



CHINA REFORM MONITOR

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February 3, 2020 **Joshua Eisenman**

Related Categories: Democracy and Governance; Human Rights and Humanitarian Issues; International Economics and Trade; China; Europe; Hong Kong; Taiwan

[EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION: On January 11, Taiwan held its 15th presidential election and President Tsai Ing-wen won with a record 8 million votes, or 57 percent of ballots cast. Her opponent, runner-up Han Kuo-yu from the rival Kuomintang party, received almost 3 million fewer votes. Taiwan is China's most sensitive issue and Beijing has not ruled out using force to bring the island under its control. China has stepped up pressure on foreign governments, even city governments, to accept its claims. In her campaign, President Tsai routinely denounced China's intimidation and interference and said Taiwan would not be bullied into submission. After Taiwan's election, Chairman Xi Jinping warned that "unification" is a condition for cross Strait talks. The U.S. has no formal ties with Taiwan, but is bound by law to provide the island with the means to defend itself. U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi congratulated Tsai on a "momentous election," and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo praised Taiwan as a model and a force for good.]

BEIJING LASHES OUT AT TSAI AND COUNTRIES THAT CONGRATULATED HER

In a Chinese language editorial, China's official Xinhua news agency blamed Taiwan's recently re-elected President Tsai Ing-wen and the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) for using "dirty tactics such as cheating, repression and intimidation to get votes," which it claimed exposed "their selfish, greedy, and evil nature." Xinhua also accused Tsai of buying votes and blamed the election results on "external dark forces." Meanwhile, leaders from more than 60 countries, including Japanese Foreign Minister Motegi Toshimitsu congratulated Tsai on her victory. Pompeo praised Taiwanese voters for demonstrating the spirit of democracy. Beijing, for its part, "lodged solemn representations [sic]" and "firmly opposed those countries' violation of the 'one-China' principle." (*Taiwan News*, January 13, 2020)

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT PASSES PRO-TAIWAN RESOLUTIONS

The European Parliament has passed two resolutions reasserting support for Taiwan's participation in international organizations and calling for peaceful conflict resolution in the Taiwan Strait. The two resolutions, which are annual assessments of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy as well as its Common Security and Defense Policy, raised concerns about "a foreign authoritarian regime" using disinformation and cyberattacks to target other Asian countries' elections and jeopardizing their democratic operations. (*Taiwan News*, January 16, 2020)

U.S. WARSHIP TRANSITS TAIWAN STRAIT AFTER VOTE

The USS Shiloh, a U.S. Navy Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser, sailed through the Taiwan Strait the week after President Tsai Ing-wen won re-election on a platform that emphasized standing up to Beijing. Taiwan's armed forces monitored the U.S. warship as it passed through the waterway, calling it an "ordinary mission." Last week, in the run-up to Taiwan's election, China twice sailed its latest aircraft carrier, the Shandong, through the waterway – an effort Taipei denounced as attempted intimidation. Over the last two years, the U.S. Navy has sporadically sailed through the Strait. (*Asahi Shimbun*, January 17, 2020)

SHANGHAI SUSPENDS PRAGUE TIES OVER SISTER-CITY AGREEMENT WITH TAIPEI

The Shanghai city government has suspended all official contact with Prague after the Czech capital signed a sister-city agreement with Taipei. Shanghai leaders said Prague's government had made many missteps on core issues such as Taiwan. The Prague's city council upset China in October when it cancelled a partnership with Beijing that required it to commit to the "one China" principle. Instead, Prague Mayor Zdenek Hrib and Taipei Mayor Ko Wen-je signed a sister city agreement in the Czech capital. "We are not dealing with China's internal politics here in Prague since the cancellation of a partnership with Beijing. The one-China topic should be left for the Foreign Ministry," Hrib said. (Reuters, January 14, 2020)

CHINA MUST "FACE REALITY" OF TAIWAN'S INDEPENDENCE: TSAI

"We don't have a need to declare ourselves an independent state. We are an independent country already and we call ourselves the Republic of China," said Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen in the wake of winning her bid for re-election. It's time for China to "face reality," she added. "If they are not prepared to face reality, whatever we offer won't be satisfying to them." She called on China to respect Taiwan's sovereignty and democracy. "We are a successful democracy, we have a decent economy [and] we deserve respect from China." Citing the intensifying threats, increasing military exercises and continuing efforts to snatch Taiwan's allies, Tsai said people in Taiwan see "the threat is real." After protests in Hong Kong, which Tsai said are harbinger of what "one party, two systems" would look like, that framework cannot "serve the purposes it was intended to serve," she asserted. (ABC News, January 16, 2020)