

ROC President Tsai Ing-wen delivers 2017 National Day address: “Better Taiwan”



In her National Day address Oct. 10, President Tsai Ing-wen elaborated on her administration’s efforts to fulfill the government’s commitments and accelerate reform, safeguard Taiwan’s democracy and freedom, and find Taiwan’s place in the new international order.

“We are a government that can resolve problems,” President Tsai said on the 106th anniversary of the founding of the Republic of China. “My job is to overcome Taiwan’s challenges, one by one.”

President Tsai reaffirmed the role of the armed forces in safeguarding Taiwan’s democracy and freedom. She pledged to bolster military capabilities, raise morale, and strengthen self-defense. Taiwan’s commitment to building its own military jets and submarines will create many new jobs in the indigenous defense industry, as the nation works to maintain peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait and across the region, she pointed out.

On cross-strait relations, President Tsai reiterated her

consistent stance: "Our goodwill will not change, our commitment will not change, we will not revert to the old path of confrontation, and we will not bow to pressure." She stressed the peaceful developments of the past 30 years, including family visits and student exchanges, and called for the two sides to work together in new modes of cross-strait interaction.

On finding Taiwan's place in the new international order, President Tsai emphasized Taiwan's irreplaceable role in the Asia-Pacific, closer ties with New Southbound Policy partner countries, and strong relations with diplomatic allies based on steadfast diplomacy and mutual assistance for mutual benefit. She explained the results in trade, talent exchanges, industrial cooperation, and credit guarantees for small and medium businesses under the New Southbound Policy, adding that Taiwan is working with Southeast Asian countries to fight dengue fever, establishing Taiping Island as a center for humanitarian assistance, and building a greenhouse gas monitoring station on Dongsha (Pratas) Island.

Taiwan is also playing a very proactive role internationally, having ratified international rights covenants and issued its first voluntary national review of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, President Tsai said. Official development assistance to diplomatic allies and New Southbound Policy partner countries is being promoted, and Taiwan is joining in efforts to resolve nontraditional security threats from climate change, resource scarcity, communicable diseases, and terrorism.

President Tsai ended her address by thanking the people of Taiwan. "We will become better together."