

## Taiwan-US relations smooth and strong, envoy says

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Representative to the US Stanley Kao talks to reporters during attending a Lunar New Year parade in Washington's Chinatown on Sunday.

**Photo: CNA**

Communications between Taiwan and the US remain smooth and bilateral relations strong, despite a US official's comment that the US does not recognize the Republic of China (ROC) as a nation, Representative to the US Stanley Kao (高志彬) said on Sunday.

Kao said the ROC's status as an independent, sovereign state is a fact and the "status quo."

"Communications between Taiwan and the US over the matter have been smooth as we have expressed our stance and they clearly understand it," he said.

The government will continue to defend the nation's democratic values and way of life, Kao added.

He was responding to a comment by Susan Thornton reiterating Washington's stance of recognizing the People's Republic of China instead of the ROC.

At her confirmation hearing in the US Senate for the post of assistant secretary for East Asia and the Pacific, Thornton was asked by US Senator Marco Rubio about the recent removal of the ROC national flag from a US Department of State Web site.

Thornton said the flag was removed because the US does not recognize Taiwan as an

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independent country.

“Our policy is to not display the flag of the ROC on US official government Web sites,” she said.

While reaffirming Taiwan’s sovereignty, Kao said the two sides should move beyond the issue and look further into the future.

Taiwan-US ties have progressed significantly based on the US’ Taiwan Relations Act and the “six assurances,” Kao said, expressing confidence that bilateral relations would only grow stronger.

Kao was speaking on the sidelines of a Lunar New Year celebration in Washington’s Chinatown.

Washington Mayor Muriel Bowser and Laura Stone, acting US deputy assistant secretary for the Department of State’s China, Mongolia and Taiwan Coordination, were also present at the event.

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