

The American Institute in Taiwan’s (AIT) Washington Office managing director John Norris on Saturday said that he expects Taiwan-US relations to advance during US President Donald Trump’s tenure as stability across the Taiwan Strait remains a core interest to the US.

Speaking at an annual meeting with overseas Taiwanese in Washington, Norris said the US will continue to commit to the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), the US legislation governing relations with Taiwan.

The Asia-Pacific region is of interest to the US and peaceful development across the Taiwan Strait benefits the US, he said.

Although there could be different approaches to maintaining US interests in the area under different administrations, the TRA will remain the top principle when handling related affairs, he said.

The TRA was enacted in 1979 to maintain commercial, cultural and other unofficial relations between Taiwan and the US after Washington switched diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing. The TRA also requires the US “to provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character.”

Taiwan’s representative to the US Stanley Kao (高志彬), who also attended the meeting, said he is optimistic about Taiwan-US relations under the Trump administration.

Stephen Yates, an adviser to Trump’s transition team and a deputy national security adviser to then-US vice president Dick Cheney from 2001 to 2005, said he believes there will be many new opportunities for cooperation this year for both Taiwan-US relations and US-China relations.

In a separate event on Saturday, former premier Yu Shyi-kun (吳敦義) said that the Trump administration poses more of an opportunity than a challenge for Taiwan, adding that the nation should take the opportunity to improve relations with the US.

## **‘Taiwan-US ties to advance under Trump’**

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Yu made the remark in New York after concluding a visit to the US at the head of a Taiwanese delegation attending Trump’s inauguration ceremony in Washington.

He said that in addition to extending congratulations to Trump, the delegation visited think tanks and the Washington-based AIT, and met with members of the US Senate and House of Representatives to allow them to understand Taiwan’s ideas and sincerity regarding the development of bilateral relations.

Yu said in his meetings with US representatives that he hopes to further Taiwan-US economic and trade cooperation, joint efforts toward peace in the Asia-Pacific region and US support for Taiwan’s international participation.

He also told the representatives that Taiwan understands the importance Trump attaches to the US economy and his “America first” policy, as well as his questioning of Beijing’s “one China” principle, he said.

Yu said he made it clear that Taiwan wants to sign a free-trade agreement with the US to consolidate bilateral economic and trade relations.

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