

places a premium on shifting from traditional factory-based production to a paradigm of innovation-driven economic development. Central to this agenda is the swift implementation of initiatives to accelerate digital transformation, foster industrial upgrades, facilitate a net-zero transition and advance the development and application of cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence. This concerted positioning of Taiwan as a smart technology island aims to spearhead a new era of economic prosperity marked by sustainable, inclusive growth.

In alignment with these objectives, Lai has articulated a strategy to strengthen trade ties and fortify Taiwan's role in global supply chains. This entails actively pursuing additional bilateral and multilateral agreements with key trading partners. Furthermore, the government is committed to nurturing emerging industries and supporting startup ventures to cultivate a vibrant innovation ecosystem. This will be achieved through strategic capital investments, initiatives for personnel development and streamlined regulatory frameworks, all while endeavoring to equally distribute the fruits of economic progress throughout society.

In his commitment to fostering an equitable and sustainable society, Lai prioritizes the protection of people's rights and dignity and environmental integrity. This approach means increasing social investment in key areas such as childcare, education, health care, long-term care, skills training, social housing and youth development, while concurrently addressing issues of ethnic, gender and labor equality. By alleviating burdens on families, safeguarding fundamental labor rights and ensuring equal opportunities for all citizens, the administration aims to empower

individuals to pursue their aspirations and realize their full potential.

Climate policy and environmental sustainability remain high on the new government's agenda. Lai has reaffirmed Taiwan's commitment to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 by strengthening public-private partnerships, transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources, expanding development projects and investment in net-zero technologies and implementing carbon pricing mechanisms. The government seeks to promote low-carbon practices across agriculture, architecture, consumer spending, industrial activity and transportation to pave the way for a greener future.

The National Project of Hope serves as a beacon illuminating the path to peace, prosperity and sustainability.

National Project of Hope

A Just and Sustainable Taiwan



Equitable society:

Promote labor rights, achieve gender equality and expand socially responsible investment in areas including childcare, long-term care and housing rights to facilitate social justice

Environmental sustainability:

Maintain stable power supply, maximize energy generated by renewables, implement low-carbon transitions in all aspects of life, and ensure all sectors of society have equal access to opportunities during the transition to reach Taiwan's goal of attaining net-zero emissions by 2050

Source: DPP

It encapsulates the shared aspirations of Taiwan's people and underscores the country's role as a force for good. "More than just military and economic power, peace is also reliant on Taiwan being an indispensable member of the international community," Lai said at a diplomatic reception last October. "Looking forward, we'll fully embrace the Taiwan Can Help spirit to contribute more in areas ranging from agriculture, infrastructure and public health to humanitarian assistance while strengthening partnerships with our diplomatic allies and other like-minded countries on sustainable projects in support of national development and economic growth."  

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A New Phase

President Lai Ching-te has mapped out plans for a democratic, prosperous and sustainable future.

On January 13, the people of Taiwan elected Lai Ching-te (賴清德) of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) to serve as their next president. The election garnered widespread international attention and congratulations from over 100 countries. Marking a milestone in Taiwan's democratic development, Lai's presidency will be the first time the same political party has held the office for three consecutive terms since Taiwan began direct presidential elections in 1996. He is also the first vice president to be elected as president.

In his victory speech at the post-election press conference, Lai thanked Taiwan's people for writing a new chapter in the country's history and demonstrating to the world how strongly they cherish democratic values. "We're telling the international community that we stand firmly on the side of democracy," he said. "The Republic of China [Taiwan] will continue to walk side by side with fellow democracies across the globe." The

voters' choice in the face of Chinese coercion reflects the staunch national belief that only Taiwan's citizens have the right to choose their leaders. Lai also thanked former President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) for her unfaltering efforts over the past eight years to establish a solid foundation for the country's continued development, vowing that he and Vice President Hsiao Bi-khim (蕭美琴) would work hard to lead Taiwan onward and steadily boost the people's welfare.

Upward Trajectory

Lai was born in 1959 to a mining family in northern Taiwan. Despite facing early hardships, including the loss of his father during infancy, his mother's unwavering determination to provide for the family left a lasting impression on him. He internalized her message: "Anything is possible, even with limited resources. As long

as you believe in yourself, there is a path to overcome adversity."

He attended National Taiwan University's Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, after which he completed the Post-Bachelor Program in Medical Science at National Cheng Kung University. His academic pursuits continued with a Master of Public Health from Harvard University, distinguishing him as one of the few physicians in Taiwan with rehabilitation, clinical care and public health expertise.

During the 1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis, Lai gave up his medical career to enter politics. He was elected to the National Assembly to represent Tainan City and successfully readjusted the structure of Taiwan's government through constitutional amendments.

Lai was elected to the Legislative Yuan in 1998 as representative of

Tainan. Leveraging his medical expertise, he played a critical role in the Social Welfare and Environmental Hygiene Committee while addressing over 100,000 local cases. Lai placed equal emphasis on professional governance and solid service, and Tainan residents showed their appreciation by electing him to the legislature for four consecutive terms through 2010.

During his legislative tenure, Lai was designated as the DPP caucus whip and named Best Legislator by Citizen Congress Watch. He frequently led delegations abroad to conduct parliamentary diplomacy and promoted the inclusion of Taiwan in the World Health Organization. In 2004, Lai participated in the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program.

In 2010, Lai was elected as the first mayor of the newly formed Tainan Special Municipality, a merger of the

former Tainan City and County, building a reputation for integrity, industriousness and efficacy. Running for reelection in 2014, he garnered 72.9 percent of the vote, the highest percentage won by any city or county head since the lifting of martial law in 1987. Lai received five-star public approval ratings multiple times as mayor. He actively promoted city diplomacy and twice visited Washington, D.C., where he gave keynote speeches at well-known think tanks.

Lai proceeded to serve as the premier from 2017 to 2019, diligently executing Tsai's seven missions. Under his pragmatic and results-driven leadership, the Cabinet implemented policies that raised wages, lowered taxes and enhanced the investment climate. Furthermore, his tenure witnessed notable progress on his vision of ensuring peaceful livelihoods and employment security, promoting sustainability and facilitating balanced development throughout Taiwan.

In November 2019, Lai accepted Tsai's invitation to be her running mate in the 15th presidential election, which he helped win with a record 8.17 million votes and a continued DPP legislative majority. Lai was officially sworn in as vice president in May 2020. He was named DPP chair in January 2023, was announced as the DPP candidate for Taiwan's 16th presidential election the following April and was successfully elected in January 2024.

When he takes office May 20, Lai assumes the responsibility of ensuring stability in the Taiwan Strait. He has promised to improve the well-being of people on both sides of the strait and preserve the interests of the international community. He has laid out a three-pronged national development blueprint entitled the National Project of Hope to achieve enduring

National Project of Hope

A Democratic and Peaceful Taiwan

Four commitments to maintain the cross-strait status quo:

- The commitment to a free and democratic constitutional system
- The commitment that the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the People's Republic of China should not be subordinate to each other
- The commitment to resist encroachment upon the Republic of China's (Taiwan) sovereignty
- The commitment that the future of the Republic of China (Taiwan) must be decided in accordance with the will of the Taiwanese people

Four pillars to safeguard regional peace:

- Enhance Taiwan's self-defense capabilities
- Strengthen economic resilience
- Deepen partnerships with other democracies
- Maintain steady and principled cross-strait policies

Source: Democratic Progressive Party

National Project of Hope

An Innovative and Prosperous Taiwan

Innovation-driven economic growth:

Invest in future generations and promote industrial, technological and entrepreneurial innovation, transforming Taiwan into a vibrant hub for entrepreneurship and employment

Inclusive economic growth:

Develop major industries and businesses, bolster rural revitalization and support hidden champions to create diverse job opportunities and foster shared economic prosperity

New strategy for green growth:

Expand renewable energy research and development, leverage Taiwan's strengths in information and communications technology, and capitalize on energy saving, energy storage and net-zero technologies to initiate a second energy transition

Source: DPP

democratic peace, innovation-driven prosperity and just sustainability.

Three Axes

Preserving Taiwan's democratic way of life is Lai's top priority. To lessen regional uncertainty, Lai advocates a pragmatic approach to cross-strait relations, pledging to maintain the status quo while fostering dialogue and exchanges with China on the basis of dignity and equality.

In the face of Beijing's military threat and economic coercion, the president has also vowed to continue bolstering Taiwan's self-defense and the operational efficiency of the armed forces. Under Tsai's leadership, Taiwan

increased its defense budget, reformed conscription and reserve systems and upgraded military training. Lai plans to further accelerate crucial reforms, particularly of asymmetrical combat and civil defense capabilities, to ensure the security of Taiwan's 23 million people.

The new administration's strategy to maintain peace extends beyond the Taiwan Strait. The president has promised to continue working with like-minded partners to defend the shared values of democracy, human rights and rules-based order.

Recognizing the inseparable link between economic security and national stability, the new administration