onaga of Okinawa Prefecture; Governor Yoshihiro Murai of Miyagi Prefecture; and Governor Takuya Tasso of Ehime Prefecture.

Senior ROC government officials who visited Japan during this period include Hung Meng-chi, Minister of Culture; Tien-Mu Huang, Vice Chairperson of the Financial Supervisory Commission; Mayor Chen Chu of Kaohsiung City; Magistrate Lee Chin-yung of Yunlin County; Mayor Ching-Te Lai of Tainan City; and Mayor Hua-Guan Chang of Chiayi County.

ii. Cooperation on fisheries

Between March 4 and 6, the Taiwan-Japan Fishery Committee held its fourth round of formal meetings in Tokyo so as to amend the Taiwan-Japan fisheries agreement's fishing regulations. They reached consensus on operation rules governing the inverted triangle area north of the Yaeyama Islands and the special cooperation zone of concern to fishermen from both countries. This has therefore further established order for fishing operations by both sides and joint protection of marine resources.

(4) Other major countries in the Asia-Pacific region

i. Korea

- (a) Memorandums signed recently with the Republic of Korea (ROK) include:
- (i) The ROC Ministry of Examination and the ROK National Health Personnel Licensing Examination Board signed a memorandum of cooperation this past April.
 - (ii) On June 15, the ROC Intellectual Property Office and the Korean Intellectual Property Office signed the Memorandum of Understanding on the Patent Prosecution Highway Mottainai and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Exchange of Industrial Property Information and the Electronic Exchange of Priority Documents.
- (b) Important meetings and investigation tours conducted:
- (i) Between April 6 and 12, Mayor Lin Chia-lung of Taichung City, Deputy Mayor Chen Shen-xian of New Taipei City, Deputy Mayor Zhou Li-fang of Taipei City, Deputy Mayor Yan Chun-zuo of Tainan City, Magistrate Pan Meng-an of Pingtung County, and Deputy Mayor Wu Hong-mou of Kaohsiung City led delegations to attend the ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability World Congress 2015.
 - (ii) Between April 11 and 18, Mr. Wei-Fuu Yang, Vice Minister of Economic Affairs went to Korea to attend the 7th World Water Forum.
 - (iii) Deputy Magistrate Wu Ze-Cheng of Yilan County led a delegation to the ROK to study policies on forming smart cities.
 - (iv) Administrative Deputy Minister Wu Men-feng of the Ministry

of Transportation and Communications went to the ROK to attend a ship-launching ceremony by Yang Ming Marine Transport Corporation.

ii. Southeast Asian countries

- (a) The Republic of the Union of Myanmar established a representative office, the Myanmar Trade Office, in Taipei on June 22 and started offering ROC passport holders online visa application services.
- (b) Taiwan and Thailand held a fifth round of agricultural cooperation meetings on March 12 and 13 in Taipei. Doujduan Sasanavi, Inspector General of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives of Thailand, led his country's delegation to the event.
- (c) The ROC signed an educational cooperation pact with Vietnam on March 20.
- (d) The ROC and the Philippines held meetings in Taipei between March and August 2015 on the following issues: aviation on March 24 and 25; science on June 9 and 10; and labor on August 3.
- (e) Dr. Chiang Pin-kung, concurrently chairman of the Third Wednesday Club and senior advisor to the Office of the President, led a delegation to the 20th Joint Economic Cooperation Conference between Indonesia and Taiwan on June 14 and 17.

iii. India

- (a) As of August 15, India started providing ROC passport holders online visa services so as to advance trade and cultural exchanges and deepen bilateral relations.
- (b) Yang Jen-Ni, director general of the Bureau of Foreign Trade, led a delegation to attend the 1st Review Meeting of the 8th Vice

Ministerial-Level Economic Dialogue between Taiwan and India in New Delhi on April 27 and 28. The 2nd Joint Working Group of the 8th Vice Ministerial-Level Economic Dialogue between Taiwan and India was on held in Taipei on July 24. Between March and August 2015, visits to the ROC were made by vice ministerial-level officials from India's Ministry of Communications and Information Technology and director general-level officials from its Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

(5) West Asia and Africa

- i. Turkish Airlines began operating flights between Taipei and Istanbul on March 31, making travel to West Asia, Europe, and Africa much more convenient for our nationals and increasing business and trade contact with countries in the region.
- ii. Certain countries lacking diplomatic relations with the ROC in West Asia and Africa had high ranking officials and legislators visit Taiwan between March and August 2015, namely, South Africa, Ghana, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Jordon, Amen, Turkey, and Mongolia.
- iii. During that period, influential people from the ROC who visited the area include Academia Sinica President Chi-Huey Wong, who went to Israel; Minister of Finance Chang Sheng-ford, who attended the 48th Asian Development Bank Annual Meeting held in Azerbaijan; Legislator Pan Wei-kang, who led a delegation of ROC-RUSSIA Interparliamentary Amity Association members to Russia; former Academia Sinica President Lee Yuan-tseh, who delivered a speech at the IX Nobel Laureates Meeting in Russia; and National Policy Advisor to the President Wu Dong-ming, who led an Investigation Bureau

delegation to Mongolia.

- iv. Taiwan actively engages in exchanges with countries in these areas with respect to economy and trade, education, legal affairs, law enforcement, sanitary, humanitarian aid, culture, and science and technology. Many meetings have been held to discuss related bilateral cooperation items.

C. Expanding international participation

(1) WTO

- i. Completion of the TFA domestic review process

The Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) passed by the World Trade Organization's General Council last November marks the first WTO multilateral accord completed since the establishment of the organization. Since then, member states have been able to deposit their instruments of acceptance. After receiving the draft instrument of acceptance from the Executive Yuan, the Legislative Yuan reviewed and passed it on May 19. Subsequently, President Ma signed it on July 20. Once in effect, the agreement is expected to lower Taiwan's international trade costs and generate more business opportunities. Through the pact, member states will cooperate more on customs clearance, thereby boosting our trade with those WTO members lacking diplomatic relations with us.

- ii. Plurilateral negotiations

In order to expand our overseas market, we continue to engage in multilateral talks under the WTO framework on such instruments as the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA), the Environmental Goods Agreement (EGA), and the Information Technology Agreement-II (ITA2), for which we have concluded negotiations on the product list.

Consensus on ITA2 is expected to be reached at the end of this year after the completion of current follow-up consultations. The agreement is expected to help lower export barriers to our information technology products.

iii. 5th Global Review of Aid for Trade and achievements

This important biennial meeting, the latest of which was held between June 30 and July 2, invites WTO members and international aid organizations to discuss Aid-for-Trade achievements. During this year's meeting, officials from Taiwan gave a presentation on our trade facilitation results in our diplomatic allies and held sideline seminars to highlight our aid accomplishments. The other participants of our productive and well received discussions included Carmen Gisela Vegara, Secretary General to the Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration (SIECA); Beris Gwynne, Geneva Director, World Vision International; Njabuliso Busisiwe Gwebu, permanent representative of Swaziland to the UN, WTO, and other international organizations in Geneva; Dacio Castillo, permanent representative of Honduras to the WTO; other officials from various countries stationed in Geneva; officials from the WTO Secretariat; and local experts and scholars.

iv. Advocacy for WTO seminars in Taiwan, with participation of WTO officials

This year, we have invited the WTO to hold three national-level conferences in Taiwan to discuss sanitary and phytosanitary issues, the Trade in Services Agreement, and trade facilitation. Such events help our personnel and the general public better understand the latest

developments in negotiations on these issues. In celebration of the anniversary of the WTO, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Economic Affairs held the international conference, The 20th Anniversary of the WTO: Review and Outlook, on August 20. During the conference, a video speech made by Roberto Azevêdo, Director-General of the WTO, was shown to the participants. These included well-known scholars from Australia, South Korea, and India, who were invited to discuss current international trade and potential areas of growth with local representatives from various fields.

v. Invitation of overseas guests

Bridget Chilala, director of the WTO Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation, and her colleague Counsellor Mustapha Sadni Jallab paid a visit to Taiwan in mid-August to advance cooperation between the WTO and our academic institutes, and promote the WTO youth recruitment program.

(2) APEC

- i. Issues emphasized by this year's APEC host nation, the Philippines, are the build-up of human resources, development of small and medium-sized enterprises, disaster prevention and relief, and health and sanitation, all of which Taiwan excels at. During APEC meetings, we will work as closely as possible with the Philippines on these topics and raise cooperation plans so as to solicit more business opportunities and expand bilateral relations with other APEC member states.
- ii. From March to August this year, Taiwan has attended over 10 high level APEC meetings, including those for senior officials, information and telecommunications ministers, trade ministers, and officials in charge of

human resources development. We also made eight important proposals at senior officials' meetings, bearing rich fruit and receiving affirmation from the Philippines and other member economies. The initiatives were promptly adopted, proving again Taiwan's concrete contributions to APEC. In addition, we held 13 other seminars, three of which were held abroad with other members.

- iii. By attending APEC meetings, Taiwan not only participates in work promoting regional integration, but also shows the other members its determination to join the TPP.
- iv. The APEC Second Senior Officials' Meeting and Related Meetings held in May confirmed the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific's jurisdiction. In sum, 14 member economies, including Taiwan, and the APEC Policy Support Unit have formed a core taskforce for drafting related studies.

(3) WHO

- i. In May, Minister of Health and Welfare Been-Huang Chiang led a delegation to the World Health Assembly (WHA)—the seventh consecutive time we have participated in the meeting. The minister gave an address elaborating our achievements in healthcare cooperation and development. Also, delegation members spoke at 28 technical discussions and held 54 bilateral talks on the sidelines with delegations from the United States, European Union members, and other countries. The international community has commended our regular and professional participation in the WHA. We will continue to expand our involvement in other WHA-related meetings, activities and mechanisms under our current status as an observer.
- ii. Prior to the 2015 WHA annual meeting, the US State Department

submitted to Congress a report on assisting our participation in the WHO. The report called for our being accepted into all WHO professional meetings using the WHA model.

(4) ICAO

- i. In September 2013, the ROC was invited to participate in the 38th International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Assembly as a guest of Roberto Kobeh González, President of the Council of ICAO. This invitation is particularly meaningful, as ICAO is the second UN specialized agency to invite the ROC to participate. With regard to our participation in this global organization, we continue to muster support from the international community, including resolutions in support of our participation by Paraguay's upper and lower houses, Brazil's Committee on Foreign Relations and National Defense of the Chamber of Deputies, and Ireland's Senate. In addition, the legislatures of 21 US states have passed 33 resolutions and statements. Twenty-eight members of Portugal's legislature also sent a letter to ICAO in support of expanding our meaningful participation in this UN body.
- ii. Based on our previous participation in the ICAO Assembly, we will continue to seek support from the international community and strive to partake in other ICAO technical meetings and regional mechanisms using appropriate approaches. We hope to further bolster international civil aviation cooperation and better safeguard the rights and safety of both domestic and international airline passengers.

(5) Other international organizations

- i. The ROC officially became a member of the North Pacific Fisheries Commission on August 25, 2015, after completing the delivery

procedures following our signing of the convention on July 27.

Between March and August, we sent personnel to attend the following international meetings to better safeguard our fishing rights in different maritime regions: the 19th Session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, 3rd Meeting of the Convention Amendment Working Group of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, 89th Meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, and the Strategy and Fisheries Management Working Group meeting of the Convention for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna.

- ii. Our country's application to establish a Center of Excellence on Green Productivity in Taiwan was approved by the Asian Productivity Organization. We hosted a training class for consultants from July 6 to 24.
- iii. During his visit in March, Sir Suma Chakrabarti, president of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), signed a memorandum of understanding with the Export-Import Bank of the Republic of China to consolidate their intention to strengthen bilateral cooperation. He also engaged in discussions with the Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA) on how Taiwanese enterprises could gain business opportunities through cooperation with the bank.

Between March and August, we sent personnel to attend the following international meetings: the 56th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Inter-American Development Bank, the 55th Ordinary Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, the 48th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Asian Development Bank, and the 24th Annual

Meeting of the Board of Governors of the EBRD.

During this period, we also worked with the EBRD to arrange for various foreign businessmen and officials to come to Taiwan, including a business-matching trip at COMPUTEX, a trip for Serbian officials on sustainable development in ICT and e-government, and a trip for Kazakhstani officials on gender equality and safety in public transport.

By facilitating exchanges with nations receiving aid provided by multilateral development institutes and participating in cooperation projects in the target countries, we continue to help Taiwanese enterprises expand their business in overseas markets.

- iv. Executive Secretary Gordon Hook of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG) visited Taiwan in March. The ROC also sent personnel to attend the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units' 23rd plenary meeting and the APG's 18th Annual Meeting and Technical Assistance and Training Forum. Through practical participation in these organizations, we have been able to enhance our cooperation on the prevention of money laundering with the international community.
- v. Regarding our efforts to participate in the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), Matt Salmon, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific of the US House of Representatives, and three of his colleagues introduced the bill H.R. 1853 on April 16 to have President Obama create strategies to help the ROC acquire observer status. His proposal was endorsed by 38 representatives and passed unanimously by the committee on May 21. Testifying on April 23 before a congressional hearing concerning

Congressman Salmon's proposal, US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Daniel Russel also expressed support of our participation in INTERPOL.

D. Strengthening economic and trade diplomacy

(1) Conducting international trade shows

As of the end of July, this Ministry had asked the Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA) to participate in or conduct 12 trade shows in diplomatic allies and newly emerging countries so as to help our businesses expand their operations in overseas markets, generating trade exceeding US\$52 million.

(2) Organizing economic and trade delegations to diplomatic allies and newly emerging countries

Funding was provided to the Central America Trade Office (CATO) for the 2015 Coffee Mission to Central America and to the Chinese International Economic Cooperation Association (CIECA) for an economic and trade delegation visiting Paraguay, Panama, and Brazil in 2015. A total of 29 businesses visited eight countries, including diplomatic allies in Latin America and other countries.

(3) Conducting investment seminars and bilateral economic joint meetings

MOFA has asked CIECA to conduct various economic and trade exchange events. As of the end of July this year, it had assisted our diplomatic allies Swaziland and Honduras to conduct economic and trade opportunity seminars in Taipei. It had also participated in a special meeting of industry leaders at the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) in Singapore, the Business and Climate Change Summit in Paris, France, and the Asia-Pacific Cities Summit (APCS) in Brisbane, Australia. In addition, in

order to boost bilateral economic and trade relations, it had conducted 12 bilateral economic cooperation meetings with the Netherlands, Croatia, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

(4) Organizing business tours for foreign diplomats and businesspeople stationed in Taiwan

Two tours have been organized to promote our economic and trade infrastructure and backbone enterprises. The first one was from May 27 to May 28 to Penghu, promoting offshore island development in such areas as renewable energy, tourism, cultural innovation, and food processing. In addition, the Penghu County government also briefed them on the Low Carbon Island Project to help match enterprises with business opportunities. The second tour will be held in November to Hualien and Taitung, with a focus on such industries as quality agriculture and tourism.

E. Expanding international humanitarian assistance to fulfill international responsibilities

(1) Engaging in international disaster and humanitarian relief

i. We continue to provide assistance to Syrian refugees in Jordan and Turkey so as to help improve the sanitary conditions and children's education in refugee camps. In addition, we provided prefabricated houses to refugees in northern Iraq. Moreover, Taiwan cooperates with the United States, the Holy See, and the Sovereign Military Order of Malta to provide humanitarian assistance to refugees throughout the Middle East. MOFA will continue to watch the refugee crisis closely and cooperate with the European Union and individual European countries to further provide needed humanitarian assistance.

ii. On April 25, Nepal was hit by a devastating 7.9 magnitude earthquake.

Our public and private sectors worked closely together to provide assistance to Nepal as soon as possible. The government donated US\$300,000, and the Ministry of Health and Welfare collected NT\$96.03 million in donations from the public. MOFA helped arrange for the transportation of 47 tons of relief materials donated by the private sector to Nepal. In addition, 290 people from government agencies and 16 NGOs flew to Nepal to help with the disaster relief efforts. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Taiwan ranked second in terms of the number of people mobilized to provide relief assistance.

(2) Demonstrating soft power through medical diplomacy

- i. Cooperation between MOFA and Taiwan's medical institutions has become increasingly diversified in recent years. For instance, I-Shou University now offers international students a post-baccalaureate medical school program. Thus far, 108 students from 17 diplomatic allies have entered this program. In addition, we have dispatched mobile medical missions, donated medical equipment, provided training courses for medical staff, and established a referral system for diplomatic allies to increase the effectiveness of medical assistance.
- ii. Taiwan International Health Action (TaiwanIHA) was sent to Nepal from April 28 to May 5 this year to evaluate post-earthquake medical and health needs, and understand the assistance provided by other countries so that we could better tailor our medical assistance. From May 27 to 31, TaiwanIHA went to Indonesia, where it worked with the Association of Medical Doctors in Japan (AMDA) in Indonesia to provide free cleft lip and palate operations. During that time, the team

successfully conducted 29 operations.

iii. In addition, MOFA helped a delegation from Changhua Christian Hospital train medical personnel in St. Lucia and provide free treatment there and in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. MOFA also helped arrange for a team from the North American Taiwanese Medical Association to provide free medical treatment and for Lin Chi-min, medical advisor to Cathay General Hospital, to fly to Paraguay to conduct 20 total knee replacements (TKR). Over the years, MOFA has dispatched many medical missions to other countries as part of its health, medical, and humanitarian assistance efforts.

F. Strengthening public diplomacy

(1) Promote e-public diplomacy

In order to increase e-promotion effectiveness, this Ministry's website provides information on major issues, such as the South China Sea, Taiwan's aid to Nepal, the East China Sea Peace Initiative, joining TPP/RCEP, and working holidays. Relevant information on the government's positions and statements are updated regularly. For some issues, leaflets in both Chinese and English or short video clips are available.

(2) Expand cultural diplomacy

As a promoter of cultural exchanges and standard bearer of Chinese culture, MOFA assists Taiwan's groups traveling abroad to perform. It also produces documentaries and promotes dramas to be broadcast overseas. In addition, MOFA provides the Taiwan Scholarship and International Youth Culture and Study Tour to the Republic of China (Taiwan) to enhance the international community's understanding of Taiwan.

(3) Encourage youths to partake in international events

- i. Organize youth ambassador group to accompany WHA observer delegation and gain experience in participating in international conferences: For the first time ever, this year MOFA organized a youth ambassador delegation to observe the World Health Assembly's operations in Geneva and exchange views with other international organizations there.
- ii. Conduct an international youth ambassador exchange program to help participants expand their international horizons and elevate the image of the ROC: Based on its past successes, MOFA expanded this year's program Youth from Taiwan, Compassion for All, recruiting 160 students from 55 colleges to travel to 41 cities in 35 countries on five continents for three weeks in September.
- iii. MOFA organized teen diplomatic envoys, international youth ambassadors, working holiday schemes, and the International Youth Culture and Student Tour to the Republic of China (Taiwan). It also established the single website portal Taiwan Youth Focuses on the World, which combines four websites and a Facebook page to help young people engage with the international community more efficiently.
- iv. MOFA has established an interagency coordination mechanism for developing working holiday programs. As of August this year, six meetings were convened to better integrate resources and provide real time information and convenient services to young people on a working holiday. In addition, MOFA worked with the Ministry of Education to hold promotions in Taichung, Kaohsiung, and Taipei, educating youths interested in joining working holiday programs. MOFA also posted

online live broadcasts on its YouTube platform.

G. Fortifying international media work

(1) Arranging for international media outlets to interview President Ma

MOFA helped arrange for nine journalists from the *Wall Street Journal* and the BBC to interview President Ma, generating some 13 articles to elaborate his policy goals. Media outlets in Korea and Singapore republished two of the articles, further demonstrating the effectiveness of such promotions.

(2) Arranging for international media outlets to visit Taiwan

- i. MOFA organized nine media delegations to come to Taiwan: the delegation on aboriginal cultural exchange, the Southeast Asian delegation on Taiwan's soft power, the Japanese-speaking delegation on Taiwan's soft power, the Muslim delegation on Taiwan's soft power, the Japanese-speaking delegation on Taiwan's economic development, the Spanish-speaking delegation on Taiwan's soft power, the delegation of foreign female journalists, the English-speaking delegation on Taiwan's participation in the UNFCCC, and the Spanish-speaking delegation on Taiwan's international cooperation. Eighty-four journalists from the international media were invited, producing approximately 90 articles.
- ii. MOFA arranged for seven senior journalists from US media outlets to visit Taiwan, such as the *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and NPR. They are recipients of an Asia-Pacific Journalism Fellowship from the East-West Center. In late August, MOFA organized another delegation of journalists from such US media outlets as the *Los Angeles Times* and McClatchy newspapers, as well as the *Canadian Globe and Mail*. All of the journalists are stationed in Asia and help increase Taiwan's visibility

in the international community.

(3) Promoting important diplomatic issues

i. Producing important government policy promotion films

MOFA created both Chinese and English versions of the film clip *Taiping Island in the South China Sea* for foreign missions and audiences so as to promote ROC territorial sovereignty over the South China Sea and the South China Sea Peace Initiative.

ii. Commemorating 70th Anniversary of Victory in the War of Resistance against Japan and Taiwan's Retrocession

MOFA produced five English short films to inform the international community about our country's resistance against Japanese aggression and contributions leading to the Allied victory in WWII. The short films were shown on September 1 and followed by a concert for around 200 people, including descendents of former US Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, and Eisenhower, as well as members of the diplomatic corps. President Ma attended the event and made some remarks. The films have been seen more than 130,000 times.

(4) Utilizing soft power to create an outstanding image of Taiwan

i. Arranging for the Taiwan Acrobatic Troupe of National Taiwan College of Performing Arts to hold eight performances total in Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia on a tour from August 26 to September 10.

ii. MOFA held the exhibition *A Narrative of Light and Shadow: Female Photographers from Taiwan*. As of the end of August this year, it had been showcased on 20 occasions by 18 missions in 16 countries in North America, Europe, the Asia Pacific and Latin America, resulting in

92 articles by various media outlets.

- iii. National Geographic Channel (NGC) worked with MOFA to produce the documentary *Taiwan to the World: Island of Fish*. As of the end of August, it was broadcast 177 times on the NGC channel in various countries, including the ROC, the United Kingdom, Germany, and 35 countries/regions in the Asia Pacific.
- iv. Promoting Taiwan's TV dramas: MOFA surveyed the public before purchasing the rights to *The Fierce Wife*. After the Spanish subtitles were completed, 19 Spanish-language television stations in 14 countries agreed to broadcast it, including two in the United States. As of the end of August, it was being broadcast on 13 television stations in 11 countries.

IV. Prospects and future directions

A. Keeping abreast of international trends to foster favorable environment

With the quickly evolving international political arena and economic environment, MOFA will continue to pay special attention to the development of conventional political and security issues, such as maritime security and disputes, disputes among neighboring countries, regional economic and trade integration, nuclear nonproliferation, counterterrorism, and transnational crime. MOFA will also formulate ROC government approaches, measures, and actions so as to safeguard national interests to the greatest extent possible. In addition, Taiwan's strategic location makes it a hub in East Asia for responding to regional, transnational, and nonconventional security issues, such as climate change, energy, natural disaster prevention, humanitarian assistance, health cooperation, and epidemic prevention. MOFA will cooperate with other government agencies and private sector groups to engage in dialogue and

interaction with diplomatic allies and other friendly countries. Together, we will seek opportunities for international cooperation in the hope to cultivate an international environment that is more favorable to our country.

B. Promoting the East China Sea and South China Sea Peace Initiatives to better serve as a peacemaker

We will continue to safeguard our sovereignty over the Diaoyutai Islands and the South China Sea. The basic principles of safeguarding sovereignty, shelving disputes, pursuing peace and reciprocity, and promoting joint development form the foundation of our East China Sea Peace Initiative and South China Sea Peace Initiative. Based on these initiatives, we aim to promote peaceful settlement of disputes and earn support for our inclusion in any institutionalized negotiation mechanism. We will continue to call upon all parties concerned to shelve disputes and share resources to help maintain regional peace with us. At the same time, we hope to institutionalize effective dialogue for settling disputes through peaceful means, promote economic prosperity through effective cooperation, continue to be a peacemaker, and protect the security, peace and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region.

C. Participating in regional economic integration and increasing national competitiveness

Taiwan is an export-oriented economy. With external trade being the pillar and lifeline of our economic development, it is closely linked with our national competitiveness. MOFA will continue to work through bilateral and multilateral mechanisms to sign bilateral economic, trade, investment, and cooperation agreements with major economic and trade partners. At the same time, we will keep abreast of the progress of the TPP and the RCEP negotiations. We will also strengthen our lobbying of member states to deepen cooperation, create an

environment hospitable to Taiwan, and expand international business opportunities. In this way, when the time is ripe, our country will be able to join the TPP and the RCEP and participate to a greater extent in global and regional economic integration.

D. Advancing public diplomacy through soft power and smart power

Taiwan boasts a rich culture, creative people, and abundant human resources. Taiwan is unique in the ethnic Chinese world in adopting democracy, allowing the diverse facets of Chinese culture in Taiwan to develop and form the core of our soft power. With the ever changing international environment, MOFA will continue to promote cultural diplomacy worldwide through international media channels with respect to the areas of multicultural dissemination, international humanitarian assistance, international medical cooperation, and expansion of the international horizons of young people and the international participation of women. In addition, MOFA will cooperate with other agencies to help private groups and INGOs create a platform for Taiwan to partake in various international issues, thereby allowing the international community to further understand and identify the quality and pluralistic nature of Taiwan's cultural achievements.

E. Enhancing travel convenience for ROC nationals

MOFA has put high priority on obtaining visa exemptions, landing visas, and other conveniences from more countries and territories for ROC nationals traveling abroad for business and leisure. Over the last seven years, the number of counties or territories providing ROC nationals such conveniences has increased from 54 to 148, an increase of ninety-four or 174 percent. MOFA will keep endeavoring to raise this figure for the greater good of the people and to the credit of the government.

V. Conclusion

Since the Republic of China adopted viable diplomacy seven years ago, we have made remarkable achievements. For instance, we consolidated relations with diplomatic allies and enhanced substantive relations with the United States, the European Union, Japan, our Asia-Pacific neighbors, and other countries with which we lack diplomatic relations. We have also promoted Taiwan's meaningful participation in UN specialized agencies; signed investment, economic, and trade agreements with major trading partners; made it more convenient for our nationals to travel abroad; and expanded the international participation of the public and private sectors. In addition, we have promoted regional peace and stability in the East China and South China Seas. Under the principle of viable diplomacy, our foreign and cross-strait relations have formed a virtuous cycle, enabling MOFA to engage in aboveboard diplomacy in a pragmatic fashion, making concrete and steady progress. With the joint efforts of MOFA, partner agencies, and the private sector, Taiwan has successfully served as a peacemaker and provider of humanitarian assistance over the past seven years.

During this time, MOFA has actively promoted viable diplomacy, creating a friendly and constructive international environment. In the future, we will continue to enhance and safeguard the interests of the country and people when facing changes and challenges, both regional and global. Meanwhile, MOFA will not only highlight Taiwan throughout the world, but also further elevate its image and status in the international arena. I sincerely hope that all of you will continue to render MOFA your support and guidance. Thank you.