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Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan

Dear << Test First Name >>

One Theatre, One World, and One Vision

Remarks for the European Values Summit 2023 9:45am-10:10am, June 14, 2023

By Jaushieh Joseph Wu

Dr. Jakub Janda, Director of the European Values Center for Security Policy;

Distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen, Good morning.

Introduction

It gives me immense pleasure to speak to so many distinguished participants in this prestigious forum. I consider it an extraordinary honor to be in this great country carrying the legacy of late President Havel. It is also a rare privilege for me, as Taiwan's Foreign Minister, who cannot travel to many capitals, to be visiting the beautiful Prague for the second time. To say that my appreciation goes to the Czech Republic is an understatement. Your generosity in welcoming me with open arms and the courage in supporting Taiwan is genuinely heartfelt.

I would like to thank Jakub and the European Values Center for Security Policy for putting together this forum. This is a cherished moment for friends and partners

believing in the values of freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law to come together and discuss the events affecting the world today, and to share our vision for the future.

The European Theatre

Of course, the most pressing event of the day is Russia's invasion of Ukraine. We have seen the atrocity, destruction, and the death of the innocent—war crimes that shouldn't have happened anywhere, anytime. Yet the war shows us what authoritarian regimes or autocracies are capable of: gross violations of human rights, and gross violations of the most fundamental UN tenet of peaceful settlement of international dispute—a critical principle that shapes the rules-based international order, and has kept the world in relative peace since the end of the cold war.

Error! Filename not specified. The war brought great pain to Europe. Countless displaced Ukrainians are everywhere in Eastern Europe, and the host government and people need to generate resources to settle them in. At the same time, European countries have to provide sufficient support, especially military, to keep Ukraine alive. After all, lesson is learned that the lack of effective response in 2014 over Crimea has its terrible consequences now.

The war has its far-reaching impact in the Indo-Pacific, too, where Taiwan and other like-minded partners are ramping up military, material, or moral support for Ukraine, condemning and sanctioning Russia, for we believe that the war crimes must be stopped, and autocracies cannot get away from what they have done. We want the brave Ukrainians to know that they are not alone in their fight for freedom and sovereignty.

A former Ukrainian parliamentarian and now an NGO leader, Ms. Hanna Hopko, visited Taiwan last October. As a gesture of appreciation to Taiwan's support, she presented me with a Ukrainian flag with signatures of front-line soldiers on it. I was deeply moved, and hung it in my ministry for permanent display as a constant reminder that freedom does not come free; one has to fight hard and even sacrifice for it.

We in Taiwan are facing enormous challenges posed by the PRC, as described by many in Europe, a wealthier and more powerful authoritarian state capable of reshaping the rules-based international order. To meet the challenges, we are drawing lessons from the war in Ukraine, with the Ukrainian's incredible bravery and resilience serving as an inspiration for Taiwan and lesson number one.

The Asian Theatre

Indeed, we are facing mounting grey zone military threat and economic coercion by the neighboring PRC. It has been exploiting Taiwan's very open society by conducting hybrid warfare, such as cognitive warfare, disinformation campaign, and cyberattacks. In fact, some describe that the PRC has already started the war in the cyber space. For many military observers in the world, invasion by the PLA may not be imminent or unavoidable, and Taiwan and its partners are trying to deter it from happening. But the PRC is following Sun Tsu's *Art of War* to try to crush its enemy without going to war.

As we speak, the PRC continues to flex its muscle to intimidate Taiwan, including sending its warplanes and vessels to cross the median line of the Taiwan Strait.

Whereas for decades, the people of Taiwan have stayed calm and responsible for safeguarding the status quo of peace and stability across the Strait. The PRC is using its "everyday" incursion and coercion to wear out our will to fight before the "D-day" arrives.

We share the same important values of freedom, democracy, human rights, and rule of law. This democratic way of life was what we have fought for in the 1980's and 90's. And it is good to see our younger generation borne

free. But it is very concerning that there is an opposite trend happening in East Asia.

The Chinese government has taught its people of a national dream, not that the Chinese people can be free to speak, free to worship, and free to choose their government, but to rejuvenate the great nation through perpetual communist rule. The communist party of China is pursuing the dream by crushing what might stand in the way, domestic or abroad, and whether their actions are legitimate.

Along the process of realizing "the great dream", horrible stories continue as the PRC government has sent more than a million Uyghurs to reeducation camps. The regime thinks the distinctively beautiful culture, religion and ethnicity in Xinjiang may not be loyal to communism. It is upsetting to be reminded that this is nothing new; the same has been happening in Tibet for decades after the Chinese government and the Tibetan representatives signed a peace treaty on May 23, 1951.

We shall not forget what happened to Hong Kong in front of our eyes: freedoms and limited democracy enjoyed by the Hong Kong citizens were totally deprived of by the Chinese government, which has trashed the agreement it

signed with the UK government. The once promised "one country, two system" has become the "one totalitarian state" system.

Every time when others ask whether we would consider a "one country, two system" model of unification, as proposed by the Chinese leader on January 2, 2019, the response from the people of Taiwan is always: we would rather stay free and democratic. In fact, what happened in Hong Kong has killed the "two systems" formula, and has also buried the sacred Chinese promise, in writing, deposited in the United Nations. It is an irony that this same government now wants to forge peace by proposing to Ukraine to give up parts of its territory for peace with Russia.

Religious freedom, as an important way of life, lies at the core of European values and social fabric. Although this may be hard to believe, but google it and you will find that the PRC government has destroyed thousands of crosses and churches across China. And in substitution, the CCP starts "sinicizing" religions, and require portraits of the top leader and patriotic slogans to be displayed in religious congregations. My stomach churns every time I think of the notion that religions in China entails patriotism to the communist government rather than being faithful to their own religious belief.

I say all these not to demonize China. In fact our two peoples share the same cultural root, and we have no animosity toward the Chinese people. We only hope that the freedom we are enjoying in Taiwan can also be shared by the Chinese people.

We worry that PRC's expansionist dream does not stop at Taiwan. Its activities in the East and South China Seas have also been rampant. The gray zone activities below the threshold of war, including maritime militia, or swarms of armed fishing boats taking direct orders from the PLA, are designed to expand its power and substantiate its excessive territorial claims. All these are causing concerns that peace is more difficult to sustain.

The world as one

We often talk about the war in Europe and the grave threat to peace in Asia as two separate theatres. The reality is that the two are highly interconnected, and the impact is global.

No one can shun from the consequences of the war in Ukraine. Even though this war occurred in Europe, many parts of the world have seen economic recession, weakening of currency, energy shortage, and disaster in stock markets, to name just a few. We have seen certain countries far away from Europe, despite being disinterested in the war, experiencing the exact same pain from high inflation rate.

It will be the same, or even worse, if war is to break out in the Taiwan Strait, where roughly half of the world container ships sail through, and more than 90% of the most advanced semi-conductor chips are produced. Imagine the shock wave Europe may experience if the supply chain is disrupted by war—especially a protracted one.

My dear friends, what we are witnessing is that the two authoritarian forces are collaborating, trading ever more with each other, feeding more to the hunger for expansion. While Russia may be weakened by the war in Ukraine, its military might in the Far East seems to have remained relatively intact. We have recorded a number of occasions where Russian warships and strategic bombers conduct joint exercises in the West Pacific with the PLA. The most recent one was just a few days ago, on June 6. The Chinese leaders may have stopped talking about the "limitless partnership" with Russia, but their joint military exercises speak volume.

And when the Russian influence in Central Asia seems to be decreasing, the PRC has quickly filled the gap. In addition, the PRC now exercises greater influence in the Middle East, parts of South Asia, and the entire continent of Africa, than any other country. The sad reality in Latin America is that the leftist trend is friendly to Beijing, not to Washington or Brussels.

The talk in the Indo-Pacific nowadays is that the PRC is quickly expanding its power and presence in the Pacific, with its security agreement with the Solomon Islands in April last year as a good example. The PRC has also been securing ports for future military use in the Indian Ocean, including Port Chittagong in Myanmar, Port Hambantota in Sri Lanka, Port Gwadar in Pakistan, to name just a few. This "string of pearls" strategy has turned many in South Asia very nervous.

The disinformation campaign is particularly worrisome. It is designed to spread false information in Europe to pit one party against another, and to create distrust in the society to undermine the very basis of democracy.

I have heard more than once that another great friend of Taiwan, Slovakia, is hit rather hard by this. I was told that many people there simply don't know what to believe any

more about the war in Ukraine. They have been exposed to so much disinformation and experienced hard time in identifying the truth. As you can see, the cyber warriors in the East have been going to Europe online. They think the whole free world is also free for them to surf and sabotage. This is taking toll on democracies, in the East and West alike.

In Taiwan, we have also been bombarded by the narrative that the war in Ukraine was started by NATO, the United States in particular; that the US has its conspiracy to weaken or destroy Vladimir Putin by throwing Ukraine against Russia; and that the US has no interest in saving Ukraine from destruction and atrocity by not sending American soldiers. The Chinese communist government has waged this cognitive warfare against Taiwan by pushing this Russian narrative on us to NOT trust the US. To me, to shape "US skepticism" in Taiwan society is not only an attempt to distance Taiwan from the US, but also to affect the outcome of the coming national election.

I know these all sound familiar to you, and what you are going through here in the cyber space is also what we are going through in the Indo-Pacific. Geographical distance has never been a problem for the government-sponsored cyber warriors. But my dear friends, whatever doesn't kill

us will make us stronger. We will be happy to share with you what we have learned in dealing with the challenges in the cyber space. We will be stronger in this fight together.

Our shared vision

And we are seeing more countries in the East and West lining up with each other in this fight together. I have been watching with amazement how closely Japanese leaders are working with Europe lately. European leaders, including top EU officials, now pay more attention to the Indo-Pacific. Many countries, including the Czech Republic, together with the EU, have issued their own version of Indo-Pacific strategy.

And in this process, we in Taiwan have heard ever more senior international leaders commenting on the importance of peace and stability and opposing unilateral change of status quo across the Taiwan Strait, including in the most recent G7 Leaders' Communiqué.

Now we even hear EU and European leaders saying that peace and stability over the Taiwan Strait is an integral part of global security and prosperity. In this regard, they are telling the Chinese officials that peace over Taiwan is

not their domestic affairs, but a matter of global interest. To show our appreciation, we want to make efforts to secure peace and stability by maintaining the status quo of the Taiwan Strait. We believe in peace; war is not an option. In order to maintain peace, Taiwan will not bow to pressure, and will not be a provocateur, and Taiwan pledges to maintain the status quo, which serves the best interest of the world. But I need to stress that maintaining the status quo and peace is a joint responsibility of the two sides of the Taiwan Strait, and it is also the expectation of democracies around the world.

In order for Taiwan to stay strong and resilient, and to have the courage to continue the policy of maintaining the status quo, we do need support from European friends. Among all those who speak out for Taiwan, I would particularly like to thank the Czech Republic for being in the forefront. Senate President Vystřil and Chamber of Deputies President Adamová separately led huge delegations to visit Taiwan despite mounting diplomatic pressure. It was also heartening that President Pavel, upon his election victory, would receive a congratulatory phone call from President Tsai. It takes the successors of late President Havel to have this vision and moral courage to connect with Taiwan.

I should also highlight that the Slovak government, too, has been organizing big mixed official business delegations to visit us, with the latest one came just last week. I am also quite pleased to see that Lithuanian government keeps sending delegations to engage with Taiwan. To those who brave through huge pressure to connect with Taiwan, though may be smaller in size and population in comparison to the bigger powers: you are true moral giants.

We have also been receiving delegations from the European Parliament and parliaments in European countries, who have touched us by traveling a long way to declare their support for Taiwan. The people of Taiwan are grateful for the actions to keep us from being alone in facing coercion. And that gives us courage and strength to stay free and democratic.

I know you support Taiwan because Taiwan is a shining beacon of democracy. You support Taiwan also because you know what life is like for freedom to be stricken by communists. My dear friends, Taiwan will stay strong and resilient knowing that we have you behind us.

We know the world is a different place after February 24 last year. We are waking up to the outward expansion of autocracies and authoritarianism. What is at stake is our true belief in freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. I am immensely proud to tell you that Taiwan

shares the vision with you to safeguard the values we hold dear to our heart, for we are all faithful disciples of the visionary late President Havel.

As authoritarian forces expand throughout the world, we democracies are left with but only one choice: to unite with each other. With the spirit of democratic solidarity, we will overcome the challenges together. And I have every confidence that when democracies in the East and West stand together, we will prevail.

Thank you.

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