

Speech at the 2018 Taiwan Night, 2018/5/22

Honourable Senators and Members of Parliament, Your Excellency
Ambassadors, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Good evening!

It gives me great pleasure to join Hon. Judy Sgro, Chair of the Canada-Taiwan Parliamentary Friendship Group, to welcome you tonight to celebrate 2018 Taiwan Night.

My wife and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the efforts you have made to enhance the bilateral relationship between Canada and Taiwan. Your firm support for Taiwan as a beacon of democracy in Asia and a true and valuable partner of Canada is highly appreciated. Your presence tonight gives us great encouragement and strength.

Taiwan and Canada share common values on freedom, democracy, human rights and rule of law. We also share mutually beneficial trade and close people-to-people relationship. Now, travel between Canada and Taiwan, we enjoy visa-waiver from both sides.

Weekly, we have 28 direct flights connecting Toronto, Vancouver and Taipei by EVA Airway , China Airlines, and Air Canada.

We are glad to see the bilateral Avoidance of Double Taxation Arrangement (ADTA) came into force on January 1st 2017. Now we are looking forward to have a Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (FIPA) with Canada.

As you know, Taiwan is Canada's 12th largest trading partner globally and the 5th largest in Asia. we appeal to the Canadian government to provide strong backing for its private sector to work with us in safeguarding freedom of business operations.

We also call on Canada to support Taiwan's inclusion in the second round of entry talks for CPTPP to deepen bilateral economic relationship.

Taiwan is Canada's 16th largest source of foreign tourists. In 2017, over 100,000 free-spending Taiwanese tourists visited Canada. Taiwan and Canada signed an MOU on youth exchanges (working holidays) to promote bilateral youth and cultural exchanges. The quota for such program is 1,000.

In 2017, Canada issued 5,000 student visas to Taiwanese students. The total number of Taiwanese studying in Canada is currently over 10,000.

MOUs signed between Taiwanese and Canadian institutes, such as the National Research Council (NRC), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), the Communication Research Centre (CRC), and the Canadian Institute for Health Research (CIHR) help to enhance our cooperation in many fields

Newfoundland and Labrador signed a driver's licence reciprocity agreement with Taiwan in April this year. This makes Taiwan have such agreements with all Canadian ten provinces.

Diseases don't respect borders. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Canadian government and parliamentarians to join the like-minded countries to voice their support to Taiwan's participation in this year's the World Health Assembly in Geneva.

To conclude my remarks, I would like to propose a toast to you all good health, to the friendship of our two countries. Thank you again for your attendance.