

Press Release

Ministry of Justice

January 20, 2017

**International Review of 2nd ROC Reports on Implementation of
Human Rights Covenants Concluded**

The three-day international review of the Republic of China's second set of national reports regarding its implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights concluded January 18 at the Chang Yung-fa Foundation in Taipei. The two review panels, comprised of 10 international experts, presented 78 concluding observations and recommendations at a press conference held by the Presidential Office Human Rights Consultative Committee January 20. The event held at the Ministry of Justice was presided over by Minister without Portfolio Lin Mei-chu, who accepted the observations and recommendations on behalf of the ROC government.

Over the course of the three days, the panelists reviewed the ROC's implementation of each article of the two covenants, and held extensive and in-depth discussions with ROC government officials and representatives of domestic and foreign human rights groups. Important human rights issues covered included rights protection for such disadvantaged groups as indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, women, children, new immigrants, and migrant workers; establishment of a national human rights institution; equality and non-discrimination; capital punishment; labor rights; resistance against eviction; and land justice. The review panels prepared a report on their concluding

observations and recommendations after hearing briefings by the government and nongovernmental organizations.

The report included five parts—introduction, general issues, specific issues relating to the ICESCR, specific issues relating to the ICCPR, and follow-up. The introduction elaborated on the ROC's implementation of the two covenants, publication of the first and second set of national reports, organization of the international review, procedure by which concluding observations were reached, and the expectation that the ROC government under the leadership of President Tsai Ing-wen could take a proactive approach toward the full implementation of international human rights law.

In the next three parts, observations were made on general issues as well as the ROC's protection of the rights accorded under the two covenants. Recommendations were made for policy, legislation, and enforcement. After reviewing the national reports, parallel reports, responses to questions, and parallel responses from the government and civil society groups, as well as constructive dialogue with their representatives, the review panels suggested that the ROC government give priority to adopting concrete measures on human rights issues. General issues included the establishment of a national human rights institution, education and training, corporate social responsibility, transitional justice, and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities. Recommendations for ICESCR implementation covered issues that have attracted widespread attention in Taiwan, such as foreign fishermen on Taiwanese fishing vessels, disputed land acquisition and urban renewal cases involving eviction, sex education, and education on gender equality. For ICCPR implementation, recommendations were

made regarding capital punishment, right to personal liberty, the right to marriage and family life, and revision of the Assembly and Parade Act—all of which are controversial issues or major concerns in Taiwan.

In final part of the report, the panelists confirmed that the ROC should continue employing this review mechanism and suggested that a national action plan for human rights be formulated to ensure that their concluding observations and recommendations are implemented.

Minister without Portfolio Lin thanked the 10 experts for traveling to Taiwan to participate in this year's review. She pledged that the ROC government would uphold human rights as a pillar of the nation's foundation, and urge for its agencies to incorporate into their policies the spirit of the two Covenants and other international human rights accords that have been incorporated into domestic law. She stated that the Executive Yuan would oversee efforts by its ministries and related agencies to carry out the concluding observations and recommendations.

With the conclusion of the international review of the second national reports on human rights, the ROC's protection of human rights has reached a new height. The successful establishment of the review mechanism for the reports was facilitated by the longstanding support and assistance of the internationally renowned experts for ROC endeavors as well as joint participation and constructive dialogue among government agencies and NGOs. The Ministry of Justice will continue to follow this review mechanism, which will serve as a platform for communication between the public and private sectors as well as a bridge between the ROC and the international human rights system, such that the protections listed in the two covenants are put into practice nationwide.