Tsai decries comparison of cross-strait ties with Paris

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Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) presidential candidate Tsai Ing-wen, left, claps hands during a rally marking the opening of a joint campaign office for DPP Legislator Chen Ou-po and herself in Yilan County yesterday.

Photo: CNA

Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) presidential candidate Tsai Ing-wen ([]]]) yesterday panned Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) Legislator Lu Shiow-yen ([]]]) for comparing cross-strait relations with France and Syria.

Tsai was all smiles onstage at a rally in Yilan as she campaigned for DPP Legislator Chen Ou-po (000), who is running for re-election.

Off the stage, Tsai turned serious when asked by journalists to comment on Lu's comparison of cross-strait relations to the unrest in Syria and terror attacks in Paris on Friday night.

"In the past, I have always held a neutral view about Lu, but what she said this time was really inappropriate. It is very inappropriate to use a regrettable tragedy abroad as part of an election campaign. It also shows that the KMT lacks the virtue of a political party in a democratic society," Tsai said, referring to a speech that Lu delivered on Friday at a rally to mark the inauguration of KMT legislative candidate Shen Chih-hwei's (DDD) campaign headquarters in Taichung.

Lu asked supporters to "look at France, and look at Syria" and then think whether they wanted peace across the Taiwan Strait.

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"If you want peace across the Taiwan Strait, then you must vote for the KMT and vote for KMT presidential candidate Eric Chu ([]]])," Lu said.

In response to questions, Tsai also said that she has also been disappointed by Chu's actions during his visit in the US, including his criticism at the Brookings Institution in Washington of Tsai's cross-strait policy platform, which he said was empty and unrealistic.

"I thought that Chu was visiting the US to strengthen bilateral relations between Taiwan and the US, but now it is more like he is extending his campaign to the US," she said.

Tsai said she had expected Chu to deliver a message about the nation's values and the shared interests of all Taiwanese to gain more support from the US for Taiwan.

However, he only took bipartisan politics and his own party's viewpoints to the US, which was regrettable, she said.

As for Chu's comments that the so-called "1992 consensus" is the basis for cross-strait exchanges, and that stable development of cross-strait relations might be endangered without it, Tsai said that Chu should stop "playing the threat card."

The 1992 consensus refers to a tacit understanding between the KMT and the Chinese government that both sides of the Strait acknowledge there is "one China," with each side having its own interpretation of what "China" means. Mainland Affairs Council chairman Su Chi (00) admitted in 2006 that he had made up the term in 2000.

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