



Chairman's Lunar New Year Message to Friends of Democracy for Taiwan

February 1, 2016

Dear Friends of Democracy for Taiwan,

The Lunar New Year 2016 is fast approaching (February 8th), and I wish to take this opportunity to send you our Warmest Wishes for the Lunar New Year and to thank you deeply for your unfailing moral support for Taiwan's Democracy and Human Dignity!!

I am particularly happy to say that this year the 23 million people in Taiwan are enjoying a Double Celebration. First, of course, is the arrival of the Year of the Monkey and the hope for an even better and more prosperous new year. Second is the smashing electoral victory achieved by the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), representing the liberal force of Taiwan, over the conservative Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), in the recent National General Elections of January 16th.

Briefly, Tsai Ing-wen, the DPP presidential candidate, won the three-way race decisively with 6.9 million votes (56%) over Eric Chu, the KMT candidate's 3.8 million votes (33%), a huge margin of over 3 million votes. In the Parliamentary contest for all 113 seats, the DPP swept 68 seats (60%) versus the KMT's 35 seats (31%).

I would like to highlight this dramatic regime change from the perspective of "4 Historic Firsts" in Taiwan's political development over the past four centuries. (For more 2016 election data, please visit our ICDT Website.)

1. For the first time, after three decades of democratization movements, the Taiwanese people have finally won majority control of both the Executive and Legislative branches of government by means of a peaceful democratic process,



expressing clearly that they have the fundamental rights to determine their own political system and political future.

2. For the first time, the Taiwanese people have successfully defeated one of the so-called “alien governments,” externally imposed on Taiwan by force throughout long historical periods spanning 400 years, through the democratic process of free voting, devoid of violence and bloodshed.

3. For the first time, Taiwan has elected its first ever woman president, Tsai Ing-wen, marking a giant step toward the empowerment of women and gender equality in Taiwan.

4. For the first time, civil society and civic groups have emerged to play a critical role in Taiwan’s political process. Of particular significance is the political awakening of the younger generation and the powerful initiatives it has taken in organizing massive students movements, injecting new blood into old politics and causing cracks in the traditional power structure. It is worth noting that a brand new political party of youth (the New Power Party) was able to win 5 Parliamentary seats from scratch in just a few short months’ time.

All this happening is very exhilarating indeed, but the post-election challenges ahead, instituting serious political and economic reforms and dealing with China strategically for peace and stability, for example, are also daunting. We will continue to seek your moral support. Secretary General Michael Kau and I stand ready to hear from you and welcome your advice and ideas. Please stay in touch.

Again, We WISH YOU A HAPPY AND PEACEFUL LUNAR NEW YEAR 2016!!

Sincerely yours,

**Rong-I Wu
Chairman, ICDT**

