

Center for Strategic and International Studies

TRANSCRIPT

## The Taiwan Relations Act at Forty and U.S.-Taiwan Relations

### “VTC Speech and Q&A with Her Excellency President Tsai Ing-wen of the Republic of China (Taiwan)”

EVENT DATE

**Tuesday, April 9, 2019**

TIME

**9:00 a.m. EDT**

LOCATION

**CSIS Headquarters, Washington, D.C.**

FEATURING

**Her Excellency Tsai Ing-wen,**  
*President, Republic of China (Taiwan)*

MODERATORS

**Richard Armitage,**  
*President, Armitage International; CSIS Trustee*

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(Applause.)

President Tsai Ing-Wen: Thank you. Thank you, and hello, Washington, D.C. Good morning from Taipei.

President Tsai: Rich, thank you for your kind introduction just now.

President Tsai: It is such a privilege to address this conference, opened by Dr. Hamre. I want to thank CSIS, the Brookings Institution, and Wilson Center, as well as Bonnie, Richard, and Abe, for organizing this event. It is a pleasure to see many friends of Taiwan, including Michael Green and Chairman Jim Moriarty, in the audience.

President Tsai: Here in Taipei, the clock will soon turn to April the 10<sup>th</sup>. On this day 40 years ago the Taiwan Relations Act was enacted, opening a new chapter in Taiwan-U.S. relations. The momentous event that led to the swift passage of the TRA 40 years ago marked a difficult time in Taiwan's history. Many both in the United States and here in Taiwan were not optimistic about Taiwan's future or not clear as to whether the future could remain distinct from that of across the strait. Who could have imagined that the foresight and friendship shown by the drafters of the TRA would eventually allow this relationship to blossom again, this time based on our shared values? And few could have imagined that Taiwan-U.S. partnership would become stronger than ever and a force for good across the world.

President Tsai: With the U.S. Congress' steadfast support, the enactment of the TRA set up the guiding principles defining how the U.S. engages with Taiwan and honors our past agreements. The TRA also established the American Institute in Taiwan. Today there is no question that AIT, which is about to move into its new home in Neihu, has withstood the test of time. But insisting on language that ensures Taiwan's security, Congress made sure that Taiwan would survive its darkest hour and have the opportunity to transform itself into the free society and robust democracy we are today.

President Tsai: What the TRA also reflects is the United States' commitment to our shared interests of peace, security, and stability in the Pacific. It has supported Taiwan's development of the defense capabilities that we need in order to resist any form of coercion. And this commitment and support has been honored by successive administrations and the U.S. Congress. It featured prominently in March in 1996 when the Clinton administration sent two aircraft carriers to sail through the water near Taiwan to stop China's attempt to disrupt Taiwan's first direct presidential election. At that historic moment the U.S. stood with Taiwan, showing the world its commitment to our shared democratic values. And the people of Taiwan responded in kind, showing the world our resolve to exercise our right to vote, the fundamental democratic process proving that we were capable of joining a global community of free and democratic nations. So, in 1996, our democracy took a big step forward, and 20 years later Taiwan is one of

the freest countries in the world, and the people of Taiwan elected their first female president.

President Tsai: With the benefit of hindsight from 40 years of experience, I trust that everyone here today agrees that the TRA has helped create a force for good and laid the foundation for Taiwan to become a beacon of democracy in the world. Taiwan survived the challenges posed to us by history. We were not defeated. We are an island of resilience, and we have been working tirelessly to contribute to a brighter tomorrow for our region and the world as well.

President Tsai: Today, at this conference, we commemorate the achievement of the TRA. But we should also recommit ourselves to our shared values and common sense of purpose. Foremost among them is ensuring that our global partnerships remain strong, particularly the special bond between Taiwan and the United States. Over the past three years we have made significant progress in advancing this relationship.

President Tsai: In terms of security, the TRA lays out a framework to not only, quote, “provide Taiwan with arms of defensive character,” unquote; but also, quote, “to consider any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means, including by boycotts and embargoes, a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States,” unquote. Cooperation between our two countries has continued to fulfill the spirit of these articles. Already, a steady drumbeat of arms sales have been announced by the current U.S. administration, and we have more in the pipeline.

President Tsai: The U.S. has also continued to support the development of indigenous capabilities that we are capable of building here in Taiwan, and right now the training and cooperation between our two countries could not be closer or more robust. But all of this only works when Taiwan is capable and determined to defend ourselves. We can’t expect others to do what we are not willing to do by ourselves.

President Tsai: So, since 2016, part of my primary goals is to strengthen our defense capabilities. Already we have increased our defense budget over the past two years in a row. These funds will go into strategies, techniques, and capabilities that make our fighting force more nimble, agile, and survivable. These ideas are encompassed by the overall defense concept, which has my support 100 percent. We are making these investments not because we pursue compensation. Quite the opposite: Our intention is to uphold the spirit of the Taiwan Relations Act and provide for lasting peace across the Taiwan Strait. But we can’t do this when we don’t have the ability to deter coercion and aggression.

President Tsai: Our diplomats across the region are also working hand in hand to promote our shared values and interests and push back against the growing tide of authoritarianism around the world. We know the dangers of authoritarianism too well. It is an ideology that is fundamentally at odds with freedom and the people’s right to choose. As the TRA states, quote, “peace and stability in the

area are in the political, security, and economic interests of the United States and are matters of international concern,” unquote.

President Tsai: Last month Taiwan and the United States announced the launch of the Indo-Pacific Democratic Governance Dialogue, which will be a platform for us to pursue joint projects advancing good governance and human rights among likeminded countries but also cooperating to advance religious freedom in the region. Last month, Taiwan and U.S. co-hosted a dialogue on securing religious freedom in the Indo-Pacific region. To make a stand, religious freedom is being threatened around the world. We want to safeguard the religious freedom of all peoples, because no one deserves to be punished or reeducated for his or her own faith.

President Tsai: The Global Cooperation and Training Framework that is GCTF is another shining example of our joint work on pressing global issues. We have not only tripled the budget for this program, but we are engaging in more issues than ever before – ranging from women’s empowerment to media literacy. And recently, we have welcomed the inclusion of Japan, making this truly a framework for regional partners to promote our shared values and interests.

President Tsai: We also want to push back against the notion that our values can or should be dictated by economic carrots and sticks, particularly by authoritarian governments. So we are stepping up our work with the United States Overseas Private Investment Corporation to find opportunities to jointly invest here in the region and across our diplomatic allies. Our engagement dates back to 1952. And an entire article in the TRA is dedicated to this relationship. But today, we have gone from a net recipient of aid to a high-tech powerhouse. And we have the capability and expertise to work with the United States to support the economic development of our friends and partners.

President Tsai: All of this has taken place at a time our international space is under unprecedented challenge. China has engaged in a relentless campaign to deny our right to participate in international affairs. They don’t do this because it is a DPP administration or because we don’t recognize the 1992 Consensus. They do it because they genuinely believe that the people of Taiwan don’t have an independent right to participate in global affairs. That is troubling and destabilizing for the healthy development of cross-strait relations.

President Tsai: So we are grateful that the United States and other likeminded countries have continued to support us in our international endeavors. We have seen all that the United States has done to help maintain our diplomatic alliances and counter China’s influence there. And following our biannual international organization consultations, we have seen a coalition of likeminded countries gradually emerge to continuously support Taiwan’s participation. So we’d like to thank countries that continuing support Taiwan’s participation in U.N. specialized agencies, and make sure that Taiwan’s contribution can be appreciated by the international community.

- President Tsai: Economic relations are another area where we have been – we have seen great focus since the passage of the TRA. Today, Taiwan, a country of 23 million people, is the United States’ 11th-largest trading partner. It’s a complementary relationship, not a competitive one. And trade has continued to increase significantly. Our global enterprises are investing in and procuring from the United States at a rate that few people in the time of passage of the TRA could have imagined, and vice versa, as major U.S. technology giants, including Google, Microsoft, Amazon, and IBM expand their presence in Taiwan over the past year.
- President Tsai: Despite this positive development we see potential to do more, which is why I have made clear our intention to engage in a bilateral trade agreement with the United States. We have the potential to work together in crafting an agreement that is based on our values and ideals, which can be used as a model for the rest of the Indo-Pacific region.
- President Tsai: The Taiwan Relations Act envisioned a relationship in which our shared interests could be protected and it provided a framework where one day we could defend our shared values. In today’s world of increasing complexity and challenge, this has been more necessary than ever before. One thing that we learned from the previous century is that the forward marching of democracy is not a given.
- President Tsai: Even as we speak, forces working against freedom and democracy are becoming more active around the world, for while we measure progress in terms of freedom and individual liberty, the metrics they use are fear and control, both at home and abroad. In fact, less than two weeks ago, China’s PLA sent two fighter jets across the median line of Taiwan Strait, breaking a tacit agreement that has served the interests of peace and stability over the past two decades.
- President Tsai: U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton tweeted: “Chinese military provocation won’t win any hearts or minds in Taiwan but they will strengthen the resolve of people everywhere who value democracy. The Taiwan Relations Act and our commitment are clear,” unquote. We could not agree more. Given the traditional and nontraditional challenges facing us today, the need for eclectic response has never been clearer and Taiwan is ready, willing, and able to do our part to achieve our shared vision.
- President Tsai: So on the 40th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act, we must be willing to work harder to ensure that the people of Taiwan can continue to live – to live free from fear and coercion with their belief in democracy. The TRA drafters began their work 40 years ago, but their work remains unfinished. Their vision will only be fully achieved when our region becomes free, open, and democratic.
- President Tsai: Taiwan is not just a recipient of this. We are a partner in this. At this critical moment, it is more important than ever to ensure that the letter and spirit of the TRA prevail and that the values we share continue to shape the future of our region. Even though we are not in Washington, D.C. – I am not in Washington, D.C., where you are – our shared vision has made our two countries feel closer

than ever before, and together, with your support, we will continue to remind the world that Taiwan is a(n) irreplaceable force for good in the world.

President Tsai: Thank you.

Richard Armitage: We thank you. President Tsai, it is we who thank you for those remarks. I can't imagine a more eloquent, clear, concise exposition of Taiwan's place in the world and Taiwan's espousal of human freedoms, human rights, human dignity, religious freedom. And your reminder at the end, Dr. Tsai, that democracy is not itself an end point – it's a journey – is one that does not fall on deaf ears here.

Richard Armitage: I must say, at a time celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the TRA, I think many who – perhaps quite a few in this audience who actually had some part in the crafting of that – want to pat ourselves on the back, but it is the 23 million-and-a-half people of Taiwan who have done this, who have put on their own backs, as I say, protection of human freedom, human rights, human dignity. So let's give a real kudo to the citizens of the Republic of China.

Richard Armitage: Dr. Tsai, I have – (applause) – thank you – (continued applause) – Dr. Tsai, I have the duty and the honor of asking you the first question. So the question, Dr. Tsai, would be this: If you could clap your hands and make a wish, and could change something or have something different in the U.S.-ROC relationship, and politically doable, what would that wish be? What would that thing be?

President Tsai: Oh, what I'm going to say is absolutely politically doable, so I – but first I would like to thank Rich for asking this great question. The people of Taiwan take great pride in our democracy. It's the only system of governance our young generation has ever known. The people of Taiwan are deeply committed to protecting this system against all threats, particularly from across the Strait.

President Tsai: But it's true that our democratic way of life is under unprecedented challenge. Using economic incentives, control over sources of information, and political subversion, China's objective is to divide our society, erode trust in public institutions, and make people question our traditional alliances.

President Tsai: The United States, together with other like-minded countries, can help, and they are helping because one thing that like-minded countries around the world are seeing more clearly is the threat China poses, not only to one country or one way of governance, but to our collective sense of security as well as our shared values and interests.

President Tsai: So I hope that the United States can make clear at a very senior level that it considers the security of Taiwan vital to the defense of democracy, both here and around the world. And similarly, that it considers any threat to degrade Taiwan's freedom, democracy, and our way of life of critical concern to the United States. And this is a message that should not only be conveyed to the people of Taiwan, but more importantly, to the other side of the Strait so that they know that expansionist actions against Taiwan are also threats directed against the free world.

Richard Armitage: Dr. Tsai, I thank you very much for a very direct and clear answer to my question, and with your indulgence, we'll turn over the hosting duties here to Dr. Green, and he will moderate the remainder of the Q&As.

Richard Armitage: Mike?

President Tsai: All right, thank you.

Michael J. Green: Dr. Tsai.

President Tsai: Hi.

Michael J. Green: Welcome to CSIS, virtually. The weather outside is just lovely today. The audience in this large room is full of people on both sides of the aisle and seven administrations who have strengthened our cooperation and friendship since 1979. I see a new generation of students and journalists here who will take us into the future. I see friends from Japan, from Australia.

Michael J. Green: Your remarks – it's hard for me to imagine another leader around the world – there would be very few whose remarks would resonate with our own values so convincingly, so deeply, and I think that's something that we should all – and everyone in the region – should reflect on.

Michael J. Green: I'm going to call on my colleagues from Brookings and Wilson and CSIS who did all the hard work organizing this conference. That seems only fair. So let me turn first to Richard Bush. I don't know if you can see him. He has a microphone. And Richard will ask the first question.

President Tsai: Right.

Michael J. Green: Good, you can see him.

Q: See me?

President Tsai: Yes.

Q: Dr. Tsai – (comes on mic) – Dr. Tsai, thank you very much for taking the time to be with us today. Thank you for your inspiring remarks.

Q: I have a question about the – our economic relationship, which you correctly –

President Tsai: Yes.

Q: – remarked was broad and deep and the result of the wisdom of the TRA. There's now talk about our two countries creating a bilateral free trade agreement. I wonder if you could offer your thoughts about why it would be in America's interest to begin negotiations on such an agreement. Thank you.

- President Tsai: Thank you. I think economic security is national security, and President Trump has been clear that he believes this is true for the United States. We could not agree more, and we believe Taiwan is part of that.
- President Tsai: First, Taiwan has a very real capacity to expand our economic relationship with the United States. Our economies – the economies of ours and the U.S. economies – are complimentary to each other and not competitive to each other. It is a mutually beneficial economic relationship, and we have the potential to work together in crafting a trade agreement that can become a model for the rest of Indo-Pacific region. And it goes without saying that by entering into a BTA – that is, bilateral trade agreement – with the United States, we open the door for other possibilities down the road.
- President Tsai: Second, Taiwan’s economic diversification is related to whether we can remain a free and open society and continue playing a critical role in the heart of the first island chain. China’s influence campaigns are primarily undertaken using economic actors. By aligning ourself with the United States and other free-market countries, we can reduce our economic reliance on China and their capacity to interfere in our media, politics, and security.
- President Tsai: Third, Taiwan is a crucial link in the global high-tech supply chain which the United States and other likeminded countries are looking at more closely in terms of its integrity and data security. It’s particularly relevant as we look at the case of Huawei and the scramble for control over the future of 5G networks. We need to shape the flow of this supply chain so that critical technologies, infrastructures, and assets do not fall into the wrong hands.
- President Tsai: Last but not the least, such an agreement gives us the opportunity to reexamine our trading relationship and think creatively about resolving longstanding trade disputes. I think the Trump administration has shown it has the capacity to be creative when it comes to trade, and I hope they can apply the same principle when it comes to discussions with Taiwan.
- President Tsai: Thank you.
- Michael J. Green: The next question is from Abe Denmark from the Wilson Center.
- Q: President Tsai, thank you for speaking with us today.
- Q: I wanted to ask you a question about the security situation that Taiwan faces.
- President Tsai: Yes.
- Q: And you addressed these issues in your speech, so perhaps you could get into a bit more detail. Considering the intensified pressure that Taiwan has come under recently from the mainland, what more do you believe could be done/should be done in order to ensure that Taiwan has a sufficient self-defense capability?

Q: And on a related note, the Taiwan Relations Act requires the United States to retain the capacity to resist coercion or the use of force against Taiwan. So I wanted to ask you your level of confidence in the U.S. capacity for that resistance. Thank you very much.

President Tsai: Thank you. Well, I have made it clear is that my party is to ensure that our 23 million people, and our democracy, and our way of life are well-protected. Now, it is clear that despite our efforts to exert goodwill and find common ground, China's aggressive actions against Taiwan have only intensified. They have become more coercive, daring, and confrontational. And most of you know, last week they flew two fighter jets across the middle line of the Taiwan Strait. The middle line is there for a reason. There is a reason why both sides have generally respected that line over the last 20 years. It helps both of us reduce the risk of conflict. The Chinese have now chosen not to respect that.

President Tsai: Make no mistake, this is not a challenge that a DPP administration faces. This is a challenge that Taiwan's democratically elected administration faces. It is a challenge to our democracy, our freedom, and way of life. And we must be capable of standing up against that. We'll continue to increase our defense budget. We'll focus on funding the capabilities we need under the overall defense concept. I am committed to ODC, which will make our armed forces smarter, more nimble, and survivable. We will continue to leverage our industrial capabilities to build new defense articles. That includes submarines. And we just completed the first phase last month. We expect that the IDS will be operational by 2024. And for items we can't build ourselves, we will continue to seek arms sales from the United States, as consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act.

President Tsai: We will continue to build up our military and ensure that our men and women in uniform have the respect, support, and confidence they need to do their job. We do all this not because we want confrontation. Quite the opposite. We want to deter aggression by showing we are capable of effectively defending ourselves. This is what it will take to maintain peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.

President Tsai: On your second question, the capacity you made reference to is enshrined in the Taiwan Relations Act. Historically, the U.S. has played a crucial role in helping Taiwan resist coercion that would jeopardize our security and our social and economic systems. Many of you here are current or former government officials. All of you have played a part in supporting this in one capacity or another. Now, the situation today is more complex, not because the U.S. commitment is any less strong, it isn't, but because of the more sophisticated tactics authoritarian governments are using against democracies all over the world.

President Tsai: So we need to have more discussions of how we can effectively pushback against these tactics. And we have made a good start. We're holding workshops on media literacy to engage on governance issues in the Indo-Pacific. But there is a lot more we can do. And we will continue to engage on that. To be clear, Taiwan is defending freedom and democracy at the very front lines of authoritarian expansionism. We have the responsibility to prevail. Taiwan will

continue to shine as a beacon of freedom and democracy. We have faith. And our partners also need to have faith in Taiwan.

Michael J. Green: The next question from my colleague Bonnie Glaser here at CSIS.

Q: Hello, Madam President.

Michael J. Green: You have to turn it on.

Q: (Comes on mic.) Yes. Hello, Madam President. Very good to see you.

President Tsai: Yes. It's so nice to see you.

Q: I hope that your messages today are heard widely throughout Taiwan, the United States, and also in China, because they're very, very important, and it truly is an honor to have you with us today.

Q: So the question that I'd like to ask is about U.S.-Taiwan cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. When you became president you launched the new Southbound Policy, and of course the Trump administration has established the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy. And we – I know our two countries and officials have talked about how we can work together, and you mentioned in your speech this new Indo-Pacific Democratic Governance Dialogue that we have recently launched. So could you talk in a little bit more detail about how you think our two countries can cooperate in the Indo-Pacific – what kind of concrete projects that we can engage in, what are the achievements that we can make in this newly-created mechanism? Thank you very much.

President Tsai: Thank you, Bonnie. I know you have engaged in a lot of research on this issue, and as you have pointed out the new Southbound Policy has been our strategy to expand our presence in the Indo-Pacific, even though this region was not so clearly defined at the time. Taiwan, the United States, and other countries pursuing a similar policy really share the same core objectives in the region; that is, to promote economic linkages, prosperities, and enhance our sense of shared security while staying true to our values and interests.

President Tsai: And this is an area where Taiwan does have a head start. The new Southbound Policy is about three years old now. We continue to see the enormous progress we have made in trade, for example with 6 percent growth last year, and investment, education, and tourism. All of this has been unprecedented and timely, even in the uncertainty of the global trade environment today. The question is, therefore, how we bring all of this together with the U.S. concept of Free and Open Indo-Pacific and, like you say, strengthen a rules-based order in the region.

President Tsai: First, as President Trump said, enhancing shared prosperity is one of the key areas in the U.S. strategy. This includes engaging on issues of infrastructure, energy, digital economy, and through APEC, all of which Taiwan has a robust presence in. So we have had a significant number of discussions with OPIC on

the possibility to engage in joint projects in Southeast Asia, and particularly in many of our diplomatic allies. In terms of issues ranging from energy to digital economy, we continue to engage with our regional partners under the GCTF, whose budget we have now tripled. At the same time, our cooperation under the APEC has been longstanding, and that will continue with particular emphasis of sharing Taiwan's strength on bridging the digital divide, connectivity, and supporting SMEs.

President Tsai: Second, good governance is another core pillar of the U.S. vision. This is an issue that is extremely important to us too because we see open, clean, and accountable governance as important in the Pacific and an asset for Taiwan as we maintain our diplomatic relationships. Last month our Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched the Indo-Pacific Democratic Governance Consultation together with AIT here. Under this platform, we will cooperate and pursue joint projects aimed at advancing good governance and human rights in the region. We are also enhancing our cooperation in countries across the Pacific. Together with the U.S., we are providing young Pacific leaders with training here in Taiwan and Hawaii, and we are grateful that the U.S. has continued to send senior-level officials who support Taiwan's role in these countries and I hope we will be able to engage in further discussions on ways we can work together on the ground there.

President Tsai: And, finally, all of this ties into building a broader sense of shared security and pursuing peace and stability in the region. We share the U.S. view that denuclearizing North Korea and safeguarding international law in the South China Sea are important to the security of the region and we are committed to playing our part there.

President Tsai: Taiwan will also be proactive. We also – we will also be a proactive contributor to peace, despite the challenges that we face. Many of my commitment and, actually, my commitment to maintaining a pragmatic and peaceful and nonprovocative postures in the Taiwan Strait has not changed. Neither has my intention to maintain the status quo. That is a promise I will continue to keep towards the international community.

President Tsai: So, overall, I would like to say that in terms of working together in the Indo-Pacific, we have come a long way. Taiwan is a full partner to the free and open Indo-Pacific strategy and we are now working hand in hand to defend a rule-based region based on our shared values and interests.

President Tsai: Thank you.

Michael J. Green: I'm going to ask the last question, if I may, President Tsai. You've described – you've described to us today in very urgent and very compelling terms the challenges Taiwan faces on the front lines of freedom and democracy, pressured by military aircraft, in cyberspace – in cyberspace and outer space, in society and information. The partner who is probably most important to Taiwan in this endeavor after the U.S. would be Japan, sharing all the same values, all the same

concerns, led by Shinzo Abe, who is possibly the most pro-Taiwan, the best friend Taiwan has had in Tokyo, in many, many decades.

- Michael J. Green: But ties with Japan – cooperation with Japan is also vexed by things like the referendum on Fukushima, food exports, and things like that. So it's a complicated time. But there is a real urgency to getting things right with Tokyo and I'd like to ask you where you want your cooperation, your partnership with Japan, to go in the years ahead.
- President Tsai: Well, Japan is a very important relations of ours, and that is partly driven by the enormous goodwill the people of Taiwan feels towards Japan, which is our largest market for outbound tourism and the third largest trading partner. This is a relationship that my administration – that is, the DPP administration – is very much committed to. I spoke about our cooperation in the Indo-Pacific earlier, but I want to make clear that we don't limit that to the U.S. We also share the same vision of the Indo-Pacific with Japan.
- President Tsai: We see great potential for working together on enhancing economic prosperity, clean governance, and shared security in the region, and I am pleased to see that Ambassador Numata, the Japanese representative, participate in our latest GCTF event on combating corruption in the Indo-Pacific, marking the first – marking the first time that our three countries have jointly co-hosted an event.
- President Tsai: I expect we will see more events like this in the future. We see opportunities to work together with JICA – the Japan International Cooperation Agency – whose work is widely respected in the region and especially in many of our diplomatic allies. Furthermore, we have been engaging as part of the new Southbound Policy in finding opportunities for Taiwanese and Japanese companies to cooperate on joint investment and commercial projects in the region. All of this will continue, but so will our discussions on what more can we do here in the Indo-Pacific region.
- President Tsai: We have also made enormous progress in terms of support for Taiwan's international space. We're grateful that very senior Japanese officials have spoken out quite forceful – quite forcefully on Taiwan's participation in international fora, such as the WHA. And we will continue to engage with Japan and alongside other likeminded partners to find creative ways for Taiwan to continue to global issues. These actions showcase essentially how far we have come in this relationship, which like the U.S. is shared on our shared interests and values. And I expect – and I expect we will continue to see this relationship evolve, reflecting the high degree of trust and friendship between the two sides. Thank you.
- Michael J. Green: So, President Tsai, this is a wonderful opportunity for us. The technology has worked extremely well. It's been clear. Your message to this audience and to the United States has been even clearer. Some lament that technology is being used primarily by authoritarian states to close civil society space, but I think today we've shown that technology can also be the friend of democracy. And you've taken full advantage of that. And it's been a great honor for us. I'd like

to invite you to give us your closing remarks before we take our own coffee break here in Washington. (Laughter.)

President Tsai: Thank you. I really enjoyed our discussion today. And I thank you for the excellent questions, which gave me a chance to elaborate on the importance of our enduring partnership with the U.S., and Taiwan's role in the Indo-Pacific region. On this special occasion, I'm glad that we revisited our joint achievements over the past 40 years. But safeguarding our shared interests is not just about maintaining the existing cooperative framework. It also means renewing our commitment to our shared values.

President Tsai: In an increasingly uncertain world, it is more important than ever to remember the spirit of the Taiwan Relations Act – that is, to protect peace, security, and stability in our region. So let's maintain the spirit that has carried us through times of uncertainty. Now, in the meantime, as president, I can assure you that Taiwan will continue to do its part to ensure an open, free, inclusive, and rules-based international order. Our next generation deserves no less.

President Tsai: I also welcome you all to visit Taiwan in the near future to experience our success as a democracy and our vibrant society in person. Thank you. Xie xie.

Michael J. Green: Xie xie. Thank you. (Applause.) I don't know what they're serving in Taipei, but coffee is served for us. (Laughter.)

(END)