

**20200915 Recorded video remarks for the Global Taiwan Institute's
2020 annual symposium entitled "US-Taiwan Relations: Building the
Foundation for a Global Partnership"**

Dr. Chen Wen Yen, Chairman of the Global Taiwan Institute;

Russell Hsiao, GTI's Executive Director;

Dear friends and colleagues in Washington, DC;

Ladies and gentlemen:

Good morning!

It is a great honor to be invited to speak at the Global Taiwan Institute's annual symposium once again. I would like to congratulate GTI on its fourth anniversary. Since GTI's inception in 2016, the seeds you have sown have sprouted and flourished. As the scope of your research and projects expands, you have become ever more influential in DC policy circles. Your efforts to advance Taiwan-US relations are much appreciated.

This is my third time to speak at GTI's annual symposium. Every year provides new opportunities to reaffirm Taiwan-US relations and gain fresh insights. This year, I am going to cover a variety of topics and discuss how thriving relations have been marked by concrete progress.

The year 2020 has been a difficult one for all of us. Since surfacing in Wuhan,

China late last year, COVID-19 has ravaged the globe with astonishing speed, devastating lives and livelihoods and tremendously impacting the world economy.

The damage could have no doubt been mitigated had the Chinese Communist Party warned the world sooner. It was revealed, only too late, that the CCP had concealed and withheld crucial information from the World Health Organization. Only then did the international community fully realize, that the threats posed by an authoritarian regime like the CCP could no longer be ignored.

Thankfully, in Taiwan we have defied expectations with fewer than 500 confirmed cases, mostly imported. Taiwan's successful containment of the pandemic hinged on a rapid deployment of the Central Epidemic Command Center, stringent border controls and quarantine procedures, and transparent information sharing. We also took swift action to ensure ample stocks of medical supplies made available to our citizens.

The government of Taiwan gained public trust during the pandemic by being responsive and transparent—two key elements of a democratic society. Taiwan's example clearly demonstrates that a free and democratic society can be more effective at crisis management than an authoritarian regime.

After securing sufficient supplies domestically, we began providing medical

equipment and supplies to countries in need. By the end of August, Taiwan had donated 54.5 million medical masks and other critical supplies to over 80 countries. Recognizing Taiwan's efforts, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo publicly stated that Taiwan's "openness and generosity in the global battle against COVID-19 is a model for the world."

Just last month, I was delighted to receive US Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar, the highest-ranking US Cabinet official to have visited Taiwan since 1979. His visit sent a powerful message to Taiwan and the world, demonstrating that the United States fully backs Taiwan. This is true both with regard to combating COVID-19, and also safeguarding democracy in the face of authoritarian aggression.

Winning the war on COVID-19 requires cooperation—no nation can do it alone. Unfortunately, Taiwan has been excluded from WHO and many other international platforms dedicated to tackling the pandemic.

In this regard, we are particularly grateful for the strong show of support from the United States. One notable example is the Taiwan Allies International Protection and Enhancement Initiative Act of 2019, or the TAIPEI Act, passed by the US Congress and signed into law by President Trump. The act reaffirms US support for Taiwan's diplomatic alliances worldwide and Taiwan's international participation.

On August 31, the US government declassified two diplomatic cables, one regarding arms sales to Taiwan, and the other discussing the Six Assurances the Reagan administration made to Taiwan in 1982. The release of the documents is timely. It serves as a testament to the longstanding US support for Taiwan and staunch commitment to Taiwan's security. As the American Institute in Taiwan indicated, "the Six Assurances have been a foundational element in U.S. policy towards Taiwan and the PRC." We are grateful to our American friends, who have supported Taiwan by faithfully implementing these policies over the past decades.

Now, I would like to discuss the economic aspect of Taiwan-US relations. The onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted international trade and triggered one of the worst global economic slowdown in decades.

The pandemic has also highlighted the importance of supply chain security, from medical supplies, vaccines and medicines, to high-tech equipment. Taiwan is willing and able to cooperate with the United States in these areas.

Moreover, as a hub of cutting-edge technology in semiconductor manufacturing and other high-tech domains, Taiwan can play a pivotal role in the global supply chain restructuring, and serve as a reliable partner for critical infrastructure and next-generation technology.

On August 26, I announced a joint declaration on 5G security with AIT Director Brent Christensen, to safeguard transparent and trustworthy telecommunications networks. And Taiwan's five major telecom service providers are designated as clean 5G carriers by the United States.

On August 28, President Tsai announced that Taiwan's restrictions on US beef and pork imports would be eased. The announcement has been welcomed by US Vice President Mike Pence, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross, Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue, and many friends on Capitol Hill. As President Tsai said, our move will be an important starting point for more comprehensive Taiwan-US economic cooperation. We sincerely hope that this will open doors and pave the way for substantive talks on closer trade ties, including a BTA.

In the postpandemic era, a bilateral trade agreement is more important than ever, as it would benefit both sides by stimulating our respective economies, creating more jobs, and enhancing supply chain security.

In addition to this, Taiwan and the United States are preparing to launch the Economic and Commercial Dialogue, with Mr. Keith Krach, Under Secretary of State as the US lead. I am positive that this new high-level dialogue will take our economic relations to the next level.

In addition to economic challenges, Taiwan also faces increasing military

pressure from China. Beijing has been ramping up aggressive military maneuvers to intimidate Taiwan. This year, PLA's aircraft have repeatedly violated Taiwan's air defense identification zone, and cut through the median line of the Taiwan Strait. The reckless and provocative actions by PLA has heightened the tensions to a new level.

China's behavior demonstrates that under the façade of confidence it projects to the world lies a grave apprehension. However, as President Tsai has emphasized, Taiwan will not engage in rash behavior, nor succumb to China's oppression or provocation.

I would like to thank the US government for supporting the enhancement of Taiwan's self-defense capabilities. In the past four years, the Trump administration has approved seven arms sales packages to Taiwan, totaling 13.2 billion US dollars.

Looking ahead, we will further develop and bolster our indigenous defense and asymmetrical warfare capabilities. We will also continue working with the United States and other like-minded nations, to defend Taiwan from China's manipulations and threats.

Confronted with Chinese Communist regime, Taiwan is on the frontlines defending democracy. Beijing wants to shake our people's confidence in democracy, and coerce Taiwan to accept its political framework through

intimidation, economic threats, and disinformation.

This has put Taiwan in a difficult position. Nevertheless, the people of Taiwan are determined to preserve their democratic way of life. Even under the threat of COVID-19, we have not deviated from democratic values. The pandemic has presented a unique opportunity to demonstrate Taiwan's commitment to transparency and freedom. The Taiwan Model has proven that, as opposed to authoritarian regimes where transparency is a luxury, democracies are far better equipped in antipandemic fights.

When I say Taiwan is on the frontlines of democracy, I really mean it. The situation in the region is deteriorating at a disturbing pace. China has extended its reach far beyond the Taiwan Strait and escalated tensions in the region, from the East and South China Seas to the Sino-Indian border. China's human rights violations against Tibetans, Uyghurs, Mongolians and other religious minorities have also raised grave concerns. In my opinion, these mass atrocities committed by Chinese authorities against the minorities, including modern day slavery and forced sterilization, constitute crimes against humanity.

Hong Kong is a particularly worrying case. By enacting the Hong Kong national security law, China imposed an Orwellian system on Hong Kong, a city once known for its freedom and openness. This draconian law is also an unprecedented show of Chinese expansionist aims, and it contravenes

international law. It is such a tragedy of our time.

Against this backdrop, the current challenges facing Taiwan are not just about Taiwan's status in the international community, but also about the survival of democracy. Taiwan is committed to defending our free and democratic way of life against Chinese expansionism. And if democracy is to win, Taiwan must prevail.

And I want to emphasize that democracies around the world must cooperate and continue to defend our shared values—only then will freedom ultimately triumph.

Thank you.