



Taiwan Newsletter

Headline News

ROC reaffirms South China Sea sovereignty

On 7 August, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed the sovereignty of the Republic of China (Taiwan) over the South China Sea islands, claiming that the island groups and their surrounding waters are an inherent part of ROC territory and underlining how Taiwan must be included in any talks on a dispute resolution mechanism. The ministry's remarks followed the adoption the day before in Manila of a framework for a code of conduct in the South China Sea by foreign ministers from the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and mainland China.



The government's stance is based on 4 principles and 5 actions relating to the South China Sea islands unveiled 19 July, 2016, by President Tsai Ing-wen. These include resolving disputes peacefully in accordance with international law and the law of the sea; including Taiwan in any multilateral dispute settlement mechanism; ensuring freedom of aviation and navigation in the region; and setting aside differences and resolving disputes through joint development. In addition, Taiwan aims to develop Taiping Island - the largest naturally formed island in the Nansha (Spratly) Islands - into a base providing humanitarian assistance and supplies, safeguarding the rights and safety of Taiwan fishermen operating in the South China Sea, and facilitating scientific research on climate change and meteorology.

International News

Taipei hosts Asia-Pacific Security Dialogue

On 8 August, the inaugural Asia-Pacific Security Dialogue kicked off in Taipei, bringing together around 30 senior officials, experts and scholars from across the globe, including former Vice President of the United States Dick Cheney, who served as the guest speaker. Speaking at the opening of the event, President Tsai Ing-wen said given Taiwan's central geographic location, it will always have a role in maintaining peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific and remains committed to this responsibility as a member of the global community.



According to President Tsai, Taiwan must play an even more active role in an interconnected world, and will continue to focus on enhancing relations with the US, Japan and other likeminded countries across a broad spectrum of areas of mutual interest. In particular, the nation remains committed to promoting trade and investment through bilateral and multilateral arrangements, with the Trans-Pacific Partnership one of its priorities. Belgian Senator Alain Destexhe, and Director of the 'Europe in the World' Program at the Egmont Institute Sven Biscop were among the panelists. Issues related to maritime capacity building and cooperation, security and regional economic integration were discussed at the conference.

Miscellaneous News

Taitung hot-air balloon festival attracts 480,000 visitors

The 2017 Taiwan International Balloon Festival, which was held from 30 June to 6 August in Taitung County's Luye Township, has attracted approximately 480,000 visitors, the county's Tourism Department said. In addition to showcasing balloons from around the globe in all kinds of colors and shapes, the festival also held 6 "hot-air balloon night glow" concerts across six different locations in Taitung, which included up to 35 hot-air balloons from a record 13 countries flying to the rhythm and beat of music. The final concert attracted up to 40,000 visitors, according to the Taitung County government. The county's Tourism Department said the annual festival generated NT\$960 million (€27 million) this year, an increase of approximately 37.2% compared to last year. The festival has been held every year since 2011.

Local Activities

TRO hosts farewell lunch for Luxembourg delegation to Taipei Universiade

On 8 August, Deputy Representative Pierre Chou of the Taipei Representative Office in the EU and Belgium hosted a farewell lunch event for the Luxembourg delegation going to the 2017 Taipei Universiade, taking place 19-30 August. Deputy Chou wished all the Luxembourg athletes good luck and introduced them to some of Taiwan's most quintessential characteristics. The Luxembourg delegation comprises 18 people in total, including 11 student athletes who will be competing in 4 different sports.

