

## INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION, 2016—TAIWAN

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, on January 16, 2016, the people of Taiwan went to the polls and elected Dr. Tsai Ing-wen as the next President of Taiwan, with 56.2 percent of the vote. The 2016 Presidential election marked the sixth direct election of the President and Vice President of Taiwan, and the first time a woman has been elected as head of Taiwan's Government. Dr. Tsai's party, the Democratic Progressive Party, also won 68 seats of the 113-member Legislative Yuan for an outright majority in that body. I congratulate Dr. Tsai and her party for their victories and new responsibilities.

This election represents a significant change in Taiwan's political landscape, with important implications for the U.S.-Taiwan relationship. I urge the administration to express its clear support for Taiwan and its vibrant democracy.

As part of the 2016 Taiwan Presidential and legislative elections, an international election observation mission made up of 18 observers from 10 countries visited Taiwan at the invitation of the Taiwan Nation Alliance and the International Committee for a Democratic Taiwan. After the elections, the mission submitted its final report on the elections, concluding that they were free and fair. I ask unanimous consent that the summary of that report be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

## OBSERVATIONS BY THE INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION, 2016

## 1. INTRODUCTION

From January 12-17, 2016, a group of eighteen observers from 10 countries (see the attached list of members) visited Taiwan at the invitation of the Taiwan Nation Alliance (TNA) and the International Committee for a Democratic Taiwan (ICDT). They formed an International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) to observe the election campaign for the January 16th 2016 Presidential and Legislative elections in Taiwan.

At the completion of their mission on the day after the elections, the members of the IEOM expressed appreciation to the organizers of the visit, and encouraged them to continue in their efforts to strengthen Taiwan's democracy, so that it can be shared with other countries in the region and around the world. In addition, as the IEOM conducted their mission, it greatly appreciated the willingness of candidates, party representatives, and government representatives to meet with them.

During the IEOM, the group visited locations in Taipei, Kaohsiung, and Taichung, meeting with various representatives of the two main political parties: Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), as well as of two smaller parties—the People's First Party (PFP) and New Power Party (NPP). They also observed political rallies, street campaigns, and activities at several polling stations and the Central Election Commission counting center on Election Day.

## 2. THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE IEOM WERE AS FOLLOWS:

It congratulated the people of Taiwan and its newly-elected president Dr. Tsai Ing-wen on the achievement of this major milestone in Taiwan's history, the consolidation of many decades of hard work and dedication by the Taiwanese people.

And it stated that:

a. The vibrancy of the sixth direct presidential election further confirms that Taiwan has left its authoritarian past behind it, and has grown into a fully democratic society featuring the institutionalization of fundamental freedoms, comprehensive electoral procedures, and sound democratic practices.

b. In our view, these elections were free and fair, though there were media reports of irregularities such as vote buying in locations such as Hsinchu, Chiayi and Taitung. However, these have not affected the overall outcome of the elections.

c. After such elections it is key that all sides of the political spectrum in the country respect the democratic choice of the people, and work together to make Taiwan a better place for all.

d. It is also essential that other nations respect the results of the elections as the free choice of the people of Taiwan, and work with the newly-elected leadership to establish a sustainable, long-term peace and stability in the region.

e. The impending third transfer of executive power, as well as the first parliamentary majority for the opposition, are opportunities for further deepening and consolidation of Taiwan's democracy.

## MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION

Head of Mission: Frank Murkowski, former Senator and Governor of Alaska

## UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Julian Baum, former correspondent for the Far Eastern Economic Review and the Christian Science Monitor

Stephen Bryen, former Deputy Undersecretary of Defense

June Teufel Dreyer, Professor of Political Science, University of Miami

William A. Stanton, former Director of the American Institute in Taiwan, Taipei

Stephen M. Young, former Director of the American Institute in Taiwan, Taipei

Charles Burton, Professor at Brock University, Canada

Michael Stainton, President, Taiwanese Human Rights Association of Canada

## EUROPE

Stéphane Corcuff, Professor of Political Science, University of Lyon, France

Jens Damm, Professor of Political Science, University of Tubingen, Germany

Michael Danielsen, Chairman, Taiwan Corner, Denmark

Bruno Kauffman, President, Initiative and Referendum Institute, Europe

Vincent Rollet, French Centre for Research on Contemporary China, Taiwan

Gerrit van der Wees, editor, Taiwan Communiqué, the Netherlands

## ASIA &amp; AUSTRALIA

Bruce Jacobs, Retired Professor of Political Science, Monash University, Australia

Akihisa Nagashima, Member House of Representatives (Diet), Japan

Tadae Takubo, Vice President, Japan Institute for National Fundamentals, Japan

Sim Tze Tzin, Member of Parliament, Malaysia

## NATIONAL EYE DONOR MONTH

Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, today I wish to honor March 2016 as National

Eye Donor Month, an event first celebrated by President Reagan in 1983 and one I am proud to commemorate now.

For over 50 years, corneal transplants have restored the vision of those with corneal diseases. Today these procedures are overwhelmingly safe and successful and help reduce the impact of eye disorders on our economy. As a result of higher medical expenses and reduced workforce productivity, eye disorders are the fifth costliest disease type in the United States.

In total, over 70,000 people receive corneal transplants each year. The largest eye bank in the United States, Eversight, operates two locations in Illinois. These institutions, one in Chicago and one in Bloomington, facilitated over 3,000 transplants in 2015 and provided nearly 1,500 corneas for research and training purposes. Thanks to the 2,700 eye donors in Illinois in 2014 and the thousands of other donors across the country each year, scientists are closer to finding treatments and cures for corneal blindness and many patients no longer suffer from impairment or loss of vision.

On this special occasion, I commend the Eye Bank Association of America and the eye banks across this country for their great work, encourage my colleagues to promote eye donation, and urge all Americans to register to become eye donors.

## MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:15 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1471. An act to reauthorize the programs and activities of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

H.R. 4084. An act to enable civilian research and development of advanced nuclear energy technologies by private and public institutions and to expand theoretical and practical knowledge of nuclear physics, chemistry, and materials science.

H.R. 4238. An act to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms relating to minorities.

H.R. 4401. An act to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide countering violent extremism training to Department of Homeland Security representatives at State and local fusion centers, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4444. An act to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to exclude power supply circuits, drivers, and devices designed to be connected to, and power, light-emitting diodes or organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination from energy conservation standards for external power supplies, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4583. An act to promote a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, each with an amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

S. 1172. An act to improve the process of presidential transition.