

# Foreign Policy Report, 9th Congress of the Legislative Yuan, 1st Session

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## **I. Foreword**

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

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 heartfelt appreciation to President Su Jia-chyuan and the other members of the Legislative Yuan for your generous guidance and support for the work we do at MOFA, and for helping promote parliamentary diplomacy.

Since the ROC government started promoting viable diplomacy in May 2008, we have made consistent and concrete progress in deepening our cooperative relations with our diplomatic allies and other countries, showcasing our democratic achievements, and expanding our international participation. Lately, the international community has become more aware and supportive of our efforts and contributions, in our role as a peacemaker, to maintaining safety, peace, and stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

Since my last foreign policy briefing, we have made a variety of inroads with our diplomatic work. In terms of new overseas offices, our Surabaya office in Indonesia formally opened last December, the same month in which the Papua New Guinea Trade Office in Taiwan was established. As for cooperation agreements, in November last year we signed the Agreement Concerning the Facilitation of Cooperation on Law Enforcement in Fisheries Matters with the Philippines, and three pacts with Japan, including the Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation, the Taiwan-Japan Memorandum of Understanding regarding the Application of Competition Laws, and the Memorandum of Understanding on Enhancing Exchanges and Cooperation Regarding Disaster Prevention and

Relief. In December, we signed a youth working holiday agreement with the Czech Republic. And this January, we signed the Arrangement between the Canadian Trade Office in Taipei and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Canada for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income. In addition, our multipronged efforts led to the European Commission announcing last October, in its new strategy entitled “Trade for All: Towards a more responsible trade and investment policy,” that it would explore launching talks on the signing of an investment pact with Taiwan. Regarding our relations with the United States, the ninth round of talks under the bilateral Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) went ahead smoothly last October in Taipei. On November 2, the US House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a resolution requesting that the president assist the ROC with gaining observer status in the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol). The US administration also announced on December 16 last year the sale to Taiwan of an arms package containing 10 items worth US\$1.83 billion. With respect to participating in intergovernmental international organizations, the ROC officially became a member of the newly established North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) on August 25, 2015. With cultural exchanges, the exhibition entitled “Treasures from Heaven—A Special Exhibition of Artifacts from the Holy See,” which is being held jointly by the Vatican and the National Palace Museum, kicked off on February 5 this year and will run for three months. In the area of enhancing our services to the public, as of March, ROC nationals are now eligible for visa waivers, landing visas, or other preferential visa treatment from 161 countries and areas. The above breakthroughs and progress underline the point that viable diplomacy has produced a variety of concrete outcomes over the past six months.

In the wake of the elections for the 14th-term ROC president and vice president, as well as all 113 members of the 9th Legislative Yuan, held on January 16, the governments and key figures in both the public and private sectors of 46 countries, including the United States, Canada, the European Union, Japan, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Singapore, Australia, and our diplomatic allies, sent their congratulations to the victors, Dr. Tsai Ing-wen and her running mate, Dr. Chen Chien-jen, and applauded the people of Taiwan for the strong democratic spirit that they had again demonstrated. They also said that they look forward to continuing to strengthen their cooperation with the ROC, showing that our relations with our diplomatic allies and important partner nations are in good shape.

On January 28, President Ma visited personnel stationed on Taiping Island, where he unveiled the South China Sea Peace Initiative Roadmap with its short-term, mid-term, and long-term plans. He also clarified the legal status of Taiping Island as an island based on Article 121 of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and reaffirmed ROC sovereignty over the South China Sea Islands and their surrounding waters. By taking concrete steps to transform Taiping Island into an island for peace and rescue operations, as well as an ecologically friendly and low-carbon island, the president proclaimed to the international community that the ROC is committed to fulfilling its international obligations and acting as a peacemaker and provider of humanitarian aid, and truly transforming the South China Sea into a sea of peace and cooperation.

After the 6.4 magnitude earthquake struck southern Taiwan on February 6, causing substantial loss of life and property, condolence messages poured in from our 22 allies, the Holy See included, as well as from the governments and

key figures in both the public and private sectors of 49 other countries, including the US, Japan, Korea, and Singapore, and from the European Union and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Meanwhile, the Holy See, the US, Japan, and Korea also made monetary donations to help with disaster relief and recovery operations. My ministry has expressed its sincere gratitude to each of the above on behalf of the ROC government and people.

Next I will report on the current state of affairs on the international stage, the latest developments and accomplishments of viable diplomacy, and our future prospects and direction. Any comments and suggestions you may have will be highly appreciated.

## **II. Current international political and economic landscape**

The international landscape has been affected by a number of interconnected factors, such as the jostling for geopolitical and economic power among major countries, the threat of terrorist attacks by extremist organizations, and increasingly severe cross-border issues. This is reflected in the way the lines between competition and cooperation are blurring, and the wave of changes that the global political and economic order is undergoing.

### **A. The troubling security outlook in East Asia**

The principal sources of friction in the region stem from territorial sovereignty disputes in the East and South China Seas, along with the nuclear weapon threat caused by North Korea test firing rockets and missiles, and launching satellites. In the South China Sea, the US sent a guided missile destroyer to carry out a freedom of navigation operation (FONOP) on October 27, 2015, sailing within 12 nautical miles of Zhubi Reef (Subi Reef) in the Nansha Islands, which is occupied by mainland China. Then, on December 10, two US Air Force B-52

bombers flew within two nautical miles of Huayang Reef (Cuarteron Reef). And on January 30, 2016, it sent another guided missile destroyer to sail within 12 nautical miles of Zhongjian Island (Triton Island), one of the Xisha Islands that is also occupied by mainland China. Meanwhile, mainland China conducted test landings and takeoffs of civilian aircraft on the newly built airstrip on Yongshu Reef (Fiery Cross Reef) on January 2, 2016, which Vietnam protested. Tensions in the South China Sea were more acutely felt after the US expressed its concerns over mainland China's missile deployment on Yongxing Island (Woody Island) and installation of radar facilities on Huayang Reef. The ROC government has continued to call on all parties concerned and other related countries to avoid escalating tensions in the region and to solve disputes peacefully.

Regarding the arbitration initiated against mainland China by the Philippines concerning the latter's South China Sea claims, a tribunal at the Permanent Court of Arbitration held a hearing on the merits and remaining issues of jurisdiction and admissibility in the arbitration between November 24 and 30, 2015, and released a statement on December 1 that it intends to issue its award in 2016. The ROC, however, reiterated its position last October that the South China Sea Islands and their surrounding waters are an inherent part of ROC territory and waters, and that as things stand now it will neither recognize nor accept related awards since the ROC government was not invited to participate in the arbitration.

Turning to Northeast Asia, North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test on January 6, and claimed it had successfully tested a hydrogen bomb for the first time. Then, on February 7, it launched its *Kwangmyongsong-4* satellite into orbit, ratcheting up tensions in the region. My ministry has consequently issued

separate press releases, reiterating that the ROC supports resolving issues on the Korean Peninsula through peaceful dialogue, and urging the North Korean authorities to abide by the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, refrain from taking any actions harmful to regional security, and cooperate on maintaining peace and stability on the peninsula and in East Asia as a whole. The ROC and many other members of the international community, including the US, Japan, South Korea, mainland China, and the European Union, have strongly condemned North Korea, with some nations also engaging in discussions on various countermeasures. While the US and South Korea were considering deploying the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system as a response, mainland China lodged objections on the grounds that the system's radar coverage far exceeds South Korea's defensive needs. My ministry continues to pay close attention to developments in the Korean Peninsula, and is putting more effort into collecting related information in order to come up with a coping strategy. The ROC government will cooperate with all parties concerned to uphold the safety of the peninsula, and peace and stability in the East Asia region as a whole.

## **B. Turbulent Middle East, destabilizing refugee problem in Europe, and rampant terrorism threats**

The expansion of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and attendant threat of terrorist attacks around the world has caused turmoil, leading to military interventions in the Middle East by the US, Russia, Europe, and Saudi Arabia, among others. The US also formed the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL. However, Turkey and Russia—two coalition members—clashed after Turkey shot down a Russian military aircraft on November 25 last year, resulting in Russia imposing economic sanctions on Turkey, and enhancing its military presence in Syria and elsewhere. This has further complicated the already

unstable situation in the Middle East. With respect to Syria, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2268 on February 26, calling for a cessation in hostilities. The scope of the ceasefire does not extend to strikes against terrorist groups such as ISIL.

Elsewhere, the nuclear deal reached between Iran and major world powers that went into effect on January 16 was an achievement worth celebrating. Unfortunately, however, tensions in the Persian Gulf have flared up due to sectarian disputes between Saudi Arab and Iran, with Saudi Arabia severing diplomatic ties with Iran after its embassy in Tehran was attacked.

Moreover, ISIL has exploited the chaos in Iraq and Syria to rise to prominence, displacing several million people in the region who are now flooding into Europe as refugees, generating a serious humanitarian crisis, and seriously affecting society, the economy, and security in many European countries.

ISIL's continued terrorist activities in France, Turkey, and Indonesia have become a major menace of international proportions. In the wake of the ISIL terrorist attack in Paris on November 13, 2015, involving shootings, explosions, and hostage taking, the ROC government immediately and sternly denounced these acts of violence, and expressed its sincere condolences to the French government and the victims' families. My ministry also promptly initiated an emergency response mechanism, and transmitted a message to all our overseas offices asking them to set up contingency teams, pay close attention to the security situation in host countries, and adopt necessary measures to protect ROC expatriates and travelers.

### **C. Accelerating economic integration in the Asia-Pacific**

Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP): TPP member countries concluded the first round of negotiations on October 5 last year. Then, on November 18, leaders



attending the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Economic Leaders' Meeting issued a joint declaration on the TPP detailing their expectations for its future development. The TPP agreement was formally signed on February 4 this year in New Zealand by the trade ministers of the 12 member nations, each of which is now proceeding with its own ratification procedures. The ROC recognizes and attaches importance to the influence that the TPP will have on economic development in the Asia-Pacific. On December 10 last year, my ministry reiterated to the representatives of TPP member nations stationed in the ROC that we are determined to join the second round of TPP accession negotiations, and have urged them to support our involvement.

Developments with the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP): the 27th ASEAN Summit and a series of related meetings held between November 18 and 22, 2015, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, concluded with the leaders of 10 of ASEAN's member states signing the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together, in which the formal establishment of the ASEAN Community on December 31, 2015, was proclaimed. In addition, 11 rounds of RCEP negotiations have been held so far, and all member states have already begun substantive talks on market access and exchanged initial lists of preferential duty concessions. During the 27th ASEAN Summit, leaders of each country issued a joint statement praising the breakthroughs and developments made with the RCEP, and expressing their hope that negotiations would be completed this year.

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB): The articles of agreement for the AIIB proposed by mainland China were signed in Beijing on June 29, 2015, by representatives of the 57 founding member states. The articles came into effect on December 25, when the bank's establishment was officially announced.

The opening ceremony was held in Beijing on January 16, 2016. To strengthen our trade and financial footing, expand our international participation, and explore the enormous business opportunities stemming from the AIIB, in the future my ministry will cooperate closely with the relevant government agencies to gain AIIB membership while ensuring our dignity, equal standing, and appropriate appellation.

#### **D. UNFCCC COP 21 adopts Paris Agreement**

The 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which was held in Paris, France, between November 30 and December 12, 2015, concluded with the Paris Agreement on December 12 thanks to the support of major nations, a general recognition of the seriousness of global warming by participant countries, and the active facilitation of the host country. Through the methods of mitigation and adjustment, the agreement requests that all signatories reach peak emissions as early as possible, submit their nationally determined contribution, and together raise US\$100 billion for the Green Climate Fund each year until 2020, which would be scaled up again post-2025. In addition, overall progress in global climate action will be taken stock of every five years in order to encourage nations to be more ambitious, enhance international cooperation, achieve the long-term goal of coping with global climate change, as well as plot out a brand new approach and direction for deepening global cooperation.

### **III. Viable diplomacy and its major achievements**

#### **A. Strengthening exchanges and cooperation with allies**

##### **(1) Enhancing exchanges between high-level officials to deepen friendships**

Since last October, leaders and high-level government dignitaries from our diplomatic allies to have paid visits to Taiwan include: President of the Republic of Kiribati Anote Tong; President of the Republic of Nauru Baron

Waqqa; Guatemalan First Lady Ana Fagianni de Maldonado; Vice President of Honduras Ricardo Antonio Álvarez; Vice President of Guatemala Juan Alfonso Fuentes Soria; Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland Paul Dlamini; Deputy Prime Minister of the Federation of St. Christopher and Nevis Shawn Richards and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mark Brantley; President of the Paraguayan Congress and Senate Mario Abdo Benitez; Minister General Secretary of São Tomé and Príncipe Afonso Varela; and Ombudsman of Burkina Faso Alima D. Traore. Their visits have helped foster mutual understanding and cordial ties.

Similarly, ROC government leaders also made multiple visits to our diplomatic allies during the same period. To enhance our relations with our allies in Latin America and the Caribbean, and to highlight the achievements of viable diplomacy, President Ma will visit two ROC diplomatic allies, Guatemala and Belize, at their invitation from March 13 to 19. He will give a speech at the Central American Parliament (PARLACEN) in Guatemala and, while in Belize, meet with the prime ministers of three of our diplomatic allies in the Eastern Caribbean, these being St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and St. Christopher and Nevis. In addition, Control Yuan President Dr. Chang Po-ya attended the 20th annual conference of the Iberoamerican Federation of Ombudsman (Federación Iberoamericana del Ombudsman) in El Salvador on November 10, 2015, before visiting Belize, where she signed a bilateral ombudsman agreement. Last December, President of the Examination Yuan Wu Jin-lin led a delegation to Burkina Faso for the inauguration of its newly elected president. Last December, I myself led a delegation to attend the Central American Integration System's meeting of foreign ministers in El Salvador. Then, in January this year, I was

President Ma's special envoy to the inauguration of Guatemalan President Jimmy Morales. These developments symbolize the stability of our relations with our diplomatic allies.

**(2) Institutionalizing foreign aid work for the benefit of the peoples of our allies**

**i. Upholding three foreign aid principles**

To help our diplomatic allies improve their basic infrastructure, national development, health and educational standards, and quality of life, we carry out our foreign aid policy in accordance with the three principles of seeking proper goals, acting lawfully, and exercising effective administration, as well as with the spirit of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. As of December 2015, the ROC had dispatched 14 technical teams, medical teams, industrial service teams, and investment and trade missions, comprising 153 experts, technicians, and project managers. They carried out 86 joint projects in the areas of agriculture, fisheries, horticulture, animal husbandry, handicrafts, healthcare, water resources management, transportation, information and communication technology, industrial services, Chinese language education, volunteer work, and trade and investment. These projects have benefited the peoples of 32 countries in the Asia-Pacific, West Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America.

**ii. Increasing transparency**

My ministry 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 2015 Annual Report of the International Cooperation and Development Fund (TaiwanICDF), was prepared, submitted to the

Executive Yuan, and forwarded to the Legislative Yuan for reference. These efforts have improved the transparency of our overseas humanitarian assistance.

### **(3) Overview of bilateral interactions with diplomatic allies**

#### **i. The Asia-Pacific**

The ties we maintain with six allies in this region are sound. Their presidents or premiers all visited Taiwan in 2015, which has been helpful for further enhancing our cooperative relations. Currently, bilateral cooperation projects with our Asia-Pacific allies are focused on six areas: healthcare, fisheries, vocational training, food security, clean energy, and culture. These diplomatic partners have always actively supported our efforts to participate in the World Health Organization and other international organizations. They also spoke on Taiwan's behalf during the 2015 Sustainable Development Summit at the 70th session of the UN General Assembly, at the General Debate of the UN General Assembly, and at the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

In addition, the ROC is co-hosting the Pacific Islands Leadership Program with the US-based East-West Center. Over the course of five years, the program will provide instruction in leadership skills and government administration to 125 young leaders from around the region, enriching their knowledge of Taiwan's economic and political developments in the process. In 2015, 25 students from 11 countries attended the training program. My ministry helped them understand our development in terms of the economy, agriculture, fisheries, and so forth.

The program serves as a good model for trilateral cooperation between Taiwan, the United States, and Pacific island nations.

**ii. Europe**

**(a) Close interactions between the ROC and the Holy See**

Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia, President of the Pontifical Council for the Family, attended the 20th Asia-Pacific Congress on Faith, Life and Family held in Taiwan last November. That same month, an ROC delegation composed of members from Fu Jen Catholic University, Providence University, and Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages participated in the World Congress of Catholic Education held by the Congregation for Catholic Education of the Holy See in Rome. On November 5, 2015, my ministry helped the National Palace Museum sign an agreement with the Holy See to hold the exhibition “Treasures from Heaven—A Special Exhibition of Artifacts from the Holy See.” Running from February 5 to May 2, this joint exhibition features 60 objects on loan from the Office for the Liturgical Celebrations of the Supreme Pontiff. Archbishop Piero Marini, President of the Pontifical Committee for International Eucharistic Congresses, led a four-member delegation from the Holy See to Taiwan, from February 3 to 6, to attend the exhibition’s opening ceremony. This is the first time that the Vatican has held a large-scale exhibition of its treasures outside the Holy See, and is a momentous occasion for religious and cultural exchanges between the ROC and the Vatican, one that underlines the cordial relations our two sides enjoy.

**(b) ROC-Holy See humanitarian aid**

Taiwan collaborated with the Vatican in October last year to help victims of a landslide in Guatemala. In December, we worked with the Good Samaritan Foundation of the Holy See's Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Health Care Workers, and the Pontifical Council Cor Unum for Human and Christian Development, on an international humanitarian aid program. The Holy See and recipient countries all sent letters to express their appreciation and recognize Taiwan as a reliable humanitarian aid partner. Meanwhile, President Ma sent a letter on January 26 this year to Pope Francis in response to His Holiness' Papal Message for the World Day of Peace 2016. In addition to elaborating on his East China Sea and South China Sea Peace Initiatives, the president also stressed that the ROC has faithfully fulfilled its responsibility as a provider of humanitarian aid over the past few years, and looks forward to working closely with the Holy See and people everywhere to create a beautiful world filled with compassion and peace.

### **iii. Latin America and the Caribbean**

We maintain stable and friendly ties with our 12 diplomatic allies in Latin America and the Caribbean, with frequent high-level exchange visits and close cooperative relations. We continue to promote programs in such areas as essential infrastructure, agriculture, fisheries, medical care, disaster prevention, welfare, tourism, organizational strengthening, vocational training, green energy, and so forth, programs that have tangible benefits for the people in these countries. Our efforts have been lauded by their governments and peoples alike. 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 participated in projects associated with the Central American Integration System. We have also done our utmost to fulfill our responsibilities as a provider of international aid by offering assistance whenever our diplomatic allies suffer from floods, droughts, and volcanic eruptions. Last June, Saint Lucia set up an embassy in the ROC, its first in Asia, with Prime Minister Kenny Anthony attending the unveiling ceremony. Saint Lucia's first ambassador to the ROC, Hubert Emmanuel, presented his credentials to President Ma on December 3.

**iv. Africa**

The ROC maintains solid diplomatic ties with each of its three African allies— Burkina Faso, São Tomé and Príncipe, and the Kingdom of Swaziland. We continue to deepen and expand our bilateral cooperation and exchanges in the areas of politics, trade, science, education, culture, and medicine, and hold frequent personnel exchanges. We also continue to provide a variety of scholarships to help our allies cultivate human resources. Meanwhile, they firmly support our bid to participate in UN specialized agencies, and speak out for us on appropriate occasions.

**B. Boosting substantive ties with other major countries**

**(1) The United States**

**i. The US administration's favorable words and deeds highlight the closeness and stability of bilateral relations**

(a) The US continues to call its relations with Taiwan "a partnership," with related terms appearing in publicly released government documents: In a policy statement published last November by the



White House to promote the US rebalance to Asia policy, it says that the US has “deepened partnerships with Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam and India, and strengthened our unofficial relationship with the people of Taiwan.”

- (b) The US has taken concrete steps to reaffirm the Taiwan Relations Act and its commitments to our national security: (i) US Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter indicated on November 7 last year that the US is fundamentally altering its operational plans and approaches in the Asia-Pacific region to deter aggression and fulfill its statutory obligations to Taiwan; and (ii) the US government announced on December 16, 2015, a US\$1.83-billion arms sale package to Taiwan consisting of 10 items, the fourth such deal to have taken place during President Ma’s tenure. Accumulatively, the US has sold Taiwan US\$20.1 billion worth of arms during this time, the highest figure over any comparable period since the Taiwan Relations Act was enacted in 1979.
- (c) The US has on several occasions affirmed our participation in international anti-terrorism efforts through the provision of humanitarian aid: (i) During a press conference held after attending the East Asia summit, President Obama publicly referred to Taiwan as a member of the global coalition to counter ISIL; he also stated his desire to continue working with Taiwan and other Asia-Pacific partner nations to fight ISIL; and (ii) the ROC national flag was shown alongside those of the other 65 coalition members during a live feed of President Obama’s State of the Union address on January 12, 2016.
- (d) Bilateral exchanges have become closer: (i) The American Institute

in Taiwan issued a press release, complete with photo, when the president's APEC representative Vincent C. Siew met with US Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken at the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting; the White House also published a photo of Leader's Representative Siew, President Obama, and mainland Chinese leader Xi Jinping exchanging greetings during the summit; and (ii) Vice Premier Dr. Chang San-cheng led a delegation to San Francisco in the middle of January. Significantly, this is the first time since 1979 that an ROC vice premier has gone on a formal visit to the US to promote Taiwan-US cooperation on the economy, trade, science, and technology.

- (e) The US did not hesitate to approve of the Ma-Xi meeting: The US administration issued a positive statement immediately after the Ma-Xi meeting in Singapore last November, with seven such public statements forthcoming. The highest-ranking US official to speak out was Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken, and the use of the word "welcome" appeared nine times.
- (f) The US openly approves of ROC conduct as helping to stabilize the region: On the same day that the Agreement Concerning the Facilitation of Cooperation on Law Enforcement in Fisheries Matters between Taiwan and the Philippines was signed, AIT issued a press release declaring that the US welcomed the agreement, which it believes can serve as a model for peacefully solving regional maritime disputes.
- (g) The US Department of State released a statement right after our recent presidential election congratulating Dr. Tsai Ing-wen on her victory, and expressing the hope that the two sides would work

together to better protect our common interests and further consolidate our bilateral ties. The US also thanked President Ma for his efforts to develop a strong partnership with the US, and applauded him for the concrete steps taken to improve cross-strait ties in recent years.

**ii. Friendship toward the ROC runs deep in the US Congress**

- (a) Number of members in the US Congressional Taiwan Caucus reaches a new high: the number of members in the US Congressional Taiwan Caucus leapt to 193 in 2015, a historical high. The caucus continues to be the largest country caucus in Congress, while its counterpart, the Senate Taiwan Caucus, has 33 members, the second highest among country caucuses in the Senate.
- (b) Supporting US-Taiwan security relations and ROC participation in international organizations: Last November, the US House of Representatives and the US Senate both passed the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016. Section 1263 pertains to the US's own South China Sea Initiative, and authorizes the US administration to engage other nations, including Taiwan, in related training programs. A joint explanatory statement passed at the same time also elaborates on US Congress support for Taiwan-US security ties. In addition, the US House Committee on Foreign Affairs and its counterpart in the US Senate separately passed bills—in November 2015 and January 2016—supporting Taiwan's participation in Interpol.

**iii. Enhancing bilateral economic and trade cooperation and exchanges**

- (a) The ninth round of talks between Taiwan and the US under the bilateral Trade and Investment Framework Agreement in October

last year in Taipei produced some very good results. After the meeting, Deputy US Trade Representative Robert Holleyman openly declared that the US welcomes the economic and trade liberalization efforts Taiwan is making to join the TPP.

- (b) The inaugural Taiwan-US Digital Economy Forum was held on December 2 last year in Taipei, with Science and Technology Advisor to the Secretary of State Dr. Vaughan Turekian leading a US delegation to participate in the meeting, which led to some rewarding exchanges. The forum, proposed jointly last June by Taiwan and the US when Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs Charles Rivkin was visiting, serves as a high-level channel for economic dialogue between the ROC and the US.

#### **iv. Expanding areas of substantive cooperation**

- (a) International dengue seminar and consultative meeting of specialists: Early last December, Taiwan and the US jointly held an international dengue fever seminar and a consultative meeting of specialists. This is yet another example of an international cooperation project that the two sides have held under the auspices of the Global Cooperation and Training Framework (GCTF), and goes to show how comprehensive, lasting, and mutually beneficial the US-Taiwan partnership is.
- (b) The International Environmental Partnership program: Following an announcement in April 2014 by our Environmental Protection Administration (EPA) that it would set up the International Environmental Partnership (IEP), the US immediately joined the program as a founding partner nation. In October last year, the EPA

and the US Environmental Protection Agency jointly held the second Pan-Pacific Partnership on Climate Change Adaptation Workshop in Hanoi, Vietnam, and the 2015 Cities Clean Air Partnership meeting in Manila, the Philippines. Both had positive outcomes.

**v. Promoting mutual recognition of driver's licenses with the US and Canada**

Since 2013, this ministry has so far reached agreements on the mutual recognition of driver's licenses with 15 US states, Puerto Rico, and seven provinces in Canada. We are working to promote the signing of more such agreements with other states and provinces in the US and Canada, to make travel in those two countries even easier for ROC citizens.

**vi. Frequent visits by high-ranking US officials**

Between October 2015 and March 2016, 44 delegations consisting of 358 US officials visited Taiwan. They included US Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs and Senior Official for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Matthew J. Matthews; Deputy US Trade Representative, Ambassador Robert Holleyman; Chairman of the US House Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, Matt Salmon; Delegate Madeleine Bordallo; Montana Governor Steve Bullock; Governor of Guam Eddie Calvo; former Senior Director for Asian Affairs at the White House National Security Council, Dr. Evan Medeiros; former Deputy Secretary of State, Ambassador William Burns; and Chairman Emeritus of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Rep. James Sensenbrenner, along with his colleague and fellow

committee member, Rep. Bruce Westerman.

## **(2) Japan**

### **i. Taiwan and Japan signed three pacts last November**

These were the Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation, the Taiwan-Japan Memorandum of Understanding regarding the Application of Competition Laws, as well as the Memorandum of Understanding on Enhancing Exchanges and Cooperation Regarding Disaster Prevention and Relief.

### **ii. Japan was full of praise over our presidential election and sent its congratulations**

Speaking publicly on the night of January 16, Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida congratulated the president-elect, lauded our mature democracy, and stated that Japan would strengthen its cooperation and exchanges with Taiwan. In response to questions in the Japanese National Diet on January 18, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe expressed his heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Tsai Ing-wen on her victory. Calling Taiwan “an old friend of Japan,” he too said he looked forward to our countries boosting cooperation and exchanges.

### **iii. The 5th Taiwan-Japan Fishery Committee meeting**

Taiwan and Japan held the 5th Taiwan-Japan Fishery Committee meeting between March 2 and 5. The two sides discussed the application of operational guidelines for fishing boats in related waters, among other issues, to safeguard the rights and interests of fishermen from both sides.

### **iv. Taiwan and Japan continue to engage in communication over the comfort women issue**

(a) On December 28 last year, the foreign ministers of Japan and South

Korea held a meeting and reached a common understanding on solving the comfort women issue, an outcome that the United States said it was happy to see. Prior to the meeting, my ministry coordinated with our Tokyo office on making representations with the Japanese side. We not only expressed our consistent and principled stance on the issue, but also again firmly demanded that the Japanese government enter into negotiations with us as soon as possible. Meanwhile, we have maintained contact, and discussed matters, with the Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation, which has long paid close attention to the comfort women issue. I met Chief Representative of the Japan Interchange Association Taipei Office Mikio Numata on January 6, when I officially put forward our four demands, and urged Japan to hold formal discussions with us without delay.

(b) Ambassador Shen Ssu-Tsun, our representative to Japan, has repeatedly brought this issue up, so that Japan Interchange Association President Tadashi Imai and other Japanese representatives are very clear on our four demands. We are continuing to communicate with the Japanese side, the channels for which remain unimpeded. In fact, the Japanese side is willing to face the issue squarely, and is looking into how it should respond.

**v. Exchange visits at an all time high**

In 2015, ROC nationals made 3.797 million trips to Japan, while Japanese nationals made 1.467 million trips to Taiwan. The combined total of 5.26 million is the highest ever.

**(3) European Union**

**i. Efforts to promote the signing of a BIA and an ECA**

In his first videoconference with members of the European Parliament, held on September 29, 2015, President Ma called on the EU to start talks on signing a bilateral investment agreement (BIA) with the ROC as soon as possible. And after my ministry and our overseas offices in Europe approached the European Commission, the European Parliament, and individual member nations on multiple occasions, the European Commissioner for Trade Cecilia Malmström eventually included looking into the possibility of signing a BIA with Taiwan as part of the EU trade and investment policy paper published on October 14, 2015. This fully demonstrates that, when it comes to the economy and trade, the EU and Taiwan have many common interests and a shared vision for the future. We will continue to work with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and other relevant agencies on this issue.

**ii. Positive statements from the EU and its member nations**

(a) EU High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini made a statement on January 16, 2016, about the recent ROC elections for president, vice president, and legislators. She stated that the elections were successful due to Taiwan's respect for democracy, rule of law, and human rights. She also reiterated EU support of the continued peaceful development of cross-strait relations. In addition, British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Philip Hammond, German Minister for Foreign Affairs Frank-Walter Steinmeier, and the French Ministry of Foreign affairs have all issued statements to congratulate Dr. Tsai Ing-wen on her election, affirm our democratic developments, and express concern for cross-strait peace and stability.



- (b) The spokesperson for High Representative Mogherini issued a statement to welcome the Ma-Xi meeting in Singapore last November. The meeting was also publicly affirmed by the foreign ministries of France, Germany, and Belgium.
- (c) Since 2008, the EU and the EP have issued or passed 30 statements and resolutions friendly to Taiwan, supporting a wide range of issues, such as the signing of a bilateral investment agreement and economic cooperation agreement, Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organizations, cross-strait peace and stability, and Taiwan's democratic developments. These developments fully reflect the cordial relations between Taiwan and the EU, and further encourage the 28 EU member states to deepen relations with us.

**iii. Promoting and upgrading institutionalized consultations with the EU and member states**

The Taiwan-EU Annual Consultation Meeting is currently the most important communication framework between the two sides. Rotating each year between Taipei and Brussels, the conference has been held 27 times. Quite a few ROC-EU cooperative projects related to the economy and trade, as well as other issues, have made substantial progress through this platform. Last November, a sideline meeting took place in Brussels, and a related non-trade meeting was held in Taipei to discuss various issues of mutual concern. In addition, we are continuing to promote institutionalized consultations for senior officials of Taiwan and EU member states, such as the first ever gender equality seminar that was held in Taipei last December. All these meetings help deepen and broaden our substantive relations with the EU and its member

nations.

**iv. Cooperation agreements with European nations**

Last October, we signed an aviation agreement with Spain, announced cooperation on medicine and medical equipment with Germany, and entered an agreement with France on stationing international innovation experts in Taiwan. In December, we signed a memorandum of understanding on mutual recognition of driver's licenses with Poland, an agreement on the avoidance of double taxation with Italy, and an agreement on youth working holidays with the Czech Republic. In addition, we entered a memorandum of cooperation on medicine and medical equipment with Poland this January, and hope to sign a youth working holiday agreement with France and a prisoner transfer agreement with the UK in the near future.

**v. Mutual visits by high-ranking officials**

(a) Between October 2015 and January 2016, 42 delegations consisting of 195 important individuals from Europe visited Taiwan. They included Prince Matthew Festing, Grand Master of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta; Anette Kramme, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister of Labor and Social Affairs of Germany; parliamentarians from France, Italy, Germany, and the United Kingdom; as well as important political figures from the EU, Spain, and Austria.

(b) During that time, high ranking ROC officials paid 13 visits to Europe to attend important bilateral meetings and international conferences. They included members of the Legislative Yuan and the Control Yuan; ministers and vice ministers of several

government agencies; and mayors and deputy mayors of Taipei City and other local governments.

**vi. Other important exchanges and cooperation**

(a) Taiwan-Austria cultural exchanges

The Vienna Boys' Choir performed in Taiwan between October and November last year and sang at the Office of the President for President Ma Ying-jeou.

(b) ROC participation in a global anti-piracy program

Last October, we took part in a global anti-piracy program and made a donation to the Oceans Beyond Piracy project of the US-sanctioned One Earth Future Foundation, helping establish maritime security centers in five Somali ports to enhance coastal maritime security. Another donation was made to the Piracy Survivor Family Fund under the Maritime Piracy Humanitarian Response Programme to support piracy survivors and their families.

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

**i. Republic of Korea**

(a) Recently signed bilateral agreements

(i) Last year Taiwan signed three memorandums of understanding (MOU) and one agreement with the Republic of Korea: MOU on the Exchange of Industrial Property Information and the Electronic Exchange of Priority Documents, MOU on the Patent Prosecution Highway Mottainai, MOU between the Taipei Mission in Korea and the Korean Mission in Taipei on an amendment of an aviation pact, and the Arrangement between the Taipei Mission in Korea and the Korean Mission in Taipei Regarding Mutual Recognition of the Authorized

Economic Operator Programs.

(ii) Since the above aviation MOU was signed last September, the number of bilateral weekly flights has increased from 137 to 162. Also, multiple consensuses were reached, including the launching of direct flights between the airport in Kaohsiung and Gimpo Airport in Seoul. These developments have benefitted people-to-people exchanges, increasing the number of such bilateral visits to over 1 million each year. In terms of economic and trade interaction, industrial cooperation had also made significant progress in terms of both quality and quantity. As for cultural and education exchanges, 115 of our universities have formed sister-school relations with 227 ROK universities. The countries interact closely, having signed 848 academic exchange accords thus far. The number of exchange students has been growing annually, with 1,994 ROC students currently studying in the ROK and 2,500 ROK students studying in Taiwan.

**ii. South and Southeast Asian countries**

- (a) Indonesia: Last year the Taipei Economic and Trade Office in Surabaya, Indonesia, started operating on December 21, three days after its ceremonial opening.
- (b) Philippines: Taiwan signed with the Philippines the Agreement Concerning the Facilitation of Cooperation on Law Enforcement in Fisheries Matters on November 5, 2015. On the same day, we convened the first bilateral technical working group meeting to discuss law enforcement matters in overlapping exclusive economic zones and notification procedures so as to effectively reduce

fisheries-related disputes. The second technical working group meeting will be held March 15-16 in the Philippines. In addition, a bilateral economic cooperation was held on December 4.

(c) India: Taiwan and India held vice ministerial-level economic talks on December 10 and signed an MOU for cooperation on small and medium-sized enterprises.

(d) Thailand and Vietnam: Taiwan also held a higher education forum with Thailand on November 24 and a tourism cooperation meeting with Vietnam on November 26.

### **iii. Papua New Guinea**

Through the proactive efforts made by my ministry, the Papua New Guinea Trade Office in Taiwan was established last year on December 31 so as to further strengthen bilateral exchanges and cooperation in such areas as trade, fisheries, and energy.

## **(5) West Asian and African countries**

i. High ranking officials and legislators from West Asian and African countries lacking diplomatic relations with the ROC, such as Russia, Saudi Arabia, and South Africa, have visited Taiwan since last October. During this period, influential people from Taiwan have also visited the area, including Vice Minister of Economic Affairs Cho Shih-chao, who went to Israel and South Africa; Kaohsiung City Deputy Mayor Wu Hong-mo, who visited South Africa; and Deputy Minister of Ministry of Transportation and Communications Fan Chih-Ku, who traveled to Russia.

ii. Taiwan actively engages in exchanges with countries in these areas with respect to economy and trade, education, and humanitarian aid. Many meetings have been held to discuss related bilateral cooperation items.

- (a) We acquired Russia's agreement to lift bans on importing Pacific saury from Taiwan, benefitting 83 local fish processing plants and fishing companies.
- (b) We also held the 11th Taiwan-Israel Economic and Technical Cooperation Conference and signed the Declaration of Intent between the Israel Economic and Cultural Office in Taipei and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Tel Aviv on Industrial Cooperation in the Field of Renewable Energy. In addition, we held the 10th Taiwan-South Africa Economic Consultations.
- (c) Concerning refugees and others in need in Jordan, Turkey, and northern Iraq, Taiwan's public and private sectors have cooperated with such countries as Jordan, the Holy See, Turkey, and the United States, as well as intergovernmental organizations and NGOs to provide refugees with aid, including prefabricated houses, medical care, counseling, and food.

**(6) Nonallied countries in Latin America and the Caribbean**

- i. MOFA has sought support from various countries, including Mexico, Chile, and Peru, for Taiwan's participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership. We have also pushed for the signing of bilateral economic cooperation agreements with certain countries, such as Chile and Colombia. Likewise, we continue to try to gain support from Mexico, Colombia, Chile, and Peru for our efforts to join the Pacific Alliance trade bloc.
- ii. We continue to strengthen our relations with other countries in the areas of economy, trade, tourism, science and technology, environmental protection, culture, aviation, agriculture, and fisheries.
- iii. The ROC Academy for the Judiciary signed a technical cooperation

agreement with Brazil's Sao Paulo School of Judges.

- iv. Between last October and this January, the foreign dignitaries from this area who visited Taiwan include Edmundo Javier Bolaños Aguilar, vice president of the Chamber of Deputies of Mexico; Roberto Vizcardo, general secretary of the National Center for Higher Studies of Peru; Nidia Marcela Osorio, first vice president of the senate of Colombia.

## **C. Expanding international participation**

### **(1) World Trade Organization (WTO)**

#### **i. Participation in 10th Ministerial Conference**

Minister of Economic Affairs Deng Chen-chung led a delegation composed of staff members from MOFA and other ministries to participate in the WTO's 10th Ministerial Conference in Nairobi, Kenya, between December 15 and 18. Multilateral consultations were held, leading to consensus being reached on agricultural and development issues of least developed countries. However, other Doha Development Round issues failed to make progress, and member states hold different opinions about whether the round should even continue. In order to safeguard our economic and trade interests, regarding the future developments of the Doha Development Round, as well as our further participation in multilateral negotiations, my ministry will continue to maintain close contact with the MOEA and other related agencies. We have also instructed our WTO office in Geneva to pay close attention to and report on important developments.

#### **ii. Plurilateral negotiations**

We actively engage in plurilateral talks under the WTO framework on such instruments as the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA), Information Technology Agreement Expansion, and Environmental

Goods Agreement (EGA). The Information Technology Agreement Expansion consultations were concluded on December 16, 2015, with negotiations on the TiSA and the EGA set to be completed by the end of 2016. MOFA has instructed its permanent representative office to the WTO to work closely with the missions of other countries and actively collect and share related information with the MOEA and other related agencies for their reference.

**iii. Taiwan's participation in and contributions to the WTO**

Our WTO office staff members have long sought opportunities to chair committees or lead negotiations, thereby putting Taiwan in the spotlight and increasing its contributions. For years, Lai Shin-yuan, ROC permanent representative to the World Trade Organization, has served as a coordinator for Recently Acceded Members (RAMs). One of the staff members was reelected as chair of the Committee on Import Licensing in 2015, making it three years in a row for our personnel to assume a leadership position. MOFA has requested staff members to continue to earn such positions in 2016.

**(2) Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)**

- i. Last year under APEC, Taiwan held 28 meetings, seven of which were held jointly with other countries abroad. As a core member conducting the strategic study on the Realization of the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP), Taiwan drafted a few chapters of the study, which is expected to be completed in time for the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting this year.
- ii. MOFA helped organize a delegation of representatives from related ministries to attend this year's first APEC Senior Officials' Meeting, which took place in Peru between late February and early March. We



are also assisting other ministries in promoting the establishment of the APEC Emergency Preparedness Capacity Building Center and the APEC Skills Development Capacity Building Alliance.

- iii. Between October and December 2015, ROC delegations participated in eight important APEC meetings at the senior official level or above. For instance, former Vice President Vincent Siew attended the annual leaders' meeting last November as President Ma Ying-jeou's envoy. The meeting allowed him to elaborate on Taiwan's progress on examining laws to determine whether they are in line with international standards and amending them. He also reiterated Taiwan's determination to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and solicited support for Taiwan's admission to the TPP's second round of negotiations. ROC delegations to APEC meetings will continue to elaborate on Taiwan's progress to foster beneficial conditions for our joining regional economic integration mechanisms, such as the TPP and the RCEP.
- iv. During 2015 APEC Economic Leaders' Week, Vice President Siew engaged in meetings with leaders and officials of other important member economies, including Japan Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, and US Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

### **(3) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

#### **i. Conference of the Parties (COP)**

##### **(a) Executive Yuan delegation**

The Environmental Protection Administration (EPA) coordinated with relevant agencies, while the Industrial Technology Research

Institute (ITRI) attended the meeting as a nongovernmental organization observer, thereby maintaining our visibility in the international arena. After continuous efforts, EPA Minister Wei Kuo-yen led a delegation to attend COP21 in Paris, France, last year, reaping fruitful results.

**(b) Legislative Yuan delegation**

The Legislative Yuan organized delegations to attend COP19, COP20, and COP21 for three consecutive years starting in 2013 to lobby for Taiwan's participation in the UNFCCC. Former legislators Chiou Wen-yen, Tien Chiu-chin, and Lai Chen-chang attended COP21 and the opening ceremony of the Climate Parliament, and visited Taiwan's booth. They also conducted bilateral meetings with German and French parliamentarians to promote environmental protection through parliamentary diplomacy.

**ii. Related events**

- (a) Arranging bilateral talks and hosting side events: our delegation held 17 bilateral talks with major countries and diplomatic allies on technical issues related to climate change during COP21 to seek opportunities for future cooperation, as well as seven side meetings.
- (b) Requesting allies to speak and write letters in support of Taiwan: Last year we requested that allies focus their verbal and written support on Taiwan's promulgation of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction and Management Act in July and commitments to Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions in September. In the end, 19 countries sent letters to

the UNFCCC Executive Secretary and 12 countries spoke in favor of our country.

#### **(4) World Health Organization (WHO)**

- i. Last May, our country was invited to attend the World Health Assembly (WHA) for the seventh year in a row. Minister of Health and Welfare Chiang Been-huang led our delegation and delivered a speech during the WHA. Our delegation held 54 bilateral talks with the US, EU members, Japan, and other countries, and made 28 comments in technical committees. Minister Chiang also presented a paper on medical and health issues.
- ii. The US State Department issued a report to Congress on assisting Taiwan's efforts to participate in the WHO, explicitly urging the WHO to adopt the WHA model to accept our country to attend WHO professional meetings.
- iii. Taiwan's participation in the WHA has become normalized and has solid professional standing. Our medical care strengths and contributions to international health efforts have repeatedly won the international community's recognition. We will continue to strive for more opportunities to join various WHO meetings, mechanisms, and events.

#### **(5) International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)**

- i. In 2013, our Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) director-general took part in the 38th ICAO assembly as a guest of the ICAO Council president under the name Chinese Taipei. Following its WHA attendance, Taiwan's presence at the primary meeting of another

specialized agency under the United Nations is especially meaningful.

- ii. We have continued to foster a friendly environment for Taiwan in the international community: Last year, both the Chamber of Senators and Chamber of Deputies of Paraguay passed a statement to support our participation in ICAO. The Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee of the Chamber of Deputies of Brazil, the Seanad Éireann (Senate) of Ireland, and the Chamber of Representatives of Belgium also passed resolutions in favor of our country. In addition, 24 US state legislatures passed 36 resolutions and statements in support of Taiwan. Likewise, the Portuguese and German parliaments sent letters to ICAO to support our meaningful participation.
- iii. The 39th ICAO Triennial Assembly will be held from September 27 to October 7 in Montreal, Canada, this year. MOFA will continue to garner support from the international community for our participation and expand our participation in ICAO activities and strengthen international civil aeronautical cooperation. This will help ensure aviation safety for passengers from home and abroad.

#### **(6) Other intergovernmental organizations**

- i. We continue to gather international support for our participation in INTERPOL. Last year, the US House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed Resolution No.1853 (392:0) on November 2 in favor of our participation in INTERPOL, requesting that the US president help Taiwan become an observer. In addition, the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations also passed Bill No. 2426 on January 28 this year to request that the US Secretary of State formulate a

strategy to assist Taiwan to gain observership in INTERPOL and other appropriate international organizations.

- ii. On August 25 last year, Taiwan officially joined the newly established North Pacific Fishery Commission (NPFC) and attended its first meeting on September 3 in Tokyo. Taiwan also sent delegates to attend meetings of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) and other activities to consolidate Taiwan's membership and fishing rights.
- iii. The ROC is carrying out the 2015-2018 Green Outstanding Center project of the Asian Productivity Organization (APO), earning Taiwan recognition from the international community for its role as a major proponent of green productivity and sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific. Last November 12, the ROC and the APO jointly held the 2015 International Forum on Asian Productivity Organization Center of Excellence on Green Productivity.
- iv. The ROC has also been participating in international financial organizations. For instance, we sent delegates to attend the first capital increase meeting of the 12th Asian Development Fund (ADF) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the donation planning meeting of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). It is hoped that our enterprises can expand overseas through cooperation with countries receiving aid from multilateral development institutions.

#### **D. Improved services to better ensure public welfare**

- (1) My ministry continues to strengthen passport security through anti-forgery features. As of the end of last year, we had issued 10.1 million e-passports

since launching them at the end of 2008, accounting for 83.45 percent of ROC passports in circulation. On April 8 last year, MOFA also started allowing the public to use a credit card to pay consular fees at the counter, which has had positive results and feedback.

- (2) In addition, we created an eVisa system at the end of last year for visa applications by foreigners, which started operations on January 12 this year. This should help encourage other countries to improve their visa treatment for the people of Taiwan.
- (3) Last May, the Bureau of Consular Affairs set up a Line account to provide information on travel abroad, which has been positively received. In addition, from October to December 2015, a total of 8,098 people and 76 tourist groups were registered on the website, better enabling our foreign missions to provide assistance in the event of an emergency.

## **E. Strengthened economic and trade diplomacy and participation in international humanitarian aid**

### **(1) International trade fairs**

In the fourth quarter last year, this ministry commissioned the Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA) to participate in or put on seven trade fairs in diplomatic allies and newly emerging countries, creating business opportunities worth over US\$245 million. MOFA will participate in trade fairs in Brunei, Bahrain, Panama and Vancouver in the first quarter to help our businesses expand their overseas markets.

### **(2) Investment seminars and bilateral economic meetings**

In the fourth quarter of last year, MOFA authorized the Chinese International Economic Cooperation Association to conduct bilateral economic

cooperation meetings with India, the Czech Republic, Austria, and Luxembourg. In addition, economic and trade missions were organized to visit Switzerland, Italy, and Romania, and 16 events were held, including the International Arbitration and Alternative Dispute Resolution Seminar. High-ranking officials from the Dominican Republic visited Taiwan for an economic, trade, and investment opportunities seminar so as to promote bilateral economic and trade exchanges.

**(3) Tours for foreign diplomats and trade representatives in Taiwan**

MOFA aims to organize two such events every year to introduce major economic and trade infrastructure and key businesses. Last November, MOFA organized a delegation to Yilan to visit local medical and biotech industries, as well as cultural creative and food industries.

**(4) Participation in international humanitarian aid to fulfill international responsibility**

In order to assist Nepal with its post-earthquake reconstruction, MOFA organized international cooperation projects proposed by Taiwan AID in mid-October last year so as to better integrate the resources of Taiwan's NGOs seeking to assist in Nepal's mid- and long-term reconstruction. In addition, MOFA has helped the International Cooperation and Development Fund (TaiwanICDF), CARE Nepal, World Vision Nepal Chapter, and other INGOs work together on Nepal's reconstruction.

**F. Public diplomacy and international campaigns**

**(1) Using diverse channels to create public diplomacy synergy**

MOFA utilizes the Internet, YouTube, the Teen Diplomatic Envoys Facebook page, and the web pages of relevant ministries, MOFA, charity

channels and multimedia boards to broadcast public service commercials and advertisements created by MOFA. In addition, viable diplomacy achievements are announced in newspapers, magazines, and MRT light boxes. In addition, my ministry receives groups of high school and university students to better publicize the government's major policy achievements. Last year, 63 groups comprising more than 2,800 students were received, as an effective way of conducting public diplomacy.

**(2) Helping young people connect with the international community**

**i. Teen Diplomatic Envoys—English Seed Team Selection Activities**

Fourteen years ago, MOFA began cooperating with the Ministry of Education to form the Teen Diplomatic Envoys. Thus far, 2,009 teams comprising 8,036 high school and vocational school students have participated in the event. MOFA arranged for the top three teams this year to visit Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand, from late January to early February. They engaged in exchanges with local high school students to broaden their international horizons and carry out youth culture diplomacy to promote Taiwan.

**ii. Youth working holidays**

Since the inception of this initiative in 2004, we have signed working holiday agreements with 14 countries. More than 190,000 youth have participated in it thus far. Five representative offices in Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Canada, and the United Kingdom unveiled working holiday Let's Go! Facebook pages on January 27, 2016. MOFA and related ministries already conducted six promotional events in northern, central, and southern Taiwan last year, and plan on conducting six more



this year.

**iii. International Youth Ambassadors Exchange Program**

This program has been well received and will be continued this year, selecting 100 outstanding university students, in five groups, to serve as youth ambassadors overseas, promote exchanges, and conduct performances in late August. This will highlight Taiwan's active role in the international community and the vitality of its young people.

**(3) Working with local NGOs to promote international exchanges**

MOFA and the ROC Chapter of the World League for Freedom and Democracy (WLFD) worked together to invite Chairman Bruce Knotts of the UN DPI/NGO to lead a delegation to Taiwan for the 2016 World Freedom Day Celebration this January. This was just one clear example of how MOFA can work hand in hand with Taiwan's NGOs to promote exchanges with UN specialized agencies.

**(4) Hosting 2015 People's Diplomacy Camp**

A total of 37 activities taking 107 hours for 6,967 participants were conducted in Taiwan and its offshore islands for the 2015 People's Diplomacy Camp. The participants gained a better understanding of our most recent foreign policy endeavors, consular services, international etiquette, international cooperation and aid, as well as economic and trade diplomacy. The event aimed to help young people participate in international affairs.

**(5) Promoting cultural and academic diplomacy**

- i. This year MOFA will continue to assist our scholars and experts to study and conduct research at renowned overseas universities, academic

institutions, and think tanks. In addition, 110 outstanding foreign youth have received Taiwan Fellowships, thereby strengthening our international academic exchanges.

- ii. Last October, MOFA asked the Graduate Institute of Asian Studies (GIAS) at Tamkang University to offer online master's degrees. Meanwhile, thirty scholarship students from 11 Latin American countries were invited to Taiwan for onsite courses. In January this year, MOFA commissioned the GIAS to continue offering online master's degree courses. Six scholarship students from three Latin American countries will be coming to Taiwan to defend their theses and take part in their graduation ceremony.

#### **(6) Strengthening international media campaigns**

##### **i. Interviews of the president and visits by international media outlets**

We helped arrange for UK-based Thomson Reuters and US-based Bloomberg News to interview President Ma, with Thomson publishing 11 articles and Bloomberg four. In addition, we organized international press delegations for National Day celebrations and meetings of international organizations in which Taiwan participates, helping 89 members of the international press visit Taiwan, resulting in 50 articles being published. On November 7 last year, 36 international media outlets represented by 81 reporters went to Singapore to cover the Ma-Xi meeting, producing 1,329 articles.

##### **ii. Boosting international coverage of key issues**

**(a) The 70th anniversary of victory in the War of Resistance against Japan and the retrocession of Taiwan**

Chinese and English versions of five videos commemorating the 70th anniversary of our victory in the War of Resistance against Japan and the retrocession of Taiwan were created and posted on the MOFA YouTube page. These clips include *Feng Shang Ho-Man of Courage and Humanity* and *Snapshots of War of Resistance against Japan*. MOFA instructed 35 of its foreign missions, including our representative offices in the United States, to show these videos in order to provide information on the contributions of the ROC in WWII.

**(b) Participation in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

When COP21 was being held in Paris, our foreign missions helped coordinate the publication of 64 articles written in the international press by Minister Wei of the Environmental Protection Administration regarding our participation in the UNFCCC. We also held interactive promotional events in the Grand Palais, where we featured sports jerseys made from recycled PET bottles and video games to introduce our energy saving and carbon reduction measures. French President Francois Hollande visited our booth on December 18, 2015.

**(c) 23rd APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting**

Four press conferences were held for Representative Vincent Siew before and after the 23rd APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting.

**(d) Presidential election**

Around 400 members of the international press corps came to

Taiwan to cover this year's presidential election. The government also created a presidential election website. Before the election, MOFA commissioned the radio station ICRT to conduct a seminar, and with the Institute of International Relations at National Chengchi University jointly held a forum on the ballot-counting process.

**(e) Promotion of national image through soft power**

- (i) Through our missions abroad, subsidies are offered to enter high quality films into major international film festivals or encourage related foreign institutions to conduct Taiwan film festivals. As of October last year, 14 overseas missions had conducted 46 movie events for audiences of more than 5,000 people total. In addition, an agency was commissioned to have the high quality series *The Way We Were* dubbed in Spanish. Our foreign missions arranged for TV stations in Spanish-speaking countries and areas to broadcast it so as to better leverage Taiwan's soft power.
- (ii) We have produced more short films in English to introduce our country's background and solicited short films to enhance the content of our Trending Taiwan and YouTube channels. The first bimonthly versions of *Taiwan Panorama* in Thai, Indonesian, and Vietnamese were launched last December, helping give people in Southeast Asian countries a deeper understanding of our country, thereby earning support for Taiwan.

(iii) National Geographic Channel featured Taiwan in the episode “Urban Mine” of the documentary series *Megastructure*. The episode has been broadcast in 41 countries, putting Taiwan in the spotlight on the international stage.

#### **IV. Prospects and future directions**

##### **A. Acting as peacemaker**

In recent years, we have sought to transform the Taiwan Strait, East China Sea, and South China Sea into waters of peace and cooperation. In the future, we will continue to act as a peacemaker, strive to ensure the security, peace, and stability of the Asia-Pacific region, and defend our sovereignty and rights over the Diaoyutai Islands and the South China Sea Islands, and their surrounding waters. We seek to win support for our East China Sea and South China Sea Peace Initiatives from all parties, and for our inclusion in related institutionalized consultations, so as to resolve disputes peacefully.

##### **B. Participating in regional economic integration**

MOFA continues to express willingness and determination to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). In addition, our foreign missions will keep gathering information about the progress of ratification in member countries so as to be able to take advantage of the best time to present our case. We will express to host countries our willingness to join the second round of negotiations, and explain the development of our economic and trade liberalization to garner their support. In addition, our country was one of 14 APEC member economies, including the United States, Japan, and Australia, that formed the Core Drafting Group of the Collective Strategy Study on Issues Related to the Realization of the FTAAP-Terms of Reference last year. We will continue to promote Asia-Pacific regional economic integration in the future.

### **C. Safeguarding our membership, rights, and interests in international organizations, and strengthening our contributions**

MOFA will continue to expand participation in the World Health Organization and the International Civil Aviation Organization, strive for meaningful participation in the UNFCCC, and seek international support to join INTERPOL.

In addition, MOFA will strengthen our foreign aid and international cooperation mechanisms so as to contribute more to the international community in accordance with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 Targets of Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations.

### **D. Cultivating diversified external relations and strengthening NGO participation abroad**

The central government helps local governments, civil society, young people, religious groups, educational institutions, and businesses connect with the international community so as to establish relations and strengthen exchanges and interaction with their counterparts overseas. In addition, by combining the resources and experiences of the private sector, NGOs are better equipped to participate in international conferences, provide natural disaster assistance, and participate in activities related to disease prevention and climate change. They can also more easily offer humanitarian assistance and contribute to the international community in a wider range of issues.

### **E. Improving services, and strengthening public diplomacy and the nation's image abroad**

MOFA will continue to pursue better visa treatment, more youth working holiday programs, and mutual recognition of driver's licenses on behalf of the people for their convenience. In addition, the Youthtaiwan.net website (臺灣青年

FUN 眼世界) is updated as needed. It is hoped that this website will underscore our foreign policy achievements, and garner more support at home and abroad. Moreover, MOFA will utilize Taiwan's soft power in the fields of the economy, culture, and technology to strengthen the content and approach of our international public relations campaigns. We aim to stay on top of domestic and foreign media trends so as to further strengthen our campaigns, better convey important policies, create a positive national image, and elevate our visibility in the international community.

## **V. Conclusion**

To respond to the quickly evolving international landscape involving such conventional and nonconventional security issues as South China Sea disputes, energy security, internet security, climate change, transnational crime, violent extremism, and epidemics, MOFA will continue to closely follow international trends and engage in close cooperation with related ministries. Based on the principle of putting Taiwan first to benefit the people, we will strengthen international cooperation and exchanges. In addition, our strengths will be further integrated and better employed so as to consolidate relations with allies and friendly countries, deepen participation in regional economic integration, and expand international cooperation. Besides helping safeguard regional security, we will strive to partake in functional and professional international organizations significant to our national development and people's welfare.

Thank you for your attention. Your comments are very much appreciated.