

Forward



In 2006, I succeeded Dr. Tan Sun Chen in the mission of carrying out Taiwan's diplomatic work as Minister of Foreign Affairs. At the same time, it is my honor to have the opportunity to work with the TaiwanICDF in participating in and aiding the development of nations around the world through international cooperation.

The year 2005 was crucial for Taiwan in terms of international cooperation and development work. The G8 nations agreed to a US\$40 billion debt relief for 18 heavily indebted poor countries and the United Nations also issued a five-year review of its Millennium Development Goals. Meanwhile, reconstruction work in tsunami-ravaged South Asia gained momentum. Also, Hurricane Katrina devastated portions of the southern United States and the possible widespread outbreak of avian influenza put the world on alert. All of these events indicated how closely linked the

international community has become and how inter-reliant countries across the globe now are. As a responsible member of the international community, Taiwan seeks to play an active role in global development through international cooperation. It is committed to sharing the "Taiwan Experience" with developing nations to enable them to become self-sufficient.

The TaiwanICDF is dedicated to carrying out Taiwan's international cooperation and development work. The data and information published in this annual report clearly illustrate the nation's efforts and accomplishments in assisting international development over the past year.

Taiwan has been involved in foreign assistance for close to fifty years. In 1959, Taiwan sent its first technical mission overseas to assist Vietnam with agricultural development. This marked the beginning of Taiwan's transition from a state receiving foreign aid to one capable of offering it. It also demonstrated an excellent model for international cooperation. In light of changing global trends, and Taiwan's own economic transformation and increasing economic prowess, the nation's international cooperation has expanded into a variety of areas, including agriculture, fisheries, animal husbandry, health, industry and commerce, trade and information technology. Taiwan has accumulated abundant experience over the past half century and has developed a tradition of sharing this experience through international assistance.

As Taiwan's premier institution for development assistance, the TaiwanICDF's mission is to broaden Taiwan's presence in international affairs through international cooperation. This is in Taiwan's own national interest and at the same time promotes global cooperation and development. This work not only establishes and strengthens ties with members of the international community, but also realizes President Chen Shui-bian's notion that just as the world came to Taiwan before, Taiwan must reach out and open its doors to the world. International development work enables Taiwan to accomplish the ideal of "cooperating to achieve joint prosperity." Taiwan celebrated its 45th anniversary of overseas technical assistance in 2005 and the TaiwanICDF held a series of activities to mark its achievements. Many people who have been affiliated with the TaiwanICDF over the decades joined in the events, enabling the public to better appreciate Taiwan's efforts toward foreign assistance.

International cooperation and development is complicated work that combines technical expertise and humanitarian concerns. Under the successful stewardship of my predecessors, the TaiwanICDF has integrated capital,

professional human resources and technology. Moreover, it has focused on four core programs: banking and finance, technical cooperation, international human resource development and humanitarian assistance. All of these programs assist developing nations in gaining the ability to become self-reliant.

The TaiwanICDF tailors its work to the needs and circumstances of partner nations. Moreover, TaiwanICDF's assistance and development work have enabled it to build a wealth of experience in international cooperation and relations. It works closely to strengthen its relationship with government agencies, non-profit organizations and corporate partners. In the future, it will endeavor to serve as a platform from which Taiwan can integrate its international cooperation and foreign assistance. The goal is to enable every project to meet the actual needs of each cooperative nation and assist in global efforts to reduce poverty and foster prosperity.

Furthermore, the TaiwanICDF has been instrumental in promoting Taiwan's diplomatic agenda by cooperating with important international organizations worldwide and growing in step with them. For instance, the TaiwanICDF jointly stages development projects with the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, the Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and other key regional institutions. As such, great things can be achieved despite limited resources. In addition, Taiwan has gained greater visibility through the TaiwanICDF's participation in international affairs, which has been of great benefit to the government's efforts in recent years to join international organizations.

In my tenure so far, I have had the opportunity to participate in many overseas visits with high-ranking officials, as well as in international conferences and various negotiations. I have gotten a deeper sense of the complexities of diplomatic work and the need for the general public to participate in these efforts. The Taiwan Youth Overseas Service and the Taiwan Overseas Volunteers programs held by the TaiwanICDF are the best examples of "People's Diplomacy." Every time I go abroad and see a member of the Youth Overseas Service or the Overseas Volunteers with their backpacks strapped to their shoulders assisting those in need, I witness the vitality and energy of this new blood involved in diplomatic work. Thanks to their determination, these young people have expanded their horizons. Their devotion also reminds us of the need to strengthen communication with the public in our diplomatic and international development and cooperation work. We need more and more people to get involved in this field. Through the power of the people, Taiwan will be able to further foster and cement external relations through international cooperation. The TaiwanICDF has a responsibility to strengthen communication and dialogue with the public, thus attracting more people to become involved in international cooperation and volunteer work.

Reviewing our past efforts encourages us to be even more determined to move forward. The TaiwanICDF continued to implement its various international cooperation projects over the past year under former chairman Chen, showing the international community that Taiwan's participation is making the world a better place. With the publication of this year's annual report, I would like to express my appreciation to the public and all those organizations and institutions that have provided assistance to the TaiwanICDF for their support and encouragement of Taiwan's international cooperation work. We intend to continue strengthening the implementation and management of projects as well as to embark on new areas of international cooperation. With our feet grounded in Taiwan but with our eyes set to the world, we will carry out our work with our foremost mission in mind: To be a partner in the world of nations and to be where we are needed most.



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