

President calls for unity on diplomatic front



Taipei, Jan. 31 (CNA) President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) on Wednesday called on Taiwan's political parties to work together for diplomatic purposes despite vigorous disagreements on domestic policy issues.

Tsai made the remarks while meeting with a delegation from the Solomon Islands led by Ajilon Nasiu, speaker of the country's National Parliament.

Tsai said that when she delivered a speech to the National Parliament during her visit to the Pacific ally in November 2017, she was impressed by the way leaders of both the ruling and opposition political parties attended even though then Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare was facing a vote of no confidence.

At that time, despite fierce competition over domestic issues, they still worked together on the diplomatic front, the president said, adding that more than 80 percent of parliamentarians attended the speech.

Tsai said that although it is common to see fierce arguments on domestic issues or conflicts between political parties in democratic Taiwan, people expect the parties to work together

in the promotion of diplomatic work.

The unity demonstrated by the Solomon Islands Parliament and Nasiu's outstanding leadership made a deep impression on her, Tsai added.

Turning to bilateral cooperation, Tsai said the two countries have achieved much cooperating in the areas of medicine and healthcare, agricultural technology, talent cultivation and clean energy development.

Meanwhile, the two countries have signed memorandums of understanding (MOU) on aviation, police cooperation, weather forecasting and harbor-to-harbor cooperation.

Noting that Taiwan's Legislative Yuan established a Taiwan-Solomon Islands legislative friendship group in June last year, Tsai said she looks forward to seeing closer engagement between parliamentarians from the two countries.

She also expressed hope that the Solomon Islands will continue to support Taiwan and help expand its international space.

(By Yeh Su-ping and Evelyn Kao)

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