President Tsai receives high-level US congressional delegation

Taiwan is committed to playing an active role in the new U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy while working with like-minded partners to safeguard peace, stability and prosperity throughout the Indo-Pacific, according to President Tsai Ing-wen April 15.

Tsai made the remarks while receiving a high-level US congressional delegation led by Sen. Lindsey Graham, ranking member of the Senate Committee on the Budget. The group also comprised Sen. Robert Menendez, chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; Sen. Richard Burr of North Carolina; Sen. Robert Portman, ranking member of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee; Sen. Benjamin Sasse of Nebraska; and Representative Ronny Jackson of Texas’ 13th district.

Taiwan and the U.S. have worked together to promote regional democracy, good governance and respect for human rights, Tsai said. This is evidenced by mechanisms such as the Taiwan-U.S. Global Cooperation and Training Framework and the U.S.-Taiwan Consultations on Democratic Governance over the past few years, she added.

According to Tsai, as this year marks the 43rd anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act, the bipartisan group’s visit is an especially significant mark of deep bilateral relations. The country looks forward to working with the U.S. to stimulate prosperity through advancing economic cooperation and trade in the Indo-Pacific, she said.

Tsai also took the opportunity to thank the delegation members for their long-standing support of Taiwan in the U.S. Congress and for their proactive efforts in the development of two-way ties.

In response, Graham praised Taiwan’s assistance to the people of Ukraine. America would stand with Taiwan, he said, adding that to abandon the country would be to abandon freedom and democracy.

Following Graham’s remarks, Menendez said Taiwan produces 90 percent of the world’s high-end semiconductor products and is of great global significance. The country’s security is crucial to the world and deserves support from the U.S., he said.

Burr pointed out that Taiwan is an integral part of global supply chains while Portman said the U.S. should include the country in its Indo-Pacific Economic Framework and kick-start a free trade agreement with Taiwan.

April Snapshots of Taiwan

Left, Members of Team Taiwan smile in victory after bagging four gold medals at the World Taekwondo Poomsae Championships April 24 in Goyang, South Korea. (Courtesy of Taiwan’s delegation to WTPC). Middle, Vice President Lai Ching-te addresses the launch ceremony of new southern Taiwan event venue ICC Tainan in the city April 21. (Courtesy of Presidential Office). Right, Taiwan men’s archery team beam with pride after taking gold in Hyundai Archery World Cup Stage 1 April 24 in Antalya, Turkey. (Courtesy of the Chinese Taipei Archery Association)
President Tsai announces new measures to combat COVID-19

President Tsai Ing-wen announced the government’s new measures to combat COVID-19 April 26, spotlighting the country’s efforts to adapt to a new phase of the pandemic and boost the economy while showcasing Taiwan as an island of resilience.

The government will leave no stone unturned in carefully managing medical resources by triaging cases according to severity and efficiently distributing medicine for treatment, Tsai said. Only moderate, severe and high-risk confirmed cases will be sent to hospitals, with others isolating at home or going to designated quarantine facilities, the president added.

In the meantime, the supply of reasonably priced rapid testing kits will be ensured through imports and ramped up domestic production, Tsai said, adding that a rationing plan of these kits is also in the pipeline to further guarantee sufficient stocks.

Tsai made the remarks during a visit to the Central Epidemic Command Center in Taipei City.

According to Tsai, the CECC just announced the shortening of quarantine for contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases and the simplification of contact tracing. As of April 26, known contacts of infected persons will isolate at home for just three days and then monitor their health for a further four days, she said, adding that the 10-day quarantine period followed by seven days of self-health management remains in place for inbound travelers.

The government is additionally committed to increasing vaccination coverage, especially among the elderly, to help reduce the incidence of serious cases, she said.

According to Tsai, Taiwan’s economy is thriving, as evidenced by the growth of export orders for 25 consecutive months during the pandemic. The central and local governments will continue working together to combat the disease while further stimulating the economy going forward.

Tsai also took the opportunity to thank front-line workers for their tireless efforts in containing the spread of coronavirus.

CECC shortens quarantine period for COVID-19 contacts

The shortening of quarantine for contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases was announced April 25 by the Cabinet-level Central Epidemic Command Center, spotlighting the government’s focus on returning to normality.

The change which takes effect from April 26, allows known contacts of infected persons to quarantine for just three days and then monitor their health for a further four days. This is a significant reduction from the previous 10 days of quarantine and seven days of self-health management.

According to the CECC, an individual will receive a COVID-19 rapid test when they are first listed as a contact and then take another on the third day of quarantine. If they test negative, they are then required to monitor their health for the next four days, taking a test every day, and must receive a negative result on the final day, the center added.

During the four day health monitoring period, after a daily negative test, individuals are allowed to go to work and purchase daily necessities, the CECC said, however, they are forbidden to eat in restaurants, eat outside with other people, attend gatherings or go to crowded places.

Should an individual test positive, they must take a polymerase chain reaction test under guidelines issued by local authorities, the CECC said. They are allowed to walk, drive themselves, be driven by friends or family members, ride scooters or bikes to designated community testing clinics but may not take public transport.

The CECC also opted to simplify COVID-19 patients’ contact-tracing. Under the new measures, people who were in close contact with a COVID-19 case in the two days prior to a positive test or appearance of symptoms are required to quarantine.

The center said close contacts are defined as: family members or roommates in the same accommodation; classmates and workplace colleagues with close contact, or colleagues seated in each direction around the confirmed case. If testing positive, individuals should proactively provide health authorities with a list of those they live with and their school or company contact information, so that the health authorities can issue official quarantine notifications.

According to the CECC, the government will focus on the treatment of moderate and severe COVID-19 cases and urge the public to proactively report contacts to protect themselves and others.
Foreign Minister Wu unveils US$8M donation, vows to stand with Ukraine during video call to Kyiv Mayor Klitschko

Foreign Minister Jaushieh Joseph Wu unveiled a US$8 million donation on behalf of the people of Taiwan and vowed the country would continue to stand with Ukraine during a video call April 22 to Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko.

A total of US$5 million is to be distributed between six medical facilities in Ukraine with the remainder allocated to the capital Kyiv, Wu said. The gesture underscores the deep-seated care and concern of the people for those impacted by the war, he added.

According to Wu, Taiwan was quick to support Ukraine with donations of cash, essential items and medical supplies following Russia’s illegal and unprovoked invasion in late February.

More than US$33 million was raised in a nationwide campaign coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Wu said, adding that 27 tons of medical supplies provided by the government were shipped Feb. 28, and 650 tons of essential items donated by the public were dispatched beginning March 17 in batches.

Distribution of the shipments was arranged with the assistance of EU member states like Poland and Slovakia, Wu said, citing cooperation of the Polish government’s Strategic Reserves Agency.

Wu said Taiwan, also a front-line state resisting authoritarian expansionism, truly understands the suffering of the people of Ukraine. The seriousness of the threat posed by the war to international rules-based order and the democratic world must not be underestimated, he added.

In a tweet on the MOFA’s official Twitter account, Wu said: “Called @Vitaliy_Klychko to convey support from the people of #Taiwan for #Ukraine. The fighting spirit of the @Kyiv_mayor is admirable. Champ, we’ll continue to stand with you & your people. Freedom will prevail! JW”

Foreign Minister Wu gives exclusive interview to UK’s The Sunday Times

Taiwan is fully committed to defending itself by enhancing asymmetrical combat capabilities while conducting security dialogues with like-minded partners to safeguard global democracy, according to Foreign Minister Jaushieh Joseph Wu.

Chinese threats against Taiwan are intensifying, as evidenced by around 1,000 sorties by warplanes last year and ongoing grey zone activities, cognitive warfare and misinformation campaigns, Wu said.

Taiwan is now sharing its expertise on disinformation and cyberattacks with countries across Europe, Wu said. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has strengthened bonds between the country and democracies worldwide, generating mutual strategic benefits, he added.

The minister made the remarks during an exclusive interview with Philip Sherwell published April 3 by U.K.-based The Sunday Times.

According to Wu, Taiwan stands with Ukraine as a fellow front-line state combating authoritarian expansion. The country’s survival is critical not only to defending its own sovereignty and democratic way of life but for the continued existence of global democracy, he said.

The people of Taiwan are deeply touched by the fighting spirit of Ukrainians, he said, adding that nearly US$31 million has been raised and 600 tons of supplies have been collected to help those fleeing the conflict.

In terms of Taiwan-U.K. relations, Wu welcomed the British government’s growing focus on the Indo-Pacific, citing its recent integrated review of policies, freedom of navigation operations and trilateral security pact inked with Australia and the U.S.

Wu also took the opportunity to appreciate the U.K.’s support for Taiwan’s participation in international organizations such as the World Health Organization. The government will continue deepening cooperation with the U.K. in areas spanning trade and investment, he said.

In a tweet on its official Twitter account, the MOFA said: “Minister Wu’s @TheSunayTimes interview is excellent. He shares insights on #Taiwan’s global responsibility to #DefendDemocracy in its David versus Goliath situation with #China, as well as lessons learned from #Ukraine’s successful resistance.”
Representative Anthony Ho handed over the documents of the Investiture of honorary degree of Doctor of Laws for Dr. Nelson Mandela conferred by Taiwan’s Soochow University and a selection of books published by the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy to the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

Representative Anthony Ho handed over the documents of the Investiture of honorary degree of Doctor of Laws for Dr. Nelson Mandela conferred by Taiwan’s Soochow University (東吳大學) and a selection of books published by the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy to the Nelson Mandela Foundation on 12 April, 2022. Mr. Sello Hatang, Chief Executive, and Ms. Futhi Mtoba, Board of Trustee, of the foundation accepted these documents and books. Dr. Wei-ta Pan, President of Soochow University, and Ms. Angel Y.C.L. Wu, Director of the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy attended the event virtually as special guests.

In order to further share with Taiwan’s progress in democracy with our South African friends, the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy also shared a selection of books and periodicals on Taiwan’s democracy with the Nelson Mandela Foundation. It is hoped that the two organizations can cooperate and exchange in other topics and fields in the future.

Representative Ho concluded his remarks by quoting Mandela’s words, and it is not our diversity which divides us; it is not our ethnicity, or religion or culture that divides us. Since we have achieved our freedom, there can only be one division amongst us: between those who cherish democracy and those who do not.” He said Taiwan and South Africa stand in unity because of the shared values of democracy, freedom and human rights, and encouraged everyone to remember Mandela’s spirits and to continue change lives and build a better world.

President Pan of Soochow University said he was honored to attend this handover ceremony. Soochow was the first university in Asia to award an honorary degree to Nelson Mandela. The university highly respects Mandela’s contributions to human rights and freedom, therefore it also held events such as marathons and concerts to commemorate Mandela.

Director Wu of the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy said the foundation has deep ties with several South African Nobel Peace Prize winners, including Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and South African former President FW de Klerk. She thanked the Taipei Liaison Office for connecting the two organizations together with this meaningful event.

Mr. Hatang and Ms. Mtoba referred to Taiwan as a good friend and thanked Taiwan’s assistance in providing these documents and the representative office’s efforts in providing scholarship opportunities to South African students.
MOFA welcomes EU, US support for cross-strait peace, stability

Support from the EU and U.S. for peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait is sincerely appreciated by the government and people, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said April 22.

The ministry’s statement came in response to a joint press release following a two-day meeting between European External Action Service Secretary General Stefano Sannino and U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman that concluded earlier the same day in Brussels.

The two sides underscored the importance of cross-strait peace and stability to regional and global security and prosperity and expressed support for the peaceful resolution of cross-strait issues.

According to the MOFA, the latest development follows similar stances expressed in statements issued after the EU-U.S. Summit and G7 Summit last year. It shows that cross-strait peace and stability have consensus in the democratic world.

At a time when Russia’s invasion of Ukraine continues to escalate, it is particularly significant for the EU and U.S. to show unwavering backing for Taiwan. Their cooperation with like-minded partners to ensure rule-based international order and defend the universal values of freedom, democracy and respect for human rights demonstrates this, the ministry added.

The MOFA said as a responsible member of the Indo-Pacific, Taiwan will continue to work with other forces for good to enhance the resilience of the democratic world while ensuring regional peace and stability to counteract the threats posed by authoritarian regimes.

In a tweet on its official Twitter account, the MOFA said “We welcome @SanninoEU & @DeputySecState underscoring the importance of peace & stability in the #Taiwan Strait, supporting the peaceful resolution of cross-strait issues & discouraging actions undermining the status quo.”

Taiwan joins US-led Global Cross-Border Privacy Rules Forum

Taiwan has become one of the founding members of the U.S.-led Global Cross-Border Privacy Rules Forum, underscoring the government’s commitment to working with like-minded partners to promote trusted global data flows and privacy protection, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs April 21.

Together with other founding economies including Canada, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, the Philippines and the U.S., the seven members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation jointly issued a Global Cross-Border Privacy Rules Declaration.

The establishment of the Global CBPR Forum will promote interoperability and help bridge different regulatory approaches to data protection and privacy, the declaration said. Participation in the forum is open to those jurisdictions which accept its objectives and principles, it added.

The U.S. Department of Commerce Secretary Gina M. Raimondo said in a statement that the launch of the forum reflects a new era of multilateral cooperation in promoting trusted global data flows. It intends to set up the Global Cross Border Privacy Rules and Privacy Recognition for Processors Systems, first-of-their-kind data privacy certifications that help companies demonstrate compliance with international standards, she added.

The forum will also facilitate trade and international data flows while making the digital economy work for consumers and businesses of all sizes, she said.

According to the MOFA, Taiwan responded to the call from the U.S. to expand participation in the APEC CBPR System—the predecessor of the forum—to the world. The country’s engagement is also expected to raise its profile in international privacy protection while enhancing the development of cross-border digital trade, the ministry added.

In a tweet on its official Twitter account, the MOFA said: “#Taiwan proudly joins fellow @APEC members the #US, #Canada, #Japan, #SouthKorea, #Singapore & the #Philippines in establishing the Global CBPR Forum. The digital sector initiative builds cooperation & compliance on promoting trusted data flows & protecting privacy.”
Foreign trade hits record high in March for Taiwan

Taiwan’s exports surged 21.3 percent year on year to an all-time-high of US$43.5 billion in March, while imports gained 20.3 percent to US$38.85 billion, also the highest on record, according to the Ministry of Finance.

The strong showings were attributed by the MOF to a rebounding global economy and surging demand for integrated circuit chips driven by new technology applications, as well as rising prices for raw materials triggered by the changing geopolitical situation and easing of disruptions impacting global supply chains.

Among major export items, electronic components and parts registered a best-ever performance, soaring 35.6 percent from the same time last year to US$18.24 billion. They were followed by information and communication technology products at US$5.68 billion and basic metals at US$3.42 billion, up 15.3 percent and 23.1 percent, respectively.

On the imports front, agricultural and industrial raw materials rose 28.1 percent to US$28.47 billion, also a record high, with minerals and electronic components and parts accounting for 83 percent of the total gain.

China, including Hong Kong, remains Taiwan’s top export destination at 41.4 percent followed by the U.S., 16 percent; the Association of Southeast Asian Nations member states, 15.7 percent; Europe, 8.1 percent; and Japan, 6.8 percent. All outgoing shipments were at their highest levels except those for Europe.

The MOF, bullish on Taiwan’s export outlook for the second quarter, cautioned that uncertainties may dampen growth momentum in the latter half of the year. These include the escalating pandemic situation in China, rising inflation worldwide and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

MOFA stages forum to promote trade with Central, South America allies

The Central and South America Trade Promotion and Market Opportunity Symposium was staged by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs April 20 in Taipei City, underscoring government efforts to expand trade links with the country’s diplomatic allies in the region.

Jointly organized with Importers and Exporters Association of Taipei, the one-day event saw more than 150 local firms taking part to seek business opportunities arising from Taiwan’s free trade and economic cooperation agreements with allies Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and Paraguay.

According to the MOFA, high-profile attendees of the event included Belize and Guatemala Ambassadors to the ROC (Taiwan) Candice Pitts and Willy Alberto Gomez Tirado, respectively, as well as senior officials from the embassies of Honduras and Paraguay in Taiwan.

During his opening remarks, Vice MOFA Minister Alexander Tah-ray Yui said agricultural and aquacultural products from the allies are very popular among local consumers, adding that Honduras, Guatemala and Paraguay are respectively the leading source of white shrimp imports, second largest source of cane sugar imports and second largest source of beef imports in Taiwan.

It is hoped that Taiwan and the allies will continue leveraging their respective advantages in food processing and top-quality produce while exploring global market opportunities for mutual benefit, Yui added.

In a tweet on its official Twitter account, the MOFA said “#Taiwan & its #CentralAmerica & #SouthAmerica allies #Belize, #Guatemala, #Honduras & #Paraguay believe in free & fair trade. The joint symposium attended by Vice Minister Yui shed light on new market opportunities promising to improve livelihoods & promote prosperity!”
VP Lai reaffirms Taiwan’s commitment to ensuring Health for All

Taiwan is committed to promoting the development of homegrown health care industries while playing a central role in achieving the World Health Organization’s goal of Health for All, according to Vice President Lai Ching-te April 19.

A major component of related government efforts is advancing international medical cooperation, Lai said. For the first three years of the 2018-launched One Country, One Center initiative, 510,000 citizens from New Southbound Policy target countries received world-class treatment in Taiwan, he added.

This praiseworthy accomplishment, Lai said, is in keeping with the philosophy of Taiwan Can Help and demonstrates the value of the NSP in strengthening the health and well-being of the people across the region.

Lai made the remarks at the plaque unveiling ceremony for Medical Excellence Taiwan in Taipei City.

According to Lai, MET seeks to enhance the country’s international health care services. In the past, these were offered through referrals, he said, adding that the 2.0 version employs a more active approach via establishing hospitals abroad.

Taiwan’s globally recognized credentials as a provider of high-quality medical treatment and effective hospital management opens the door for more overseas cooperation, Lai said. Such synergy gives rise to potential-laden opportunities and creates conditions for similar successes accomplished by the country’s small and medium enterprise hidden champions, he added.

The NSP is a key plank in the government’s national development strategy. It aims to enhance Taiwan’s agricultural, business, cultural, education, tourism and trade ties with the 10 Association of Southeast Asian Nations member states, six South Asian countries, Australia and New Zealand.

Taiwan FDA greenlights Moderna COVID-19 vaccine for children aged 6-11

The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine was approved for children aged 6-11 by the Taiwan Food and Drug Administration under the Ministry of Health and Welfare April 17, highlighting government’s commitment to safeguard health for the younger generation.

A total of two doses will be administered, with each containing 0.25 milliliter, or half of the adult dose, the FDA said. Each dose will be given at least 28 days apart, it added.

According to the FDA, Phase 2 and 3 clinical trial data showed that neutralizing antibodies and immunogenicity induced by the vaccine in children aged 6-11 were at similar levels to those seen in young people aged 18-25 or in adult groups.

Children were slightly more likely to have a post-vaccination fever, but otherwise experienced mild and temporary side effects at similar rates to adults, the FDA said.

The administration will continue monitoring domestic and international safety warnings related to COVID-19 vaccinations while analyzing immunization reports to safeguard people’s health, the FDA said.

In related news, the Central Epidemic Command Center announced two days ago that starting at midnight on April 18, arrivals from Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the U.S. will undergo a saliva test after landing in Taiwan.

The CECC said that positive test rates for passengers from these countries have remained low recently, related to their slowing pandemic levels, but added that quarantine after entry is still required.
Foreign relatives of R.O.C. (Taiwan) nationals and Alien Resident Certificate holders may apply to enter Taiwan while strict border control measures remain in place

Considering the need for and right to family reunions of R.O.C. (Taiwan) nationals and Alien Resident Certificate holders residing in Taiwan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), in coordination with other government agencies, announces that starting today, April 12, foreign relatives of R.O.C. (Taiwan) nationals and valid Alien Resident Certificate holders residing in Taiwan may apply to enter Taiwan. They may submit an application for a special entry permit (visitor visa) for the purpose of visiting relatives at R.O.C. (Taiwan) overseas missions by presenting proof of relationship to R.O.C. (Taiwan) nationals or Alien Resident Certificate holders residing in Taiwan.

This arrangement comes in addition to the other purposes for entry to Taiwan currently allowed by the Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC)—i.e., joining family (foreign spouses and minors only), study (formal degree programs), studying Mandarin, business visits, investment, fulfilling contractual obligations, employment, emergencies, and on humanitarian grounds, and other cases given special approval by the CECC.

For details on the documentation requirements, please refer to the Bureau of Consular Affairs webpage on visitor visas for visiting relatives (boca.gov.tw/cp-158-251-e78ef-2.html). Individuals previously issued with special entry permits (visas) for visiting relatives purpose with expiry dates between May 19 and August 18, 2021, may apply, free of charge, for a new visa of the same purpose and type at the same R.O.C. (Taiwan) overseas mission. Visa-exempt entry, visa on arrival, and e-visa services remain suspended.

These regulations are subject to change and may be adjusted based on pandemic developments.

Taiwan Pitch 2022  Be a nice pitcher yourself!

An Invitation for Creative Storytelling~~Spark your inspiration on this fancy-free and bountiful Taiwan!

Formed over five million years ago, Taiwan is a relatively young island in the earth’s history. The lavish and fertile land between the steep mountains and the deep sea has been through eventful history and conceived countless stories to be discovered and told. To showcase these stories to the world by drawing moving visual talents from far and near, we launched Taiwan Pitch in 2022 with the deadline falls on the end of April, 2022.

Taiwan Pitch is a two-pronged initiative. First, we would invite established film directors, artists, and influencers of different genres and professional backgrounds, to be inspired by the rich landscape and the diverse culture of Taiwan to create stories that allow the world to see Taiwan through their unique eyes and profound perspectives.

With our consistent mission to nurture promising young filmmakers, the second part of the Taiwan Pitch initiative is an open call program, “Nonfiction Short Film Fund,” targeting filmmaking students worldwide to tell their unique Taiwan stories by combining aesthetics, innovation, and new media techniques in creating nonfiction short films. Finalists will assemble in the “Talent Village Workshop” in Taiwan to build up knowledge and skills and exchange ideas, sparking creativity together. The final films will premiere on the international streaming platform, TaiwanPlus.

Taiwan Pitch invites you, talented filmmakers, to come and explore this beautiful island, enjoy the vibe and the energy with the locals, and share your priceless memory and inspiration of this extraordinary journey to the world.

Unleash your creativity in between civilization and the uncharted nature through joining the Taiwan Pitch and relish the film voyage that is exclusive to you!

For further information, please refer to the website as follows: https://www.taiwanpitch.com/about-us/ and also find the TaiwanPlus’s homepage (https://taiwanplus.com/).

Enjoy the stories of Taiwan and watch for yourself!