

Cross-Party Group on Taiwan Meeting

Date: 6:00pm, 09/01/2019

Venue: Committee Room 4, The Scottish Parliament

Update on CPG on Taiwan's Recent Development:

- The Co-Convener, Rhoda Grant MSP, chaired the meeting and warmly welcomed the members and friends of the CPG on Taiwan to the meeting.
- The Director General of the Taipei Representative Office (TRO) in Edinburgh, Jason C.C. Lien, provided an update on Taiwan, noted that Taiwan has successfully held local elections last November and China delivered the so-called "message to Compatriots in Taiwan" last week, which reiterated that China would not give up the use of force against Taiwan and suggested a deadline to unify by force by 2050. The Director General remarked that, as President Tsai Ing-Wen stated in her reply, China's refusal to relinquish the use of force against Taiwan negatively impacts peace and stability in the Asia Pacific region. China's oppression of the people of Taiwan violated the core values of democracy, freedom, and human rights. The so-called "One China Principle" ignores the reality that the Republic of China is a sovereign and independent country, and the principle is absolutely not a consensus in international society. The Director General noted that Taiwan will continue working to uphold the status quo in the Taiwan Strait and seeking to improve cross-strait relations, and that the existence of a democratic Taiwan is in line with the common interest of the international society. Regarding the 'one country, two systems' model that China proposed, the Director General noted that Taiwan is completely different from Hong Kong and will not accept such proposal. The Director General remarked that Spokesman for National Securities Council of White House also expressed Washington's support toward Taiwan that "Beijing should stop its coercion and resume dialogue with the democratically-elected administration of Taiwan," and "the US rejects the threat of use of force to compel the people of Taiwan, and any resolution of cross-strait differences must be peaceful and based on the people on both sides. The Director General urged the international communities to support Taiwan's response to China's threat and encourage a peaceful resolution between the cross-strait differences.

Guest Presentations:

- The Chair of Scotland Taiwan Chamber of Commerce (STCC), Ms. Hsien-Lin Ro, provided an introduction to the STCC. Ms. Hsien-Lin Ro noted that the STCC is a non-profit organisation that was established in Glasgow in December 1998, a time when Taiwanese electronic enterprises began to invest in Scotland. The missions of the STCC are (a) to improve the interaction amongst Taiwanese business people in Scotland; (b) to help develop members' business ambitions in Scotland; (c) to strengthen the network amongst the members; and (d) to organise activities for members.
- The Chair of Scotland Taiwanese Association (STA), Ms. Jenny Chen, gave a presentation on what STA is about and what it does. Ms. Jenny Chen remarked that STA is a home to all Taiwanese people in Scotland. Ms. Jenny Chen noted that STA creates a platform for both Taiwanese and local communities to create a supportive network for both Taiwanese and local communities. The activities and events STA organises include weekly Taiwanese Mandarin class, Fringe shows, monthly Taiwanese films screening, UK Passport to Taiwan, fundraising, etc.

Discussion and remarks:

- Philip Chan asked if the MSPs would support Taiwan's response to China's threat to take control of Taiwan by force if necessary. Rhoda Grant MSP responded that it is hoped that China's renewed vow is only rhetoric and noted that the spokesperson of the European Union expressed an willingness to continue to develop relations with Taiwan and to support the shared values that underpin Taiwan's system of governance. Rhoda Grant MSP remarked that a better understanding of Taiwan and the culture of Taiwan is needed.

- Simon Chiu remarked that Taiwan and Scotland share very similar values in terms of democracy and human rights, and that Scotland has a duty to defend such values. James Dornan MSP noted that the Scottish Government is not in the position to comment on this as it is not within its remit to do so given the devolved powers Scottish Government has.
- Douglas Kinloch Anderson remarked that speaking from his own experience of having over a hundred Anderson stores in Taiwan, Taiwan is an excellent country to invest in. Additionally, he asked the Director General of TRO how the Taiwanese Government views its relationship with the US and what support is available to Taiwan from the US Government. The Director General of TRO responded that there is legal agreement between the US and Taiwanese Governments with regard to weapon supply.

Attendance:

1. Rhoda Grant MSP (Co-Convener, Chair)
2. James Dornan MSP (Co-Convener)
3. Kate Fry
4. Richard Sullivan
5. Jason C.C. Lien (Director General, Taipei Representative Office in Edinburgh)
6. Mindy Chia-Min Chang (Assistant Director, Taipei Representative Office in Edinburgh)
7. Daniel Wei-Ting Hu (Assistant Director, Taipei Representative Office in Edinburgh)
8. Blanca Kao (Secretary, CPG on Taiwan)
9. Hsien-Lin Ro
10. Robert Mark
11. Jenny Chen
12. Philip Chan
13. Ian McKee
14. Nu-Ya McInnes
15. Joyce Bood
16. Bill Bood
17. Sabina Gu Wu
18. Claire Lin Maruyama
19. Cathy Denny
20. Simon Chiu
21. Alan Salonika
22. Douglas Kinloch Anderson
23. Angel Chong
24. Chih-Jen Lin
25. Sheng-Feng Huang