

It is the time to 'Light Up Taiwan'

Written by Taipei Times Editorial
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Since the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 2758 on Oct. 25, 1971, recognizing the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of China and expelling "the representatives of Chiang Kai-shek (蔣介石)" from the place which they unlawfully occupy at the United Nations and in all the organizations related to it," Taiwan has been isolated from the international community and subjected to unfair treatment.

Following Beijing's posturing that has repeatedly forced the issue of treating Taiwan as part of its territory, the vast majority of the international community has chosen to kowtow to China by denying Taiwan's existence as a political entity, despite it having achieved all the rights of a full-fledged democracy. As a result, Taiwan has been constantly rejected at the doormat of international organizations, with its sovereignty belittled and its dignity trampled upon.

The list of ill-treatment is beyond impervious to reason, from Taiwanese being banned from entering the UN's headquarters in New York and Taiwanese delegations being forced to leave meetings of international bodies, to the frustration of Taiwanese athletes who cannot compete with pride and honor for Taiwan, but must participate under the meaningless and absurd national title "Chinese Taipei."

Despite all the unfairness and the majority of the international community having for decades chosen to look the other way, rather than stand up to China's bullying and address the injustice facing Taiwan, groups of talented Taiwanese have been quietly and diligently making the nation proud, effectively promoting Taiwan's many sides to the world, despite Beijing's incessant efforts to squeeze Taiwan off the world stage.

Among these are world No. 1 badminton player Tai Tzu-ying (戴資穎), who on Sunday claimed the Badminton World Federation's Dubai World Superseries women's singles title, her second victory in the world series; three-time Oscar-winning director Ang Lee (李安); violinist Tseng Yu-chien (曾毓謙), who last year won a silver medal in the prestigious International Tchaikovsky Competition and was in effect the top winner, as there was no candidate nominated for gold; and Kuo Chih-ling (郭智玲), a top-prize winner in the 2011 Asia-Pacific Bartender of the Year Cocktail Competition.

Other achievements include Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co securing its place as the world's largest contract chipmaker and the Chungshan Institute of Science and Technology's

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contribution of an uncrewed lunar lander to NASA’s Resource Prospector mission.

Granted, such successes are the result of hard work by individuals, which the government cannot take credit for. However, the government’s efforts have built Taiwan into the world’s 17th-largest trading nation, while dutifully fulfilling the nation’s role as a global citizen through efforts such as combating international crime and leading Taiwan’s emergence as a major contributor of humanitarian aid. Taiwanese and their government have collectively helped polish Taiwan’s name on the international stage.

Following a historic telephone conversation between President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) and US president-elect Donald Trump earlier this month, Taiwan’s global visibility has been greatly enhanced, as evidenced by a dramatic spike in Google searches for “Taiwan,” along with expansive coverage of the nation by various international media outlets.

During her presidential election campaign, Tsai employed the slogan “Light Up Taiwan” — now is the time. It is important for the government to use its voice to let the world know the nation’s plight. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs should seize this opportunity to launch international campaigns to highlight Taiwan’s achievements, as well as its predicaments, because any sort of silence or passivity would be exactly what China is counting on in its pursuit of unification.

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