

**Report by Jaushieh Joseph Wu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the  
Republic of China (Taiwan), at the Foreign and National Defense  
Committee of the Legislative Yuan on September 28, 2020**

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

Good morning!

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

**1. Foreword**

This is the first full report the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is making to the Legislative Yuan since the start of President Tsai Ing-wen's second term. Compared to four years ago, Taiwan's diplomatic situation is much more serious, and we face more variables. We are mindful of our heavy responsibilities and the long road ahead. Looking to the next four years, the Ministry will continue to do its utmost to safeguard the nation's sovereignty, defend the national interest, secure our diplomatic alliances, gain greater participation in more international organizations, strengthen cooperation with our allies, and deepen our relations with like-minded partners such as the US, Japan, and the European Union. We will also strive to open up new areas of

cooperation and work to actively participate in regional cooperation mechanisms.

## **2. Major challenges and threats to Taiwan’s diplomatic work**

The global political and economic situation is in flux. At the same time, security in the Indo-Pacific region is fraught with destabilizing factors. The Ministry will continue to pay close attention to these situations and respond accordingly. Among the most important developments are the following:

### **2.1 China’s continuous suppression of Taiwan in the international arena**

China has never ceased attempts to suppress Taiwan in the international arena. Recently China has faced domestic crises and external difficulties, leading it to seek out a scapegoat so that it can undergird its legitimacy. As such, it is pressing forward with attempts to impose the “one country, two systems” model on Taiwan and has continued to intensify its rhetorical assault and military intimidation. Following on Hong Kong, Taiwan has become China’s next target. China’s egregious acts have been a unilateral attempt to undermine the status quo of stability across the Taiwan Strait. They also seriously threaten peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, causing great concern and unease in the international community.

### **2.2 The spread of COVID-19 around the world**

The COVID-19 outbreak continues to spread around the world, with over 31 million cases and nearly a million deaths. In recent months, a second wave of cases has gradually begun around the world. People’s lives continue to be threatened. This has had a drastic impact on transportation, trade, and travel and has been devastating for many nations’ economies. Taiwan has seen good

results from its antipandemic efforts, but continues to be affected by the global spread of the disease.

### **2.3 Potential concerns for regional security**

We have witnessed increased confrontation between the US and China; tension in the South China Sea; the military standoff between India and China along their shared border; China's passage of the Hong Kong national security law, increased controls put in place over Xinjiang, Tibet, and Inner Mongolia; increased military intimidation of Taiwan; and the continuing North Korean nuclear threat. Thus, there remain many challenges in the regional security environment.

### **2.4 International economic situation fraught with variables**

COVID-19 has been a major shock to the global economy and is forcing a restructuring of global supply chains. The World Trade Organization predicted months ago that global trade would fall 13 percent this year. While a phase-one trade agreement between the US and China was signed at the beginning of this year, the two sides have yet to resolve disputes over finance and technology. Free trade agreements signed between other countries and the trend toward regional economic integration through the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) have had effects on Taiwan's economy.

## **3. Significant breakthroughs and accomplishments through steadfast diplomacy since the last legislative session**

### **3.1 Increased international antipandemic cooperation has helped the world see Taiwan.**

COVID-19 has again proven that disease knows no borders, and that there should be no gaps in global disease prevention efforts. It has also shown the importance of global cooperation on public health. Taiwan is working through bilateral and multilateral frameworks to cooperate with the international community to stop the spread of disease. We have donated antipandemic supplies including infrared thermal imaging cameras and over 53 million medical masks to over 80 countries. We are also cooperating on developing vaccines and conducting exchanges on disease prevention. We are sharing the Taiwan Model and realizing the spirit of “Taiwan can help, and Taiwan is helping.”

Our efforts and contributions have been affirmed by the international community. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, then Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen, and prominent political figures from many other countries all publicly expressed thanks for our donations.

As concerns connecting to the world, while personnel exchanges are at a standstill during the pandemic, we are making use of high-tech solutions including videoconferencing and video interviews with international media to increase Taiwan’s international visibility. We continue to promote having key government officials, including the President, share Taiwan’s antipandemic experience with foreign politicians, academics, important media outlets, and members of the public. Former Vice President Chen Chien-jen attended via videoconference a hearing hosted by the UK House of Commons’ Health and Social Care Committee, effectively raising Taiwan’s international visibility.

### **3.2 Stable and cordial ties with diplomatic allies**

This year, COVID-19 prevented President Tsai from traveling to diplomatic allies and the heads of state or high-ranking government officials of our allies from visiting Taiwan. The only exception was Second Vice President of the Honduran National Congress Denis Armando Castro Bobadila, who visited Taiwan with his wife.

The leaders or deputy leaders of diplomatic allies including King Mswati III of Eswatini, President Alejandro Giammattei of Guatemala, President Juan Orlando Hernández of Honduras, Prime Minister Allen Chastanet of St. Lucia, and President Lionel Aingimea of Nauru, sent video congratulations to President Tsai on her inauguration, highlighting the strength of our alliances. Key political figures from many diplomatic allies expressed congratulations in letters or via social media. Eleven heads of state and many key political figures from our diplomatic allies expressed condolences on the passing of former President Lee Teng-hui in a variety of ways.

On July 18, President Tsai attended a Mass for the installation of Taipei Archbishop Chung An-chu. In remarks at the event, the President affirmed the contributions of the Catholic Church in Taiwan to social welfare, education, and medicine. This showed Taiwan's high regard for Catholic groups and demonstrated that cooperation between Taiwan and the Holy See is close and friendly.

Various cooperation projects with our diplomatic allies are proceeding smoothly. We continue to sign cooperation agreements, such as the Implementation Agreement of the Capacity Building Project for the

Prevention and Control of Chronic Metabolic Disease with St. Christopher and Nevis and the Cooperative Agreement on the Breeding Sheep and Goat Production and Guidance System Enhancement Project with Belize.

Heads of state and key political figures from our diplomatic allies have repeatedly thanked Taiwan for assisting in agricultural technology, basic infrastructure, and antipandemic supplies. They have also reaffirmed the strong ties with Taiwan and expressed strong support for Taiwan's bids to participate in international organizations.

### **3.3 Steady advances in Taiwan-US relations**

Taiwan-US relations are stable and robust, and continue to advance steadily. In addition to enhancing mutual trust, we have strengthened our partnership through relevant channels, with cooperation expanding to a broader range of domains.

On March 26, US President Donald Trump signed into law the Taiwan Allies International Protection and Enhancement Initiative Act of 2019, or TAIPEI Act. The TAIPEI Act supports further strengthening of the bilateral trade relationship between the United States and Taiwan and Taiwan's participation in international organizations. The American Institute in Taiwan's Taipei Office posted recently declassified cables on its website relating to the 1982 Six Assurances and the August 17 Communique, and reiterated that the Six Assurances are a foundational element of US policy toward Taiwan.

US Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar II led a delegation to Taiwan in early August. He was the highest-ranking US Cabinet official to

visit Taiwan since 1979. While in Taiwan, he witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding on health cooperation. Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment Keith Krach visited Taiwan in mid-September, becoming the highest-ranking State Department official to visit Taiwan since 1979. During his visit, the two sides exchanged opinions on many issues as well as prospects for future cooperation.

High-ranking members of the US government have expressed support for Taiwan on many occasions. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on May 19 publicly congratulated President Tsai on her inauguration. In a July 23 speech, he once again recognized Taiwan's democratic development. On July 28, the US and Australia reaffirmed Taiwan's important role in the Indo-Pacific region in a joint statement released at the Australia-US Ministerial Consultations.

The Trump administration has announced seven arms sales to Taiwan totaling US\$13.25 billion. On May 21, the White House released the US Strategic Approach to the People's Republic of China, in which it reaffirmed its security pledges to Taiwan under the Taiwan Relations Act.

The US Senate and House of Representatives support Taiwan. In May, the Senate passed unanimously an act to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to regain observer status for Taiwan in the World Health Organization (WHO), which was proposed by Sen. James Inhofe (R-OK), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Armed Services. The Cochairs of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus led 205 House members in sending a letter to

WHO Director-General Tedros Ghebreyesus, calling on him to invite Taiwan to attend this year's World Health Assembly (WHA).

This year, the US, Japan, and Taiwan have held three activities under the Global Cooperation and Training Framework (GCTF), and held the GCTF Fifth Anniversary Press Conference at the Ministry on June 1, releasing the Joint Statement on the 5th Anniversary of the GCTF, showing the three countries' resolution to reinforce their partnership.

The Ministry announced on July 3 that it would be reopening the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Guam. On August 28, President Tsai announced that Taiwan would open up to imports of US pork and beef, an action affirmed by over 80 prominent figures from various US sectors including Vice President Mike Pence.

### **3.4 Continued enhancement of Taiwan-Japan relations**

Taiwan-Japan relations have been steady and cordial, with Japan showing even greater support for Taiwan in the international arena in recent years, demonstrating that bilateral interactions have gradually carried over into multilateral issues. For instance, Shinzo Abe, then Prime Minister of Japan, reiterated his support for Taiwan's participation in WHO in response to a parliamentary interpellation. At this year's WHA, Katsunobu Kato, then Japan's Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare (currently Chief Cabinet Secretary), raised the issue of Taiwan in his speech, revealing how Japan's statements have become clearer and more direct.

Bilateral cooperation has become more comprehensive. For example, on July 28 a midterm review of progress made on and the effects of resolutions taken at the 44th Taiwan-Japan Economic and Trade Meeting was held as a videoconference. On July 29, the Taiwan-Japan Commission on Cooperation in Third Country Markets conducted its third meeting by videoconference to discuss a wide range of issues.

Parliamentary exchanges between Taiwan and Japan have also highlighted the deep friendship between the two countries. Former Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori led two cross-party parliamentary delegations, one in August and one in September, to pay tribute to late President Lee Teng-hui and attend his memorial service. In addition, 16 local assemblies issued statements or passed resolutions extending support for Taiwan's participation in the WHA.

The government of Taiwan expressed concern and donated relief funds after floods ravaged Japan this July. We hope that the two countries can strengthen exchanges and cooperation with respect to disaster relief, preparedness, response, and reconstruction.

### **3.5 Steady advancement of Taiwan-Europe relations**

Taiwan-Europe relations have maintained a healthy momentum, with both sides continuing to advance exchanges and cooperation based on the shared values of democracy, freedom, and human rights. Taiwan has become a values-based partner in Asia for Europe.

Taiwan and the EU have diverse and robust institutionalized consultation mechanisms in place. Through the Human Rights Consultations, the Labor

Consultation, the Dialogue on Digital Economy, and the Industrial Policy Dialogue, the two sides have fortified bilateral cooperation.

Senior officials, parliamentarians, members of the European Parliament, and other key figures friendly to Taiwan from 15 European countries released statements, wrote letters, sent tweets, or created video clips congratulating President Tsai Ing-wen on her second-term inauguration, thereby affirming Taiwan's democratic achievements. At the invitation of the Alliance of Democracies, President Tsai addressed the virtual Copenhagen Democracy Summit by video on June 19. She shared Taiwan's successful COVID-19 response measures and democratic experience, stressing that like-minded democratic countries across the world should work more closely together.

Areas of exchange and cooperation between Taiwan and European countries have grown more comprehensive. For example, a memorandum of understanding on a working holiday program signed with the Netherlands entered into effect on April 1. The Netherlands Trade and Investment Office in Taiwan changed its name to the Netherlands Office Taipei on April 27, reflecting the overall development of our bilateral relations. In addition, on August 25, Taiwan announced that it would open a representative office in Aix-en-Provence in Southern France.

The European Parliament and the legislatures of many European countries have been staunch supporters of Taiwan, with many countries having taken great pains to support Taiwan's WHA bid. Over 190 EP members wrote letters to Josep Borrell, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and the Ministers of Health of EU member nations, calling on them to

support Taiwan's WHA bid. At the invitation of Legislative Yuan President You Si-kun, President of the Senate of the Czech Republic Miloš Vystrčil led a Czech delegation of parliamentarians and industry representatives to Taiwan in late August, thus solidifying Taiwan-Czech relations. The legislatures of 10 European countries, including Germany and the United Kingdom, have sent letters to the WHO Director-General or passed resolutions in support of Taiwan's bid. Former Vice President Chen Chien-jen was invited by Jeremy Hunt, Chair of the UK House of Commons Health and Social Care Committee, to join a hearing via videoconference on June 3, giving him the opportunity to discuss Taiwan's experience in combating COVID-19. On July 16, the Belgian Chamber of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a resolution on Taiwan's position in the international community, calling on the Belgian government to encourage the resumption of cross-strait dialogue and the discontinuation of attempts to unilaterally change the status quo.

### **3.6 Further deepening of the New Southbound Policy**

Taiwan will continue to deepen its diverse exchanges with New Southbound Policy partner countries, and has already achieved some results.

On the economic and trade front, as of this June, trade between Taiwan and New Southbound Policy partner countries had reached US\$51.9 billion. In the third quarter, virtual bilateral collaboration forums will connect Taiwan with six partner countries to discuss COVID-19 containment and such industries as smart cities, green energy technologies, and food biotechnology.

With respect to people-to-people exchanges, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused the number of tourists to fall. However, exchanges are still being

promoted through social media and other platforms, such as the *Embracing Taiwan* television series that MOFA has coproduced with and aired in four countries this year (Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam), introducing Taiwan's recent development.

In terms of resource sharing, through the One Country, One Center initiative and in coordination with eight partner countries, including India, Indonesia, and Myanmar, videoconferences and virtual lectures have been held on more than 10 occasions to share Taiwan's experience in containing the COVID-19 pandemic. As of the end of June, Taiwan had also provided training to more than 30 healthcare professionals from New Southbound Policy partner countries. As for regional connectivity, Taiwan has signed numerous agreements and engaged in cooperation with these partner countries, including a revised investment protection pact with Vietnam that entered into effect at the end of May.

The 4th Yushan Forum will be held in October in Taipei. The theme will be "Forging a Resilient Future Together." This will showcase Taiwan's ability to further the New Southbound Policy in the postpandemic era.

### **3.7 Continuing to build momentum for Taiwan's international participation**

Owing to China's interference, Taiwan has been unable to participate in the UN system. However, the international community widely recognizes that Taiwan can help. An ever-increasing number of nations, including their executive and legislative branches of government, media, and citizens, are speaking up for Taiwan, underscoring the fact that our appeal for international participation is both appropriate and legitimate.

This year, international support for Taiwan’s participation in the WHA was of an unprecedented magnitude. In addition to our diplomatic allies, high-level figures from many countries—including then Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, US Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar II, and US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo—as well as government ministries, legislatures, and political and opinion leaders in numerous nations, used a variety of methods to publicly support Taiwan’s involvement in the WHA as an Observer.

This year’s campaign for UN participation again promoted the idea that Taiwan is a key partner in the global implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A promotional film, *Blessings from Taiwan*, shared with the international community Taiwanese people’s hopes of participating in the UN system, and showed that Taiwan has stood firmly alongside its partners in global pandemic containment and recovery. This year we asked our diplomatic allies to continue to speak up for Taiwan during the UN General Debate and write letters to UN Secretary-General António Guterres urging the UN to include Taiwan in a suitable manner.

Taiwan’s cooperative relations with APEC continue to advance, and 14 Taiwanese experts have been reappointed or selected to chair APEC subfora. Although a good deal of this year’s meetings have been cancelled or organized via videoconference due to the disruption of COVID-19, Taiwan has remained an active participant. To date, we have attended or organized no less than 96 physical or virtual meetings, and ensured that important APEC statements

included Taiwan's government policies and Taiwan's antipandemic achievements. In addition, Taiwan's 15 APEC projects have received US\$1.23 million in funding this year, exceeding our contributions of US\$900,000.

On June 16, the World Organisation for Animal Health declared Taiwan a foot and mouth disease-free zone where vaccination is not practiced. Our government and private sector had worked for many years to eradicate the disease after discovering its presence in Taiwan. Obtaining the recognition of this international organization was a major milestone.

Taiwan continues to strengthen relations with development banks and help Taiwanese enterprises secure business opportunities. Owing to COVID-19, this year's business opportunities meetings with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development have been held online. In July, we assisted the TaiwanICDF in signing a cooperation agreement with the Asian Development Bank's Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department which will involve cooperation and exchanges concerning Earth observation technology. In August, the Central American Bank for Economic Integration Board of Directors approved TaiwanICDF preferential loans that will assist in the Central American region's economic recovery. Taiwan also continued to deepen cooperation with the Association of World Election Bodies: since July, the association's Secretariat has had a Taiwanese member of staff.

### **3.8 Taking proactive steps to make our voice heard internationally**

Our Ministry continues to employ a variety of approaches to speak up and let Taiwan's voice be heard throughout the world. From March to September, I gave 36 interviews and spoke with journalists from CNN, Fox News, and other mainstream media outlets from such countries as the US, UK, Germany, and Japan. A total of 58 news reports were issued in relation to these interviews. Our Ministry has also facilitated media interviews with former Vice President Chen Chien-jen and other officials and scholars to share Taiwan's successful experience of containing COVID-19.

In addition, our Ministry's official Facebook page has attracted over 180,000 followers since its launch, and the Facebook pages of our overseas missions have a combined total of nearly 420,000 followers. Our bids to participate in international organizations are promoted via the 96 Facebook accounts and 224 websites of our overseas missions. Meanwhile, through our official Twitter account, we have reached more than 104.61 million users. These have effectively raised Taiwan's international visibility.

### **3.9 Mutual establishment of Representative Offices with Republic of Somaliland**

On August 17, the Taiwan Representative Office in the Republic of Somaliland officially opened and our countries signed a technical cooperation agreement. The Somaliland Representative Office in Taiwan opened on September 9. This adds another base for promoting our work in Africa.

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

Today, we face a complex international landscape and formidable challenges. Our Ministry will continue to forge ahead with steadfast diplomacy in the following ways:

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

We are making a concerted effort to consolidate relations with diplomatic allies. Firstly, we are enhancing resources at our embassies and strengthening intelligence gathering. We will also continue to promote high-ranking exchanges and build on current foundations to advance bilateral initiatives. We will work with the United States and other friendly countries to support diplomatic allies; however, Taiwan will not engage in pointless checkbook diplomacy competitions with China.

##### **4.2 Deepening relations with like-minded countries and other nations with which Taiwan does not maintain diplomatic relations**

Making good use of the current international climate, which is favorable to Taiwan, we will align with friendly forces worldwide and continue to bolster substantive ties and expand the scope of cooperation with like-minded nations such as the United States, Japan, European countries, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, in an effort to jointly counter challenges and threats and advance regional peace, stability, and prosperity.

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

Based on the principles of professionalism, pragmatism, and making contributions, we will dedicate all available resources and expertise to

promoting our bids to join more international organizations. In addition, we will safeguard our rights in organizations to which we already belong. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, our Ministry has actively sought to participate in related WHO meetings and mechanisms as well as cooperated with friendly nations to contain the disease, thereby concretely contributing to global disease prevention efforts. Furthermore, given that Taiwan's nongovernmental organizations are well-equipped to play a role in global affairs, our Ministry will continue to work with them in all domains to increase our international presence through public-private coordination.

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

The government will build on existing foundations to further promote the New Southbound Policy and strengthen its alignment with the US Indo-Pacific Strategy. We will focus on four pillars: economic and trade cooperation, human resource exchanges, resource sharing, and regional connectivity. By exercising Taiwan's soft power, creating new mutually beneficial cooperation models, we will seek to contribute to the prosperous development of the Indo-Pacific region.

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

Our government is fully committed to joining regional economic integration mechanisms. Our highest priority is to join the CPTPP. We are currently focusing on integrating internal and external resources to establish a CPTPP track for interactions with CPTPP member states and actively seek their support through bilateral channels and multilateral forums.

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

Our Ministry continues to employ diverse approaches to speak out and share our contributions and achievements with the international community so that the world can gain a better understanding of and extend greater support to Taiwan. In particular, we will expand use of social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, to demonstrate the positive effects of public diplomacy.

#### **4.7 Fulfilling international responsibilities**

Taiwan continues to work closely with like-minded nations to counter challenges and threats. We will also further implement the UN SDGs in order to fulfill our international responsibilities and make greater contributions to the global community. Taiwan will staunchly uphold the worldwide consensus on maintaining the status quo of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and will safeguard shared values of freedom and democracy and the rules-based international order.

#### **4.8 Optimizing public services and facilitating greater travel convenience**

Our Ministry will continue to improve public services and facilitate greater travel convenience. As of today, Taiwan nationals are granted visa exemptions, landing visas, or electronic visas by 170 countries and territories, and can enter many of these countries via automated customs clearance systems. Furthermore, to improve recognition of Taiwan on the cover of our country's passport and enhance citizens' travel rights and convenience, we have refined the design of passport covers, enlarging the word *Taiwan*. This new version of the passport is scheduled to be issued from January 2021.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many countries have closed their borders or implemented isolation and quarantine measures for inbound travelers. Over the past months, our Ministry has helped bring home many Taiwanese, while also negotiating with other governments to ease entry restrictions for Taiwanese nationals. We will continue to strengthen such efforts going forward.

## **5. Conclusion**

I would like to once again thank the Legislative Yuan and the distinguished Members of the Committee for your support and encouragement of our Ministry. Despite the rapidly changing international landscape, challenges and threats to regional security, and China's ever-growing rhetorical assault and military intimidation, we will continue to forge ahead with our work under steadfast diplomacy. We will show the world Taiwan's vitality, professionalism, and resilience. We will safeguard Taiwan's sovereignty, dignity, and democratic values. We very much look forward to your continued support and assistance. Thank you!