

'Taiwanese' office to open in Lithuania

Written by Taipei Times

Wednesday, 21 July 2021 04:11 -



Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Gabrielius Landsbergis speaks at a news conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, on June 4.

Photo: Reuters

Taiwan is to establish a “Taiwanese Representative Office in Lithuania,” the first office in Europe to be called Taiwanese, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced yesterday.

“It is an important diplomatic breakthrough,” President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) wrote on Facebook, thanking diplomatic personnel for the significant achievement.

To expand the nation’s relations with central and eastern Europe, especially with Baltic nations, the government decided to establish the office in Vilnius, Minister of Foreign Affairs Joseph Wu (吳敦義) told an online news conference.

The plan signals progress in Taiwan-Europe relations, as it has been 18 years since the nation last opened an office on the continent, the Taipei Representative Office in Bratislava, Slovakia, Wu said.

Taiwan and Lithuania are both situated on the front lines of defending democracy and freedom, he said.

A member of the EU and NATO, Lithuania is known for its strength in lasers, biotechnology, satellites and information technology, as well as agriculture and furniture, Wu said.

When the Taiwan Representative Office in the Republic of Somaliland opened last year, it was the first to use the name “Taiwan,” he said.

‘Taiwanese’ office to open in Lithuania

Written by Taipei Times

Wednesday, 21 July 2021 04:11 -

The planned office in Vilnius would be the first in Europe that is called “Taiwanese,” a nomenclature similar to the names of the British Office Taipei, the French Office in Taipei, the German Institute Taipei and the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT), he added.

The nation’s representative offices in countries without formal relations mostly use the word “Taipei,” such as the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the US. Embassies in nations with formal ties use “Republic of China.”

The ministry is seeking a suitable location for the planned office, Wu said when asked about the inauguration date.

“Freedom-loving people should look out for each other,” he said, quoting Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Gabrielius Landsbergis, who on June 22 confirmed that his government planned to donate 20,000 doses of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine to Taiwan.

Lithuania plans to establish a trade office in Taiwan by the end of this year.

Following the news conference, the AIT issued a statement backing the plan to establish the office in Lithuania.

“All countries should be free to pursue closer ties and greater cooperation with Taiwan, a leading democracy, a major economy, and a force for good in the world,” the AIT said. “The United States remains committed to supporting Taiwan in a manner consistent with the US ‘one China’ policy as Taiwan strengthens its international partnerships and works to address global challenges, including COVID-19, investment screening, and supply chain resilience.”

The Taipei Mission in the Republic of Latvia is currently responsible for promoting relations with Baltic nations, including Lithuania and Estonia.

A video released by the mission yesterday showed Representative to Latvia Eric Huang (黃瑞雄)

‘Taiwanese’ office to open in Lithuania

Written by Taipei Times

Wednesday, 21 July 2021 04:11 -

meeting Matas Maldeikis, chairman of the Lithuanian Parliamentary Group for Relations with Taiwan, in front of Vilnius Cathedral, making a toast with Taiwanese bubble tea purchased at a local shop.

Taiwan and Lithuania share many parallels in history and geopolitics, and the office's establishment would open a new chapter of bilateral economic cooperation and send a clear message that democracies must cooperate in the current geopolitical turbulence, Maldeikis said in the video.

Taiwan maintains formal diplomatic relations with 15 allies, with the Vatican being the only one in Europe.

Since taking office in May 2016, Tsai's administration has lost seven diplomatic allies.

Taiwan last year opened the office in Somaliland and the Taipei Representative Office in France's new branch in Aix-en-Provence. It also resumed operations at the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Guam after a hiatus of three years.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2021/07/21](#)