

Lithuania is expecting more cooperation with Taiwan on defense, security and the economy after fruitful discussions during a visit to the nation, a visiting Lithuanian delegation told a news conference yesterday.

The nine-member parliamentary delegation from the National Security and Defense Committee arrived in Taiwan on Monday for a six-day visit.

Sending a cross-party delegation to Taiwan shows “quite a strong consensus in Lithuania on our relations with Taiwan,” committee head Laurynas Kasciunas told reporters at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Taipei.



From left, former Lithuanian minister of foreign affairs Audronius Azubalis, Lithuanian Parliament Committee on National Security and Defense Chairman Laurynas Kasciunas, Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokeswoman Joanne Ou and Lithuanian Parliamentary Group for Relations with Taiwan Vice Chair Dovile Sakaliene attend a news conference in Taipei yesterday.

Photo: Fang Pin-chao, Taipei Times

On her second visit to Taiwan, Dovile Sakaliene, vice chair of the Lithuanian Parliamentary Group for Relations with Taiwan, said that ties between Lithuania and Taiwan are “developing quite quickly and in the right direction.”

Former Lithuanian minister of foreign affairs Audronius Azubalis said that compared with his first visit to Taiwan 25 years ago, “I see tremendous progress in your country.”

The sustainability of relations between the two nations is important in the fields of defense and security, Lithuanian lawmaker Eugenijus Sabutis said.



Spanish lawmaker Rosa Romero Sanchez, center left, Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokeswoman Joanne Ou, center right, and other members of a Spanish delegation attend a news conference in Taipei yesterday.

Photo: Tu Chien-jung, Taipei Times

Lithuania and Taiwan are facing the same problems posed by aggressive neighbors, so have many common issues to share, Lithuanian lawmaker Edita Rudeliene said.

Despite the distance between the two nations, “we are bridged together by common values,” Lithuanian lawmaker Ieva Pakarklyte said.

The main purpose of the visit is to discuss topics related to defense and security, Kasciunas said.

Commenting on Taiwan’s plan to reinstate one year of mandatory military service next year, he said: “It is very, very wise.”

After exchanging ideas and plans with Taiwan, the two sides can foresee cooperation in many areas, including cybersecurity and combating disinformation and propaganda, Sakaliene said.

Lithuania ties moving 'in right direction': delegation

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A group of Lithuanian companies would likely sign a major economic cooperation pact with Taiwanese companies next week, Pakarklyte said.

Speaking of the changes brought by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Sakaliene said that Lithuania, Taiwan and Ukraine are "icebreakers in changing the mentality that is old and outdated" to help the world realize that "by withdrawing, we only incite the aggressor to attack,"

"Taiwan's help to Ukraine also helps Taiwan," as it provides European nations with more motivation to help Taiwan, she added.

Separately yesterday, Spanish lawmaker Rosa Romero Sanchez said that Spain's Congress of Deputies opposes any unilateral action to alter the "status quo" in the Taiwan Strait.

Romero Sanchez, president of the Spanish lower house's Health and Consumer Commission, made the comment at a news conference, adding that China and Taiwan should engage in constructive dialogue.

She said that the Spanish lower house issued a statement on Oct. 6 last year to express its concerns over tensions in the Taiwan Strait.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that it was the first time since the severing of diplomatic relations that a Spanish legislative branch had issued a statement in support of Taiwan.

Romero Sanchez said that she and her delegation are visiting Taiwan to explore opportunities to deepen bilateral ties.

Romero Sanchez arrived in Taiwan on Tuesday for a five-day visit with a delegation that also includes Spanish lawmakers Jaime de Olano, Ricardo Tarno Blanco, Jose Angel Alonso and Juan Diego Requena.

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Unlike the German, Lithuanian and Tuvaluan parliamentary groups that have visited Taiwan over the past week, the Spanish delegation was not scheduled to meet with President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) or Premier Su Tseng-chang (蘇貞昌).

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