

Report on: The National Election in Taiwan January 14, 2012

**From: The International Election Observers Mission
(IEOM)**

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TO: ICFET International Election Committee

Overview

Taiwan is an island nation of 23.2 million people (November 2011) in an area of 35,980 sq. km. The eligible voters in the national election were 18.1 million. The voters are defined as adults who are 20 years of age or older and registered in Taiwan to vote.

The winner of the January 14, 2012 Presidential Election was Mr. Ma Ying-jeou of the incumbent Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang or KMT) with 51.6% of the vote. Ms. Tsai Ing-wen of the challenging Democratic Progressive Party (DDP) followed with 45.6% and the Peoples' First Party (PFP) candidate Mr. James Soong had about 2.8%. (The Economist, January 23, 2012, p.43 and Election Chart Table #1 below).

The election to the 113 seats in the parliament, the Legislative Yuan, was held at the same day as the presidential election. The KMT won 64 seats, the DPP got 40 seats with 3 seats each for the PFP and the TSU. The remaining 3 seats were won by smaller parties and independent candidates. The number of KMT seats was reduced by 17 while DDP and TSU increased 13 and 3 respectively.

Political Background

Taiwan had experienced a long political struggle during the authoritarian era. Democracy in Taiwan really only “began in the 1980s with the rise of social movements, the formation of the first opposition party and finally the lifting of martial law” Taiwan Elections Handbook, 2011: p.13). The political system is not ideological with a “left” or liberal versus “right” or conservative view of the nation or world. Instead, “primary political cleavage between the political parties has been and remains the issue of national identity, often referred to as the ‘unification-independence’ issue” (ibid., p13), or “blue” (Kuomintang and associated parties) and “green” (DPP and aligned parties).

As one post-election observer noted, Mr. Ma's percentage of the vote fell from 58% four years earlier. This means that now with his re-election, he will have to be more careful "on questions of sovereignty --- such as a peace accord ... in which Taiwan and China would pledge not to resolve their differences by force" (Economist, January 21, 2012 p.43). The KMT influence has dropped in recent years (as seen in the election results), despite what some journalists refer to the debate between independence vs. unification with China as the historical "authoritarian legacy" in Taiwan. However, that legacy still exists today.

The International Election Observer Mission (IEOM)

Twenty-one (21) observers from 8 countries were invited by the International Committee for Fair Elections in Taiwan (ICFET) to form an International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) for the January 2012 Presidential and Legislative elections in Taiwan. See the list of member of the IEOM below.

The group consisted of observers from Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Japan, Sweden, the Netherlands and United States, ranging in experiences from academia, elected representatives, religious groups, businesses, and civil society. As observers, we have tried to be strictly neutral in all our activities, records, and conclusions.

Most members of the IEOM were in Taiwan from January 10-15, 2012. They visited locations in Taipei, Kaohsiung, Tainan, and Taichung. As a group they met with campaign organizers, staff, and candidates from the three main political parties: Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), and People's First Party (PFP). Then on pre-election day (January 13, 2012) and during the Election Day (January 14, 2012), the group split into smaller groups of 2-4 members who then observed political rallies, street campaigns, and polling stations as well as the Central Election Commission counting center on Election Day.

This report consists of the IEOM observations by its members as well as other sources, including the Taiwan and international press, mostly post-election. There were other observer groups there in Taiwan; credible sources (including some members) report that these groups were invited by institutions associated or influenced by the Kuomintang.

One unbiased observation group was the Asian Network for Free Elections Foundation (ANFREL) headquartered in Bangkok, Thailand. ANFREL produced an Observers Report (sub-titled "Credible Elections but a Tilted Playing Field") after the Election that corresponds with and validates much of the IEOM observations and its Press Release and this Report.

The National Election: democracy and identity politics

After Taiwan's transition to democracy in the early 1990s, the number of people on the island who identified themselves as "Taiwanese" grew rapidly from around 20% in 1992

to more than 70% at present. At the same time the percentage of people identifying themselves as “Chinese” decreased from around 50% in 1992 to less than 5% at present. The remainder identifies itself as both Taiwanese and Chinese (Source: Taiwan Communiqué www.taiwandc.org/twcom/ no. 112 and TVBS opinion poll, Feb. 2011).

A variety of data over the past 16 years documents that the number of Taiwanese who consider themselves as Taiwanese, has increased significantly. In June 2011, 54.2% considered themselves as Taiwanese, a trend that has been increasing since 1992 when the same number was only 17.3%. The identification with the Chinese origin has dropped to 4.1% in June 2011, down from 26.2% in 1992. This development has continued since Ma became president. A recent survey shows that 74% prefers independence if given a free choice, and more than 81.7% refuse to accept the One country - Two systems proposal from China (from IEOM member, Danielsen, 2012).

Identity, therefore, no longer strongly predicts party affiliation or preference for unification or independence --- other factors exist, including the influence of China’s new global economic strength in Taiwanese and other nations.

According to several western newspapers, about 20% of the Taiwan population earns over 6 times that of the rest of the population. While the unemployment level is low (19th lowest in the world), it hits lower and working-class people the hardest. Nonetheless, Taiwan is one of the most “equal societies in the Far East Asia” (ibid. 2012).

The national elections on January 14, 2012 were the 5th direct presidential and the 7th direct parliamentary election, which made Taiwan “a beacon of democratic practices in Asia” (Baum and van der Wees, 2012), which other nations were watching the outcome very carefully. Taiwan has become more “democratic” over the last 25 years, and especially with the creation of parties in addition to the KMT, which had dominated the island nation since 1949. Nonetheless, the national elections were not perfect. This is why the IEOM, in its post-election Press Release, labeled them “mostly free but partly unfair” (Taiwan Elections 2012).

Taiwan is surely not alone among the countries across the globe, where movements dealing with social and environmental concerns have been followed up by developments focusing on the establishing and functioning of a genuinely democratic system. In Asia, people power movements also included countries like South Korea, the Philippines or Indonesia, where similar developments happened in Eastern Europe and Latin America, most recently reaching the Middle East, Northern Africa and Eurasian countries like Georgia and Russia. Yet the issues of free and open democratic elections are not restricted to nations becoming independent and democrat including freedom of speech, religion and human rights (Economist, 2012, pp.47-48). For decades now the issue has been of concern to developing nations and to western developed nations like France, Italy, Spain, UK, other EU nations and the USA as well as the former Soviet Union, and Russia itself (ibid. pp: 53-54).

In 2005, David Kilgour, a member of the IEOM, spoke about election issues in Ontario, Canada to the House of Commons Study Group. He noted that Canada had some similar issues with vote-getting and the interpretation of election results, from resting on one's record to being a victim of past successes. But the key principle in his report was for elected officials to "face each case 'without fear or favour'" a principle that becomes an "important goal and valuable service standard ... particularly at election time" (Kilgour, 2005:1).

Conditions for Free Elections

Many scholars have studied national democratic elections and come to conclusions and even created guidelines for others to follow. Wolf (1984), while at Harvard in the early 1980s, set forth some universal conditions for democratic elections based upon experiences that he had as an election observer in Nicaragua. He identified nine "Conditions" that can be applied elsewhere (ibid., Preface). Certainly these Conditions can be used to measure the national election in Taiwan in January 2012:

- 1) Honest watching of each polling place
- 2) Total secrecy in casting the vote
- 3) Integrity of inspecting and counting of votes
- 4) Absence of a climate of coercion and fear
- 5) Pre-election freedom of party organization and activity
- 6) Institutional freedom of intermediate organizations
- 7) Freedom of speech, campaigning, and assembly
- 8) Freedom of access to the media and voting residence
- 9) Media freedom, including the existence of independent journals, papers, and electronic media

The IEOM proposes additional Tenth and Eleventh Conditions, not only for the case of Taiwan, but also for other nations:

#10: International or extra-national actors do not exercise undue influence over the electorate, whether through means of political influence, economic pressure and / or trade relations.

The #10 Condition was of particular concern for Taiwan, not only because of the specific issues regarding its relationship with China, but also because of the other nations as well, including those who have had democracies for decades, such as the U.S.A. and UK along with other western nations with interests in Taiwan.

The #11 Condition concerns:

#11: All Candidates have Equal and Common Standards to Access for Funding.

Basically all candidates need to have access to the same amount of funds for an election. The ability of someone to get elected often depends on their ability to raise money from

all sources. For example, that the US Supreme Court ruled in January 2010 that it was a violation of the First Amendment of the Constitution to restrict people and “organizations” (like companies and unions) to contribute any amount of money to a political campaign. Thus the US has in effect no limits on funding for political campaigns.

Overall the IEOM considers the 2012 Taiwan National Election to have been acceptable in Conditional areas #1, #2, #4, and #6. However, Conditional areas #3, #5 and #7 through #11 raise issues that should be addressed and corrected in future elections to improve the functioning of democracy in Taiwan. Though the evidence pertaining to these issues should be verified, the concerns are based on multiple sources and appear valid as news stories and international media report.

The following discussions detail the issues of concern:

Condition #3: Integrity of inspecting and counting of votes

Political Stakes

The KMT has many members who serve in various national and local government appointed positions. Their loyalty can be questioned and may be interested in seeing the KMT get re-elected. This can imply that they “miss”, “overlook” or simply forget issues and problems. The IEOM recommends that Taiwan embark on a path of de-politicization of its civil service and non-election public offices.

Observers

ANFEL and IEOM discovered a disappointing number of independent local observers at polling stations both during and after voting. We believe that Taiwan should work to instill a culture of election observation to increase the public’s feeling of ownership and the transparency of the elections. Both IEOM and ANFREL would like to have a more open and welcoming procedure from Taiwan and the CEC in regards to election observation. Observation, both domestic and international, should be encouraged and welcomed by the CEC and related organizations through a codified policy of encouraging, recognizing, and authorizing election observers for every election. Further, national civil society organizations could be engaged to observe across the country in partnership with the CEC. Realizing this is somewhat beyond the CEC’s traditional portfolio, ANFREL believes that it is important enough that the CEC or another relevant government body should nevertheless explore possibilities for such activities with local CSOs in the future.

Condition #5: Pre-election freedom of party organization and activity

Party organization

Its long history as an authoritarian power has given the Kuomintang ample opportunity to build up local networks. This network at the local level is made up of block (“lin”) captains, who know every household in their block. Long before the elections, the captain visits every household and ensures that the people understood they needed to vote

for the “right” candidate. The vote buying (noted below) generally also takes place in this context.

The DPP generally has to rely on organizing campaign rallies to get their views heard by the people. These rallies are free and open, but permits have to be obtained from the local authorities, and in some cases these authorities (more often than not KMT members) have turned down rallies requests for more favorable locations, so the DPP had to make do with less favorable, out of the way, locations.

Vote buying

According to sources interviewed during the campaign, vote buying was made easier by the fact that the Legislative and Presidential elections were combined. One article in the Taiwan News (February 18, 2012) a month after the election, however, described how Taiwan prosecutors were investigating two KMT lawmakers for vote buying. Over 200 cases of vote buying were investigated before the election with 376 people interrogated with six people detained and released and another five released on bail. In this way, for example, the local KMT candidate could influence his constituency and at the same time get the locals to vote for Mr. Ma. The “going price” was NT\$ 1000.—(US\$ 30.--) per vote in “easy” areas to NT\$ 3000.— (US\$ 100.--) or even as high as NT\$ 5000.-- (approx. US\$ 168.--) per vote in areas where there was a hard-fought campaign. The practice was more prevalent in rural and agricultural areas (particularly in the South) than in urban areas, since these regions were more pro-DDP and contained more lower-income families and voters.

The ANFREL (2012) notes also that vote buying is always a problem, but specific, concrete evidence of vote buying is hard to come by. There were nevertheless enough complaints and acknowledgements from locals that vote buying remains a problem to make it appear likely that the problem persists in some areas. Reported vote buying often took the more indirect and sophisticated form of vote buying in-kind, with, for example, trips or dinners being used to curry favor with voters. It was also a general consensus that the vote buying is worse the more local the election taking place. This has been a long-term problem in Taiwan and is one that the Central Election Commission (CEC), the judicial system and some political party officials continue working to correct. The progress they have made should be consolidated and expanded to the areas where vote buying is most rampant.

Condition #7: Freedom of speech, campaigning, and assembly

Vote betting

An unnamed source explained the mechanism of “vote betting”, a subject that came up in the IEOM meetings in Taichung on Friday January 13th. According to this source, the KMT makes extensive use of local networks to encourage betting on the outcome of the elections. The local underworld bosses open up “betting on the elections”, and promise a handsome profit. E.g. one can vote 4 to 1 that Mr. Ma will win. The person doing the betting puts in a sum of say 500 or 1000 NT\$ (or more) and is promised that s/he will get a fourfold if Mr. Ma wins. That person then has a personal financial interest in Mr. Ma

winning and will work on his relatives and friends to vote for the KMT. The payout after the elections is heavily subsidized by the KMT through its local networks.

The IEOM found it vital to focus on judiciary and the neutrality of the government administration. Newspapers reported embezzlement accusations against DPP presidential candidate Tsai from the minister of economic planning in relation to the TaiMed Biologics company. The accusations faltered when the dates on the published documents were proven by the DPP not to be correct.

There appears to be a need for structural reforms to ensure impartiality of the legal system. The ANFREL and IEOM believe that Taiwan Civil Society has an opportunity to assume a larger role in the election process. While ANFREL is thankful and fortunate to have the support that it did for this IEOM, they believe there is still a greater, more substantial role to be played by Civil Society in strengthening and representing the public interest on issues like electoral reform and activities such as election observation.

China (Peoples Republic of China)

“Cross-strait” relations (that is between Taiwan and China) in the context of an economically and politically rising China weighs heavily on the election process in Taiwan. It puts tremendous pressures on Taiwan’s democracy and the freedom and fairness of the context within which its voters must make their choice. A more detailed analysis is presented in the article “Chinese shadow over Taiwan’s elections” by IEOM member Gerrit van der Wees in the Taipei Times:

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2012/01/30/2003524210>

Condition #8: Freedom of access to media and voting residence

Most of the mass media in Taiwan (TV, Cable and Satellite TV and radio) were supportive of the KMT Party. Due to the authoritarian legacy a large majority of the news media in Taiwan is still closely allied with the KMT. Among the written media only the English language Taipei Times and the Chinese-language Liberty Times and Apple Daily can be said not to be aligned with the KMT. Among the major TV stations only Formosa TV (Channel 4) is not aligned with the KMT or the government. All others are closely following the KMT line, including CTS, TTV, CTV, CTiTV and TVBS. There are however smaller cable networks, often at the local level.

The role of the media was an obvious example of not having a “level playing field” since they almost uniformly favored the KMT. The media environment was open and free, but was often regrettably compromised and partisan. Both the IEOM and ANFREL teams observed how one could detect the political affiliation of a particular media outlet almost immediately thanks to preferential treatment of a particular party or candidate. Such media bias was witnessed on both sides of the political divide. The media must decide, and the public and social organizations must demand, that they take their journalistic ethics more seriously. A stable, mature democratic Taiwan needs an independent media without which its democracy will suffer and the political polarization evident in some areas will grow. In addition to media bias in general, the team received complaints that one party controlled or was affiliated with a greater number of media outlets and could

therefore guarantee a larger quantity of preferential media coverage. Such systemic imbalances have a negative impact on the development of the Fourth Estate and Taiwan's democracy as a whole.

Students not being able to return to vote. Several newspapers reported that most universities had final exams at the end of the semester up until the day before the elections (January 13th), causing problems with their ability to vote. These students are generally still registered to vote in their home town or village, and many students from the South (which is primarily "green") were not able to return home to vote, especially since a week later (Jan 21st) was the start of the Lunar New Year when they would go home for the holidays. Two trips in one week would be too costly for most of them. There appears to be a need for a reform in regards to household registration in Taiwan that can make it easier to register in the city where the citizen is actually living.

Condition #9: Media freedom, including the existence of independent journals, papers, and electronic media

Financial Resources

The financial control of the media is usually a result of a party having funds to pay for media time. The IEOM visited each Party headquarters before the election and received briefings on their goals and finances. IEOM checked the reported financial numbers from the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) which itself could be considered bias to the KMT, but still provides an asset basis. The official KMT assets are NT\$29 billion, or US\$985 million. Even if we narrow it down the KMT's stated liquid assets, the party had 5.6 times more money than the others. However, the actual sum is much larger, though it's hard to tell just how accessible that money is, given that it's probably been re-invested, for example in dividends on those could feasibly be used to finance the party (Cole, 2012).

DPP's finances are about NT\$300 million or US\$10 million, with fixed assets in land and real estate accounting for about a third of this. It should be noted, however, that most of the land and real estate -- including the party's branch office in Taipei -- are held as collateral or mortgaged for bank loans. Those figures were prior to the January 14th elections, and I don't know how much money they spent on the campaign.

As Cole reports, the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU) only ran in the legislative elections and is cash-strapped. The People First Party (PFP), which ran in the presidential and legislative elections, fares slightly better, mostly because of the wealth of its chairman and presidential candidate James Soong. The KMT's assets are about *97 times* those of the DPP.

When the IEOM went to the DDP, they agreed and verified that number. However, when the IEOM went to the KMT Party and asked, the Associate Director said that he "did not know you should ask the Administration Budget Office next door." This was shocking to the IEOM members that the second highest level member of the KMT Election Committee did not know the party's assets and budget. To his credit, however, when the

IEOM members were leaving the meeting, he offered to find out and get back to the IEOM with the numbers. Yet he never did contact the IEOM with that information.

Campaign finance expenditures are of critical importance to both IEOM and ANFREL. Campaigns, by both parties, were clearly very expensive, a fact made evident by the number and size of signs, rallies, and mass media political ads presented before the election. While data does not exist on this, clearly the KMT numbers, amount and massive penetration of advertising exceed the other two parties.

From even the short period observed by ANFREL and IEOM, it seemed likely that campaign spending would likely exceed campaign finance limits which exist, but which have not been effectively implemented or enforced. Perhaps as problematic as this general excessive spending is the widely held assumption that one party has a permanent wealth and resource advantage that provides them a built-in advantage in the process. This is difficult to prove unfortunately, because of the aforementioned lack of a true and accurate auditing and enforcement of campaign finance expenditures, including disguised spending by such means as vote betting (see Condition #7 above).

Condition #10: International Influences in terms of political, economic and trade relations

Chinese agricultural purchases. Over the past year, China has sent a number of “agricultural purchasing missions” to the South, buying agricultural products in large quantities. Chinese interest groups spread the message that if Tsai would win, these missions would stop, leading quite a number of traditionally DPP supporters in the South to either stay home or even vote for the KMT. Here is a Taipei Times article on the issue: <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2012/01/10/2003522882>

Reduction of Chinese tourism. During the weeks before the election, the Chinese government significantly reduced the number of tourist groups that were allowed to go to Taiwan. Reportedly, this had a twofold purpose: **a)** to reduce exposure of the groups to the Taiwan elections as an example of democracy, and **b)** to signal to the tour operators and hotels in Taiwan that if Tsai would win, they could turn off the tourist-spigot easily, drying up income for the tourist industry that has come to rely on Chinese tourists. Here is an article in the TT: <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2012/01/15/2003523297>

China (Peoples Republic of China)

Long before the elections, political leaders in China made it abundantly clear that they supported the KMT and its leader, President Ma during his administration in order to increase trade, tourism and social issues between the two nations. Interference from the Chinese side took many different forms, also at an unofficial level. According to news media, flights from China to Taiwan were discounted by up to 50% for Taiwanese living in China. It is commonly believed that the Taiwanese living in China are mostly KMT voters. A few striking examples:

a) Taiwanese businessmen returning from China. While in the past these were primarily the big businesses in the North, over the past few years, an increasing number of small and medium sized businesses from the South have also set up businesses in China. Owners of these businesses came back with the same message as big business in the North: a victory for Tsai would mean “instability” and thus be bad for business. This led to a lower vote for the DPP in the South, their traditional stronghold. See Washington Post article: http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/tycoon-prods-taiwan-closer-to-china/2012/01/20/gIQAhswwFQ_story.html

b) Influencing Taiwanese workers working for Taiwanese companies in China. A Taiwanese friend, according to one IEOM member whom he had known for some 40 years, told him that a relative of his worked for a Taiwanese company in China. The relative was told by his bosses that he could return to Taiwan, and told that when he voted he should make a picture with his cell phone of his ballot. He should bring back the picture and if he had voted for the “right candidate” he would get his travel reimbursed and an extra week holiday.

Asian Nations

Japan and S. Korea appeared to be neutral in the Taiwan elections.

Southeast Asia (ASEAN) nations seemed to be cautious of the KMT Party, possibly due to that party's close relationship with China.

Australia was neutral, reportedly because of its dependence on Chinese purchases of coal, natural gas and oil.

European Union (EU)

The European Union and all its member nations remained officially neutral.

United Nations (UN)

The United Nations remained neutral.

United States of America

Through a number of statements, the USA administration professed neutrality. At a hearing before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on October 4th 2011, Assistant Secretary Kurt Campbell stated: “We do not believe any one party or leader on Taiwan has a monopoly on effective management of the relationship, and we do not take sides in the elections. We will work closely with whatever leadership emerges from Taiwan's free and fair elections to build on our enduring commitment to Taiwan's people, its prosperity, and peace.”

However, in a span of three short months, there was a quick succession of more visits by high-level U.S. officials to Taipei than during any calendar year in recent memory. Then on December 21, 2011, less than one month before the elections, the U.S. State Department announced Taiwan's candidacy for participation in the Visa Waiver Program. Together, this series of statements and actions during a politically sensitive time led many observers to reach the conclusion that the U.S. government preferred the re-election of the incumbent administration in Taipei.

Also, a senior US official in the Obama administration stated anonymously through the Second Track Diplomacy that DPP's presidential candidate Tsai sparked concerns about stability in the Taiwan Strait, which is “critically important” to the US.

Two days before the election, one former USA government official, who had served as AIT Director in Taipei, made a statement in favor of the KMT Party. He also implied that the American government's choice was for President Ma to continue to lead Taiwan. The Chair of the IEOM, Senator Frank Murkowski held a press conference the next day refuting those comments, branding them as “careless” and “inexcusable”, and saying that the former AIT Director's statement did not reflect the USA government policies.

Condition #11: All Candidates have Equal and Common Standards to Access for Funding.

Campaign Funds

Due to the legacy of the authoritarian past, there is a huge imbalance in party wealth and resources. There is a very little concern expressed by government in power about the issue of controlling campaign expenditures by its government or impartial third parties. This lack of concern reflects a huge imbalance of resources which creates an atmosphere where the election rules are routinely disrespected, undermining the rule of law and progress toward democracy. The fairness of the election is therefore weakened in a context where resources amongst the parties are so unequal. The huge imbalance in capacity for parties to purchase advertising is reflected in the media. This is an important area for reform.

Because the KMT has massive real estate and financial holdings, the numbers and extent of which are unknown to outsiders, their ability to fund and influence voters is strong. According to news reports and “The Unfinished Democratization” by Taiwan Brain Trust, the annual interest alone from these holdings amounts to approximately US\$ 100 million.

Judicial and Key Appointments as Neutral

President Ma, having been a Minister of Justice before his first election to office, obviously had links and solid connections the Taiwan judicial system. Consequently, the IEOM and the ANFREL both would like to see the CEC, the Ministry of Justice, other government oversight bodies, as well as Civil Society Organizations, make an effort to accurately measure campaign spending and party wealth so as to ensure a more level campaign playing field. Where necessary, campaign finance laws should be strengthened and further elaborated. Even where there is no violation of campaign finance law, such uneven resources can result in an unhealthy democratic culture and an uneven playing field that harms the election's fairness. Only through a coordinated effort on this issue can these agencies effectively enforce the law and make Taiwan's elections not only more transparent but also more fair.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The IEOM would like to thank the organizers of the visit, the ICFET, for their invitation and organizing the delegation. The IEOM would like to encourage the ICFET to continue in their efforts and to support election observation activities in the future to strengthen Taiwan's democracy, so that it can be shared with other countries in the region and around the world. As the IEOM conducted its observations, the members greatly appreciated the willingness of candidates, party representatives, and government representatives to meet with them. Each party organization and its representatives demonstrated hospitality to the IEOM questions with grace and dignity.

Areas for Improvement

The IEOM and ANFREL (January 2012) delegations made comments on the successes of the Taiwan national election, which are summarized below. Both saw "areas of concern". These comments are made to provide constructive feedback on the process in the spirit of improving it so as to provide a vibrant democratic system worthy of the people of Taiwan.

Several key institutions, as noted above, need to be strengthened and improved. With greater institutional strength, the judicial system would be better able to respond to complaints and, also crucially, have greater legitimacy and the trust of the population as a whole. Improvements in these two metrics would leave the court, or other institutions such as the police, less likely to be criticized or politicized in the course of a campaign. Attention can and should be put to ensuring the neutrality and impartiality, both real and perceived, of all related government agencies.

The IEOM strongly feels that Taiwan is well on its way to continuing as a democratic nation. There are many issues and problems confronting the nation as noted above ranging from public reporting of financial expenditures to the use of media that need to be "regulated" or held to enforceable legal standards. However, the issues of the administrative and judicial systems are serious and need oversight, evaluation and control. Will the newly re-elected government appoint and oversee "objective" and "transparent" government officials and judicial officers and move towards much-needed judicial, administrative as well as legislative reforms? Or will it allow "influence" from vested interests in Taiwan as well as the Chinese side across the Strait, and inertia due to the authoritarian legacy to compromise its democratic system?

The world will continue to watch Taiwan as it "performs" and reveals in the next four years what those future steps will be. Taiwan has been and should continue to be the "show case nation" for democracy. To do that will demand repeated reviews, reports and oversight. Every nation, including the western democracies, need to do the same.

(*) Daniel Wolf, Esq. is a political scientist and attorney who provided guidance, edits and expert advice based on his international work with democratic elections for over three decades. See reference below.

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9. Peter Noteboom, Deputy Secretary of Canadian Council of Churches,
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10. Ted Sivers, Former Dean, Vancouver School of Theology
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12. Lois Wilson, Former Canadian Senator, leader on Committee on Human Rights in
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13. Stéphane Corcuff, Professor of Political Science, University of Lyon (France)
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15. Michael Danielsen, Chairman, Taiwan Corner (Denmark)
16. Bruno Kaufmann, President, Initiative and Referendum Institute Europe and
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17. Gerrit van der Wees, Editor, Taiwan Communiqué (The Netherlands)

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18. Katsuhiko Eguchi, Member, House of Councillors, Diet
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Australia

21. Bruce Jacobs, Professor of Political Science, Monash University

Election Results

Table 1: Summary of the 14 January 2012 Republic of China presidential election results from wiki

Party	Candidate		Votes	%
	Pres	V. pres		
 KMT	Ma Ying-jeou (incumbent) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Vote1.svg	Wu Den-yih	6,891,139	51.60%
 DPP	Tsai Ing-wen	Su Jia-chyuan	6,093,578	45.63%
 PFP	James Soong Chu-yu	Lin Ruey-shiung	369,588	2.77%
Total			13,354,305	100%

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