



**CALD Taiwan Presidential Election Observation Mission
8 – 12 January 2020
Taipei and Hualien, Taiwan
&
CALD Executive Mission to Hong Kong
12-14 January 2020
Hong Kong**

Concept Note

On 11 January 2020, close to 20 million registered voters are eligible to take part in Taiwan's presidential and parliamentary elections. The elections are portrayed as the most important electoral exercise in nearly a quarter century, primarily because what is at stake could be Taiwan's democratic existence and way of life.

China appears to be bent on stopping the re-election of incumbent President Tsai Ing-wen of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), and is supportive of the candidacy of Koumintang's (KMT) Han Kuo-yu. The two presidential hopefuls hold divergent views over relations with Beijing, with the former declaring that, "Our Republic of China, Taiwan, is a country, a sovereign, independent country. Our people have the right to choose their own president."

Recent surveys suggest that President Tsai is leading Han by over 16 percentage points, following her announcement of William Lai as running mate last 17 November. Lai, a former premier, angered Beijing when he described himself as a "Taiwan independence worker" and that he believed Taiwan is a sovereign, independent country. There are claims that the ticket of Tsai-Lai has been boosted by the events of the past months in Hong Kong, which demonstrated the dangers of the so-called "one country, two systems."

While the DPP has a comfortable lead, so far, in the presidential race, the parliamentary elections appear to be more difficult. The Legislative Yuan (LY) has 113 seats: 73 district election seats, 34 proportional representation seats, and 6 seats reserved for indigenous Taiwanese. DPP currently has the majority in the LY with 68 seats, but various analyses suggest that it may be a struggle for the party to retain the majority. Even if Tsai wins the presidency, her ability to push for policy would be severely limited if the DPP loses the LY.

Taking into account the importance of the upcoming Taiwan presidential and parliamentary elections not only to the future of Taiwan but also to democratic prospects in the Asian region, the Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats (CALD), in cooperation with the DPP and with the support of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF), is organizing an election observation mission to Taipei and Hualien, Taiwan on 8-12 January 2020.

The election mission participants are also invited to take part in an executive mission to Hong Kong, which happens subsequent to the Taiwan election mission on 12-14 January. Those who will participate are expected to take a direct flight on 12 January from Taipei to Hong Kong. In Hong Kong, they are expected to meet with the members of the pan-democracy camp (legislators, district councilors, political party and civil society leaders, students, among others) in order to better understand the political crisis that has been gripping the territory in the past months. It will also be an opportunity for the participants to discuss with Hong Kong counterparts the implications of the Taiwan elections.

More specifically, the Taiwan election mission and Hong Kong executive mission aim to achieve the following specific objectives:

- To provide the participants with a general understanding and appreciation of the Taiwanese democratic system, electoral framework and political party dynamics;
- To comprehend the main issues and problems that define the campaign platform and strategies of major political parties and candidates in the 2020 elections;
- To understand the strength and weaknesses of the leading political parties and candidates, as well as their approaches to maximize their chances of electoral victory;
- To observe and analyze the voting process and vote tabulation and how these meet the standards of free and fair elections;
- To show liberal solidarity with CALD founding member-party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), as it contests crucial elections;
- To hold dialogues with various members of the pan-democratic camp in Hong Kong to better understand the issues that led to months-long protests in the territory; and
- To demonstrate liberal solidarity with Hong Kong's pan-democratic camp as they continue their fight for more democratic Hong Kong.

Project Goal: Through these missions in Taiwan and Hong Kong, CALD hopes to contribute to the development and communication of liberal solutions to electoral and political issues, particularly in the context of more aggressive China. The participants are expected to come up with media articles, policy papers, resolutions

and other related materials that summarize their key learnings or take-aways from the missions. Copies of the materials should be sent to the CALD Secretariat two (2) weeks after the events for recording and documentation.

CALD Executive Mission to Hong Kong

12-14 January 2020 | Hong Kong

Note: Please bring our passport to enter the Legislative Council Complex

12 January 2020, Sunday

12:05 Arrival and Hotel Check-in

Holiday Inn Express Hotel Hong Kong Soho

Address: 83 Jervois Street Sheung Wan, Hong Kong Central

Phone: +852 3417-8888

13:30 Lunch

Legislative Council Complex, Room 502

Address: 1 Legislative Council Rd, Central, Hong Kong

15:00 Meetings with pan-democrat legislators

Legislative Council Complex, Room 502

Address: 1 Legislative Council Rd, Central, Hong Kong

19:00 Welcome Dinner

21:00 End of Dinner

13 January 2020, Monday

08:00 Breakfast

10:00 Student forum and meeting with student leaders

Legislative Council Complex, Room 502

Address: 1 Legislative Council Rd, Central, Hong Kong

12:00 Lunch

Victoria City Restaurant

5/F Citic Tower, 1 Tim Mei Avenue, Admiralty

- 14:00 Meetings with Civic Party (CP)
- Legislative Council Complex, Room 506**
Address: 1 Legislative Council Rd, Central, Hong Kong
- 17:00 Debriefing session
- Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF)**
Global Innovation Hub, WeWork Room 13A
Address: 10/F YF Life Tower, 33 Lockhart Road
Wan Chai, Hong Kong Island, Hong Kong S.A.R., China
- 19:00 Farewell Dinner
- Kin's Kitchen**
5/F W Square, 314-324 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai
- 21:00 Return to Hotel

14 January 2020, Tuesday

- 08:00 Breakfast
- Variable Departure