

Dr. James C.Y. Soong

Leader's Representative of President Tsai Ing-wen to the 25th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting

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Dr. James Soong has been a devoted public servant for four decades, and has served in such capacities as Secretary to the Premier, Secretary to the President, Director-General of the Government Information Office (equivalent to Minister of Information), and Secretary General of the then-ruling party, the KMT. Over the years, Dr. Soong has played a vital role in Taiwan's democratization process. Since founding the People First Party in 2000, he has been the voice of the middle ground and the much-needed third force in Taiwanese politics, which has predominantly been bipartisan.

Dr. Soong was the only directly elected Governor of Taiwan, serving from 1994 to 1998, winning more than 56 percent of the total vote. He is fondly remembered as being down-to-earth and close to the people, as he personally visited all 309 cities, towns, and villages during his term of office. Living up to his motto—"All politics is human concern"—he demonstrated great responsibility as a public servant, ensuring the inclusiveness of Taiwan's growing economy and providing timely aid to farmers, fishermen, and indigenous people.

Dr. Soong initiated and oversaw countless infrastructure projects, including numerous schools, roads, highways, bridges, reservoirs, sewage systems, embankments, fishing harbors, water supply and irrigation systems, hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, and public housing projects. Through such endeavors, he helped bridge the divide between urban and rural areas, improved the lives of many, and most importantly, helped lay the foundation for Taiwan's further economic development.

His core team was known for its efficient teamwork still acclaimed today. Another motto of his—"All small matters of the people are great responsibilities of the government"—captures the essence of his philosophy and has inspired other statesmen.

Complementing his domestic political achievements, Dr. Soong has represented Taiwan at various international events, making acquaintance with other world leaders.<sup>1</sup> For these

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<sup>1</sup> These world leaders include US Presidents Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama; the UK's Queen Elizabeth II and Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher, James Callaghan, John Major, and Tony Blair; Japanese Prime Ministers Nobusuke Kishi, Eisaku Sato, Yasuhiro Nakasone, Toshiki Kaifu, Morihiro Hosokawa, Tsutomu Hata, Yasuo Fukuda, Taro Aso, and Naoto Kan; Malaysia's founding father Tunku Abdul Rahman and Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad; French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing; German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt; South African Presidents Marais Viljoen, P. W. Botha, and F. W. de Klerk; Singaporean Prime Ministers Lee Kuan Yew and Goh Chok Tong; Vietnamese President Nguyễn Minh Triết; South Korean President Roh Tae-woo and Prime Ministers Kim Jong-pil and Shin Hyun-hwak; Saudi Arabia's King Khalid and King Fahd; Philippine Presidents Corazon Aquino, Fidel Ramos, Joseph Estrada, and Gloria Arroyo; Thailand's Prime Minister Thanom Kittikachorn; Dominican Republic President Antonio Guzmán;

reasons, he was chosen to represent President Tsai Ing-wen at the APEC Economic Leaders' Meetings in Peru in 2016 and Viet Nam this year.

Dr. Soong also helped break the ice across the Taiwan Strait by meeting with mainland Chinese leaders, including Messrs. Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping in 2005 and 2014, respectively, thereby enhancing cross-strait trade relations and people-to-people exchanges. These gap-bridging trips embodied his belief and vision for the peaceful development of cross-strait relations.

Dr. Soong received his PhD in political science from Georgetown University and his MA from the University of California, Berkeley. He has also been awarded honorary doctorates from the Catholic University of America, the University of South Australia, the University of Maryland, and Sookmyung Women's University in the Republic of Korea.

Dr. Soong was decorated by the Republic of South Africa in 1980 with the Order of Good Hope in the Grand Cross Class; by the Republic of Korea in 1980 with the Order of Diplomatic Service Merit (Kwanghwa Medal); by the US in 1982 as an Eisenhower Fellow; and by the Asia Foundation in 1999 as an Ellsworth Bunker Distinguished Fellow.

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Dominican Prime Minister Eugenia Charles; Costa Rican President Rodrigo Carazo Odio; Paraguayan President Alfredo Stroessner; Panamanian President Aristides Royo; Uruguayan President Gregorio Conrado Álvarez; Guatemalan President Fernando Romeo Lucas García; Honduran President Roberto Suazo Córdova; and New Zealand Prime Minister John Key .