

Taiwan President-elect Lai Meets with Select Committee Delegation

2.22.2024

Lai Ching-te: The Honorable Mike Gallagher Chairman of the Select Committee on the Strategic Competition between the US and Chinese Communist Party. The Honorable Raja Krishnamoorthi ranking member of the Select Committee on the CCP, honorable representatives Moolenaar, Johnson, and Moulton, ladies and gentleman, vice president elect, representatives from the foreign ministry and National Security Council, good morning. I sincerely welcome this delegation from the House Select Committee on the CCP, you are showing Taiwan staunch support through concrete action. On January 13, Taiwan just held our democratic elections that determined our future. Even though we faced pressure and intimidation from China, the people of Taiwan still cast their sacred votes to select the direction our country will move forward and we have decided to move forward on the path of democracy. We are also very grateful for the congratulations that we have received from the Select Committee after the elections. So through social media through media interviews and op eds, the members of the Select Committee have recognised that Taiwan's robust democracy This is very meaningful for Taiwan's future and also our security so on behalf of the people of Taiwan, I would like to express my sincere gratitude. So we are facing a rapidly changing global geopolitical landscape and also tremendous pressure and diplomatic, military and economic coercion coming from China. We are determined in Taiwan to handle cross strait matters with the principles of peace, parity, democracy and dialogue. We will also continue to enhance our self defense capabilities to show the world that we are determined to safeguard our own country. But also we hope that the United States and like minded countries will also continue to back Taiwan. So at this critical juncture, I would like to tell Chairman Gallagher on a personal note that I think we still need you in the US Congress so that you can continue to help us safeguard peace and democracy around the world. So I know that you are a young politician, and you have many considerations, including family and plans for your future. But I hope that you understand that what you have done in Congress has affected not only the United States and Taiwan, but also the whole Indo-Pacific region and the world. We all need you. So in the future facing authoritarian expansionism, and also different kinds of challenges, the Vice President-elect and I will work together. When we are inaugurated on May 20, we will unite and work together with the people of Taiwan. And we have to continue to stand with the US and a free world so that we can make the world a more prosperous and stable place. Thank you very much.

Rep. Gallagher: Great, well, thank you, Mr. President-elect, if you want me to stay you're gonna have to convince my wife is the ultimate decision maker in my system of government. Congratulations to both of you on your election victory. I think it was thrilling for us, the United States, just to watch the vibrant electoral process in Taiwan play out and so and also your remarks after your victory, I thought, sent the perfect message of unity and strength. And we

were very, very glad to hear that in the United States, and you can rest assured that you have many friends in the United States Congress, Democrats and Republicans who will do everything we can to deepen this partnership as you assume the presidency. Now you will have the fun challenge of dealing with a divided government. This is something we have extensive experience with in the United States. And while it can be frustrating, I think ultimately it forces us to work together and find principled compromise without compromising our principles. When I was here last we had a great conversation. And I remember vividly you used the metaphor of a basketball game when we were talking about the challenge posed by China and threats to Taiwan from China. And he said, If we play a one on one game, we could lose and China could win. But if we play as a team, there's no way that we can lose. And so I just want to say I emphatically agree with that. And we're here to figure out ways where we can expand the team that works together in defense of freedom and stands up to authoritarian aggression. I think the message we want to send in a bipartisan fashion is that if Xi Jinping and the Chinese Communist Party were to ever make the incredibly foolish decision to attempt an invasion of Taiwan, that effort would fail. And so just please know that as you look forward to assuming the office of the presidency, America stands with Taiwan and you can draw upon a deep reservoir of friendship and support from the United States Congress. And with that, I would like to recognise the ranking member Raja Krishnamoorthi.

Rep. Krishnamoorthi: Thank you so much. And thank you, Mr. President, Miss Madam Vice President Elect. And now we have to do it, which is we're gonna go talk to Mike's wife. I want to make two points. The first point is we on a bipartisan basis, I deeply deeply support a strong relationship with Taiwan. And that is why indeed in our own law, we have the Taiwan Relations Act, which is uniquely equipped to make sure our relationship always remains strong. The second point I'll make is that we in Congress, deeply believe in you. We deeply believe in your role, your leadership and your speech. After you won the presidency was Pitch Perfect. And was exactly what we wanted to hear and the world wanted to hear as well as the Taiwan people. Now you have a very inspiring personal story. I understand that your own family were among the original inhabitants of Taiwan. And I also understand that you are a physician. My wife is a physician. She's an anesthesiologist, and the joke is that we both put people to sleep. So in light of that fact, I'm going to conclude my remarks by saying that I believe that you are going to properly diagnose what is needed to face the challenges ahead in Taiwan and therefore I believe that the prognosis for Taiwan is extremely bright. Thank you very much.