

Cross-Party Group on Taiwan

27th September 2023 18:45

Minute

Present

MSPs

- **Jamie Greene MSP**
- **Rhoda Grant MSP**
- **Jeremy Balfour MSP**

Non-MSP Group Members

- **Director General Chia-cheng Chang**
- **Penny Ho**
- **Danielle Thomson**
- **Dr Paul Behrens**
- **Hsien-Lin Ro**
- **Ian Irvine**
- **Philip Chan**
- **Robert Mark**
- **Vivi Lin**

Apologies

- **Ian Mckee**
- **Lindesay Low**
- **Martin Bell**

Agenda item 1: Welcome Remarks and Updates

Jamie Greene MSP chaired the AGM meeting, extending a warm welcome to the members and friends of the CPG on Taiwan.

He expresses best regards and gratitude on behalf of the group to **James Dornan MSP**, who has officially stepped down as co-convenor of the group.

Note of gratitude and best regards also extended to **Mindy Chang** for her service as Assistant Director at the Taipei Representative Office in Edinburgh as she transitions from her role.

Welcome remarks from Chia-cheng Chang, the Director General of the Taipei representative Office in the UK Edinburgh Office

1. Acknowledgment of Support:

- Gratitude to the members of the Scottish Parliament who lent their support to the motions put forth by Jamie Greene MSP, ranking Taiwan as the 14th best country for freedom and human rights.
- Jackson Carlaw MSP's support for Taiwan's inclusion in the World Health Organization and World Health Assembly.

2. Bilateral Relations Progress:

- *Historical Medical Ties:*
 - 150 years ago, Scottish-origin missionaries (Dr. James Maxwell, Mr. George MacKay, and Dr. David Landsborough) introduced Western medical knowledge to Taiwan, leading to modern hospitals.
- *Medical Collaboration Highlight:*
 - In August, 200 Taiwanese medical professionals attended the European Medical Education Conference in Glasgow. They shared medical expertise with 4,000 international participants, fostering international collaboration.

3. Edinburgh City Council Leader's Visit:

- **Council Leader Cammy Day** visited Taiwan in March for the Smart Cities Expo. He also called on Tainan City and Kaohsiung City where both cities expressed their strong interests in promoting exchanges and cooperation with Edinburgh City.
- In August, Policy and Sustainability Committee of the City Council agreed to pursue a memorandum of understanding with Edinburgh and Taiwan city partners.

4. Green Energy Cooperation:

- Deputy Minister Minn-tsung Lin led a delegation to Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen in June to explore green energy sector cooperation.

5. Cultural Exchanges:

- In August, five Taiwanese performing organisations participated in the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, deepening cultural exchanges.
- Lord Provost Aldridge delivered welcome remarks at a reception on August 14.

6. Judicial Affairs Exchange:

- Officials from Taiwan's Judicial Yuan visited Edinburgh in early June, exchanging views with counterparts.
- Lord President, Lord Carloway, and Lord Justice Clerk, Lady Dorrian, visited Taiwan, delivering keynote speeches at a Constitutional Law Forum this month.

7. Trade and investment:

- In July, Taiwan and the UK initiated discussions on an enhanced trade partnership, prioritising investments, energy, decarbonisation, and digital trade.
- With the UK set to join the CPTPP, the director envisions the strengthening of economic ties between Taiwan and Scotland through both bilateral and multilateral avenues with Taiwan as an aspiring CPTPP member.
- The recent report from the Taiwan All-Party Parliamentary Group, titled "Outlook for UK-Taiwan Semiconductor Cooperation," underscores Taiwan's crucial role in global technological advancements and its vital contribution to supply chain resilience in the semiconductor industry.

Agenda item 2: Review of year and Election of Office Bearers

Jamie Greene MSP provided an overview of the past year, which included two meetings, covering updates and recent news on Taiwan, as well as a presentation by **Mr Thomas Huang**, and discussions on Taiwan's business prospects and the UK-Taiwan bilateral trade collaborations.

- Co-convenors:
 - **Rhoda Grant MSP and Jamie Greene MSP** were nominated and agreed as co-convenors of the CPG on Taiwan by the group.
- Secretary:
 - **Danielle Thomson** was nominated and agreed as secretary of the CPG on Taiwan.

Agenda item 3: General Discussion

- Suggestion for more focused theme to meetings in subjects such as, but not limited to academia, culture, health, Taiwan-Scotland collaborations or relations.
- Extension of meeting invitations to guests in Taiwan (via hybrid or online format).

Specific ideas/topics of interest

- Exploratory conversation regarding the recognition of Taiwan as an independent nation.
- Menstrual Health Awareness:
 - Recognising the shared objectives of Taiwan and Scotland in menstrual health awareness. Scotland's implementation of the Free Menstrual Product Act and Taiwan's provision of free menstrual products in schools as noteworthy examples.
 - Discussion centred on potential enhancements and the exchange of insights between both nations on this topic.
- Discussions and collaborations with the Scottish Youth Parliament and Taiwanese youth committees, aiming to foster greater youth engagement in public affairs.
- Discussion regarding concerns raised in Westminster regarding Chinese and Mandarin education in the UK and the influence of China on academic freedom and educational institutions within the UK.

Next meeting date to be confirmed