



Czech senate president Milos Vystrcil, left, receives a certificate for an award before delivering a speech at the main chamber of the Legislative Yuan in Taipei yesterday.

Photo: REUTERS

Czech Senate President Milos Vystrcil yesterday said that he is “Taiwanese,” as Taiwan and the Czech Republic share the common goal of defending democratic values.

Speaking at the Legislative Yuan in Taipei, Vystrcil began his speech by comparing the differences between the Czech and Taiwanese parliaments, with the former bicameral and the latter unicameral.

Although this would inevitably raise the question of which system works better, he said he believes there is not a single system that would be the best or would suit all nations, as countries in a free and democratic world have different criteria for functional democracy.

However, all legislative bodies in functional democratic systems uphold human life as the highest value, he added.

Laws are not passed to dictate what people should think or do, or to limit their natural desire for freedom, but to protect and care for them, and guarantee their basic rights and freedoms, Vystrcil said.

There is no perfect piece of legislation, as each law is merely an imperfect description of how lawmakers believe society should ideally function, he said.

As every law is bound to be imperfect, the fundamental role of democratic principles or the definition of the fundamental values and respect for such values is in the spotlight again, Vystrcil said.

As such, he believes that the legislative bodies of democratic nations not only have a responsibility to pass legislation, but also to defend democratic principles, he said.

Vystrcil said he is convinced that it is the duty and obligation of every democrat to support anyone who defends democratic institutions and who often establish democracy in difficult conditions.

He is therefore glad that he was able to visit the Legislative Yuan within the framework of parliamentary diplomacy to share experience and expand mutual cooperation, he said.

In 1963, then-US president John F. Kennedy, in criticizing communism, said: "Freedom is indivisible, and when one man is enslaved, all are not free," Vystrcil said.

Just as Kennedy supported West Berlin's pursuit of freedom by proclaiming "Ich bin ein Berliner," Vystrcil said that he would also like to express his support for Taiwan and freedom with a more humble, but equally strong statement.

"I am Taiwanese," he said in Mandarin.

Vystrcil said he wished Taiwan an independent, true and just future.

His statement that he is Taiwanese won him a standing ovation from lawmakers across party lines.

Asked by reporters about a remark on Monday by Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi (王毅) that the Czech Republic would "pay" for sending a delegation to Taiwan, Vystrcil said that the visit does not go against Beijing's "one China" principle.

‘I am Taiwanese’: Czech Senate head

Written by Taipei Times

Wednesday, 02 September 2020 04:05 -

He added that the Czech Republic has its “own interpretation” of that policy.

The Czech delegation is visiting Taiwan to consolidate partnership, reiterate the independent status of the Czech Republic and assert that it “would not follow the orders of non-democratic nations,” and would engage in exchanges with democratic nations with shared values, he said.

Prior to delivering his speech, Vystřil was awarded the Legislative Yuan’s grand medal of diplomatic excellence and a model speaker’s gavel by Legislative Speaker You Si-kun (游錫堃).

In a statement, You lauded Vystřil’s visit in the face of the Chinese Communist Party’s “wolf-warrior diplomacy” as the manifestation of the traditional defiant spirit of Czechs that have been evident in the Defenestrations of Prague, the Prague Spring and the Velvet Revolution.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2020/09/02](#)