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民主進步黨
Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan

Remarks by Chairperson Lai Ching-te at the DPP National Party Congress

July 22nd, 2024

The Democratic Progressive Party held the 21st National Party Congress on July 21. The following are President Lai's remarks:

Vice President Hsiao Bi-khim, Premier Cho Jung-tai, former Party Chair Yao Chia-wen, former Party Chair Hsu Hsin-liang, former Party Chair Su Tseng-chang, former Party Chair You Si-kun, the eighteen founding members of the party, Chairperson of the Central Evaluation Committee Lai Jui-lung, members of the Central Standing Committee, Secretary-General Lin Yu-chang, mayors and magistrates, legislators, esteemed guests, and all party delegates: Good afternoon!

First of all, I would like to thank all of you for your dedication to the party, society, and the nation, both in your daily work and during election campaigns. I also appreciate you taking the time to attend this National Party Congress to jointly decide our future goals.

As far as I recall, the recently concluded Legislative Yuan session was one of the most challenging in the past 20 years for the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). Nonetheless, under the leadership of the DPP Legislative Caucus Convener Ker Chien-ming, Secretary-General Wu

Szu-yao, and Secretary-General Chuang Jui-hsiung, the party caucus worked all out to achieve our set goals. This was no small feat!

Please give a round of applause to acknowledge the hard work of our Legislative Yuan caucus. There are more challenges ahead in the Legislative Yuan. Let us give them another round of applause.

Additionally, during his first interpellation session at the Legislative Yuan, Premier Cho Jung-tai demonstrated both proactivity and steadfastness under the opposition's intense questioning and strict supervision. He not only advanced legislation for public welfare but also safeguarded the foundations of democracy. Let's also thank Premier Cho and the executive team for their outstanding efforts with a round of applause.

As we have just heard in Premier Cho's report, it is clear that his administration's economic development efforts have paid off for the public. Further, efforts to promote public welfare and combat organized crime and fraud have helped stabilize society. Other initiatives, such as expanding social investments and caring for the underprivileged, have yielded initial results and high hopes. Let's cheer them on with another round of applause.

Our party was born during an era of authoritarian rule. We have upheld the spirit of integrity, diligent governance, and love for the homeland. We stood with the people to break through martial law, lift party and press bans, and pursue absolute freedom of speech. We also pushed for a fully elected legislature and direct presidential elections, driving democratic progress and social diversity.

Throughout this process, the DPP transitioned from opposition to ruling party, then back to opposition, and now once again to ruling party. In January's presidential election, the Taiwanese people opened a new chapter in history by entrusting governing responsibility to the DPP for the third consecutive time, hoping that we will lead Taiwan on the right path, continue to deepen our democratic constitutional system, and fully consolidate peace and prosperity.

Therefore, as we gather for the National Party Congress today, we should thank our predecessors who, with their blood and lives, fought

for Taiwan's democracy and freedom from authoritarianism.

Their achievements remind us that a party's purpose of governing lies not in personal gain, but in the realization of its shared ideals for the country and its people.

"Democratic Taiwan, United Forward" is the theme of this year's National Party Congress.

Fellow party members, despite our diverse backgrounds, and although we joined the party at different times, I believe that democracy is our shared belief!

We come from all over, but wherever we were born or whenever we came to Taiwan, Taiwan is our motherland. In the embrace of our mother Taiwan, we have the right to build our country based on our shared ideal of a democratic Taiwan.

We will conduct party office elections at this National Party Congress, marking the DPP's official entry into a new phase. As Taiwan faces greater challenges domestically and internationally, I expect the new party executive team to shoulder even greater responsibilities in this new era.

The entire party must unite, unite, and unite; cooperate, cooperate, and cooperate, to leverage our key strengths and lead Democratic Taiwan forward. We must never cede our democratic progress, lest we fail to live up to the people's trust and expectations.

Therefore, looking ahead, we have several important goals that will require everyone's continued joint efforts:

First, to establish a Taiwanese national identity:

Our predecessors shed blood and risked their lives to expose the fallacy that "Taiwan is a base for reclaiming the Mainland" and set a national direction that placed Taiwan front and center.

Now, our responsibility is to unite the people, resist annexation, and safeguard national sovereignty. We must do our utmost to ensure that

all citizens recognize Taiwan's history and culture. We must establish that "the 23 million people living in Taiwan share a common destiny." We must unite every bit of strength, so that our national identity no longer divides, but becomes a uniting force for all citizens.

Second, to consolidate the democratic constitutional system:

In the past, our predecessors aimed to break through martial law, overthrow authoritarian rule, and strive for popular sovereignty. Now, our responsibility is to uphold the constitutional system of separation of powers, and prevent power concentration that endangers democracy and harms people's rights.

In the past, our predecessors demanded the lifting of party bans and the establishment of party politics. Now, our responsibility is to further uphold democratic principles and safeguard democratic constitutionalism, because "without establishing the authority and consensus of constitutional norms," we would not be able to maintain sound party politics.

Democracies do not fail because of the impulses of an individual or a few. Rather, it risks failing when prolonged partisan strife leads to the neglect or even outright rejection of constitutional norms, resulting in gradual democratic erosion and, eventually, the failure of the state.

In the past, our predecessors fought for popular sovereignty and a fully elected legislature. Now, our responsibility is to embody the constitutional principle that "sovereignty resides in the people" by continuing to advocate for lowering the voting age to 18, and persisting in combating election bribery and unfair practices.

Third, to safeguard freedom and human rights:

Our predecessors broke press bans, fought for freedom of speech, and opposed the persecution of people for their speech. Now, our responsibility is to prevent the abuse of freedom of speech, protect people's rights from being infringed upon by misinformation and cognitive warfare, and simultaneously safeguard our democratic society.

Our predecessors fought for personal freedom, opposing the use of the judiciary by those in power to persecute individuals. Now, our responsibility is to continue judicial reform, uphold social justice, protect the people, and build faith in the judiciary's role in safeguarding social justice.

Our predecessors fought for people's freedom to manage their property. Now, our responsibility is to protect the people's right to housing from exploitation by land and real estate speculators.

Our predecessors fought to eliminate political, economic, and social injustices and undue privileges. Now, our responsibility is to strive for equality in gender, ethnicity, age, region, and socioeconomic status, fostering social harmony and stability.

In the past, our predecessors fought for freedom of assembly and association. Now, we must promote a transparent government that fosters greater civic participation in political decision-making.

Since the inception of the fully elected legislature in Taiwan, there have been three transfers of power. However, achieving a mature constitutional democracy still requires significant effort, especially given the presence of the "China factor" in Taiwan, which makes our situation even more unique.

As the primary force advancing Taiwan's democracy, the DPP will steadfastly uphold a democratic and free constitutional system. We will never allow Taiwan to face the threat of destruction due to a failure of democratic politics.

Fellow party members, ideals are the soul of a party's sustainable development, and talent is the source of a party's vitality. As the saying goes, "Sweet potatoes are not afraid of rotting in the soil, they only hope for their branches and leaves to thrive generation after generation."

Whether we are in central or local government teams, at various levels of party departments, in different associations, or in various roles in society, let us support each other and always follow in the footsteps of our predecessors. Let us strive to realize the DPP's ideals of defending

Taiwan's sovereignty, consolidating democracy, upholding peace, and fostering prosperity. Together, we will pass on a better and more robust Taiwan to the next generation!

Thank you!

[Link to the video of President Lai's remarks >>>](#)

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