

Tuvalu vows to ‘stand firm’ with Taiwan: Natano

Written by Taipei Times

Tuesday, 06 September 2022 04:49 -



President Tsai Ing-wen, front left, and Tuvaluan Prime Minister Kausea Natano, front center, review an honor guard during a welcoming ceremony outside the Presidential Office Building in Taipei yesterday.

Photo: CNA

Visiting Tuvaluan Prime Minister Kausea Natano yesterday said his country would “stand firm to remain a lasting and loyal ally” of Taiwan.

Natano made the pledge at a ceremony in Taipei marking his first visit to Taiwan as prime minister since taking office in 2019.

At a military ceremony hosted by President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) in front of the Presidential Office Building, Natano said his visit was a “testament of our shared and genuine commitment to our long-standing friendship forged since 1979,” when the two nations established diplomatic relations.

“These 43 years ... will be a lasting, genuine, enduring partnership between us,” he said.

In times of uncertainty, his country continues to “stand firm in our commitment to remain a lasting and loyal ally of the ROC,” Natano said, using Taiwan’s official name, the Republic of China.

The cornerstone of bilateral ties is the shared principles of democracy, trust, human rights and individual freedoms, he said.



Honor guards fire a 21-gun salute in front of the Presidential Office Building in Taipei yesterday to welcome visiting Tuvaluan Prime Minister Kausea Natano.

Photo: Fang Pin-chao, Taipei Times

Natano also thanked Taiwan for the support it offered to his country over the past decades.

Tsai thanked Natano for the support Tuvalu has shown Taiwan on the international stage and for its “invaluable friendship.”

The two sides would exchange views on international development and issues of mutual interests during the visit, and discuss ways to further enhance ties, Tsai said.

During the military ceremony, Natano and a delegation of Tuvaluan officials were greeted with a 21-gun salute, followed by the playing of the national anthems of both countries.

Tsai and Natano then observed a parade of honor guards and military bands.

In the afternoon, Natano and Minister of Foreign Affairs Joseph Wu (吳德昇) signed a joint communique to reaffirm diplomatic relations ahead of the 43rd anniversary of the establishment of bilateral ties later this month.

The delegation would also sign two agreements on police and coast guard cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior and the Ocean Affairs Council respectively, as well as a memorandum of understanding with Kaohsiung-based National Sun Yat-sen University on education and maritime research, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said.

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The delegation arrived on Saturday and is to depart on Friday.

Tuvalu is one of 14 UN member states that have diplomatic ties with Taiwan.

Taipei lost two Pacific allies to Beijing in 2019: the Solomon Islands and Kiribati.

Nauru, Palau and the Marshall Islands have remained with Taipei.

Additional reporting by Reuters

Source: [Taipei Times - 2022/09/06](#)