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會員演講座談會之演講參考稿

Remarks by President Ma Ying-jeou at the Taiwan Foreign
Correspondents' Club (TFCC) on November 22

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TFCC President Martin Williams;

Deputy President Eva Dou;

TFCC members;

Ladies and gentlemen:

Good morning!

It is a great pleasure for me to attend this event held by the TFCC and I want to extend our warmest greetings to you all. I also want to take this opportunity to look back at various developments in Taiwan, and share with you what I hope this country's future will look like.

The rich fruits of the viable diplomacy policy

You could say that this is the year in which the Republic of China's policy of viable diplomacy truly began to pay dividends. The ROC today not only enjoys very stable relations with our diplomatic allies, with the only exception of Gambia, but also continues to deepen its substantive relations with other nations, such as the United States, Japan, ASEAN members, New Zealand, Australia and the members of the European Union.

In addition, the number of countries and territories granting ROC nationals visa-free or landing-visa treatment has leaped

from 54 five years ago, to 134 today. This makes it much more convenient, efficient and economic for our people to travel to 98 percent of the countries they frequently visit. While there are those who take this for granted, given Taiwan's diplomatic isolation, achieving such diplomatic breakthroughs is quite remarkable.

With respect to our bilateral relations, the viable diplomacy policy and our "low-key and surprise free" approach have allowed us to make huge progress in our relations with the United States over the last five years. We have not only restored high-level mutual trust and maintained open channels of communication, but have deepened our ties in security cooperation, trade and investment, amid other areas. This July, President Obama signed into law a bill supporting Taiwan's participation in the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), which was very helpful for bringing about our

participation in the 38th ICAO Assembly this September after a departure of 42 years.

The close ties that exist between the ROC and Japan, meanwhile, can be traced back a long way. Indeed, since taking office, I have defined Taiwan-Japan relations as being a “special partnership.” Over the past five years, we have signed a youth working holiday agreement, add an office in Sapporo, signed a bilateral investment arrangement, and open sky aviation agreement, and many others. Our relations with Japan are the best they have been for 40 years.

The European Union, meanwhile, is Taiwan’s fourth largest trading partner and largest source of foreign investment. The economic structures of Taiwan and the EU complement each other nicely, and there is plenty of potential for the two sides to expand their substantive ties in the absence of formal diplomatic ties. The annual report on the Common Foreign and Security

Policy (CFSP) issued this October reiterates EU approval of Taiwan's contributions to promoting cross-strait relations and regional security, as well as EU support for our meaningful participation in international organizations and related activities. The report also expresses the hope that the EU and Taiwan can promote negotiations on an economic cooperation agreement. I hope that the two sides can start talks on a bilateral investment agreement as soon as possible. This will help pave the way for an economic cooperation agreement in the future.

Seeking peaceful means to resolving international disputes

The Republic of China is a peace-loving country that seeks to resolve international disputes through peaceful means. On the 5th of August last year, which marked the 60th anniversary of the coming into force of the 1952 Treaty of Peace between the Republic of China and Japan, I proposed the East China Sea Peace Initiative based on the belief that, while national sovereignty cannot be divided, natural resources can be shared.

The initiative led to the negotiation between Taiwan and Japan on the fishery rights in the East China Sea. This April, we signed the Taiwan-Japan Fisheries Agreement that, fittingly, has resolved a problem involving overlapping exclusive economic zones that had existed for more than 40 years and had been negotiated without solution for 17 years. Under the Agreement, Taiwan fishermen may operate freely without interference from anyone in an area twice the size of Taiwan. The agreement perfectly embodies the ideas behind the initiative, and was well-received by the international community as it not only resolves the fishery dispute, shelves the Tiaoyutai Islands territorial dispute but also ensures regional peace and stability.

This May, the Republic of China fishing boat *Guang Da Xing No. 28* was attacked by a Filipino government vessel with automatic weapons while operating in the overlapping exclusive economic zones between Taiwan and the Philippines, resulting in the death of a Taiwanese fisherman and damaged seriously

the boat. After three months of negotiations, we finally got the Filipino government to make an apology and provide compensation to the victim's family, punish the perpetrators, and initiate talks on a fisheries agreement. Justice was done for the victim's family. In the second Taiwan-Philippines fisheries talks that took place in October, the two sides confirmed a consensus which was reached last June, namely, the establishment of a law enforcement cooperation mechanism that excludes the use of force, sets up an emergency notification system, and a prompt release mechanism. This is an important step in improving bilateral maritime law enforcement and protecting the safety of Taiwanese fishermen, thereby establishing an order in the seas. Meanwhile, in response to the devastating damage of Typhoon Haiyan to the Philippines, my government and people have donated more than US\$6 million in cash and supplies and shipped them to Cebu City in the central Philippines through 18 flights of our C-130 transport planes in six days. We will send more by ships in the following days. After all, the Philippines is our close neighbor and the ROC has

always wanted to play the role of a provider of international humanitarian aid.

Seizing the opportunities of the times and promoting the virtuous cycle of cross-strait relations

We have all witnessed our success in stabilizing and improving cross-strait relations. For more than five years now, our government has greatly expanded exchanges across the Taiwan Strait in all areas. Nineteen agreements have been signed under the 1992 Consensus of “one China, respective interpretations,” facilitating direct sea and air links between the two sides, visits by mainland tourists to Taiwan, mutual judicial assistance, and economic cooperation. The latest agreement is a trade in services agreement signed in June this year. The improvement of cross-strait relations has greatly benefited the daily lives of the people and have paved the way for harmony and stability in the Taiwan Strait.

Continuous improvement of cross-strait relations and expansion of Taiwan's international participation

The Republic of China was a founding member of the United Nations in 1945, but lost its representation in 1971 when mainland China acceded to the organization. For many years, we have been denied participation in the meetings and activities of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. Since the 1990s, our government has actively sought to increase its role in the world activities. We now enjoy formal membership in 34 international organizations and observer or other status in 21 others. Since I took office five years ago, we have been able to attend the World Health Assembly, which is the most important occasion of the World Health Organization, join the Government Procurement Agreement, which is an agreement under the World Trade Organization, and attend the Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) as a special guest after a hiatus of 42 years. In October, former Vice

President Vincent Siew attended the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Leaders' Meeting, where he held bilateral meetings with leaders of the economies of APEC, including those of the United States, mainland China, Japan, and other APEC economies. This has increased the opportunity for Taiwan's participation in regional economic integration, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership [agreement] and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

Facing squarely the challenges from regional integration

To implement the strategy of "building up Taiwan while integrating with the Asia Pacific region and deploying worldwide," we have adopted the principle of "making multiple contacts and concluding agreements one by one." This is adhered to during economic cooperation agreement negotiations with major trading partners, so as to assist Taiwanese enterprises in their global deployment. This year alone, we have concluded three such agreements: the Cross-Strait Trade in Services

Agreement in June, the Agreement between New Zealand and Taiwan on Economic Cooperation (ANZTEC) in July, and the Agreement between Singapore and Taiwan on Economic Partnership (ASTEP) in November. For those trade partners who have yet to enter into negotiations with us, including the United States, Japan, and the European Union, Australia, we will start the preparatory work through feasibility studies, first the separate feasibility studies and then joint feasibility studies, and through, in some cases, block-building so that we could reach the final goal through a series of steps. With this flexible and pragmatic approach, we hope to deepen cooperation with those major trading partners in a variety of fields as well.

In addition, the government has officially launched the Free Economic Pilot Zone Plan in order to accelerate Taiwan's economic liberalization. As such, domestic laws and regulations will be reviewed and amended, so as to align them with international standards. At the same time, we will accelerate and

expand the Republic of China's economic liberalization in hopes of leading the Asia Pacific in creating a new order and opening our markets.

Taiwan must now face the combined challenges of economic liberalization at home and regional integration abroad and, in the future, must reposition itself accordingly. On the one hand, we hope to transform Taiwan into a provider of key components and precision equipment in the international supply chains, and create a new model for trade in services. On the other hand, we have to join global competition and attract foreign investment with the aim to expand our commodities and services exports, and make Taiwan a real "free economy island."

My TFCC friends, with the joint efforts of the government and people, the Republic of China's democracy, freedom and prosperous economy have earned high praise throughout the international community. Taiwan also serves as a treasure trove

of Eastern and Western cultures. The people of Taiwan embrace the merits of Western culture, while preserving the wholesomeness and sincerity of traditional Chinese society. We take pride in the warmth of the people of Taiwan, which is highly lauded by visitors from abroad. I believe that all of you have experienced the kindness and warmth of the people of Taiwan during your stay here, and I hope you will make it known to the world through your reports.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation once again for your invitation and, as this year is approaching an end, extend my best wishes to each of you. Thank you.