



CIECA News Letter

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World News Europe

Germany to shut down coal-fired plants, extend power grid

The German government will announce on Thursday (2 July) a decision to order the shutdown of several coal-fired plants in order to reach its ambitious climate goals by 2020, according to government sources.

Chancellor Angela Merkel and the leaders of her two junior coalition parties also settled a dispute over high-voltage power lines which are planned to carry green energy from the breezy north to the industrial south, the sources said.

Energy minister Sigmar Gabriel is expected to explain the results of the coalition negotiations which lasted more than four hours at a news conference on Thursday morning.

"Coal-fired plants with a capacity of 2.7 gigawatts will be shut down," said the government sources, who declined to say how many plants will be closed.

"The affected power plants will not be allowed to sell electricity on the normal energy market," they said, adding that with this step Germany would manage to reach its goal to curb CO2 emissions by 40% by 2020 compared with 1990 levels.

Gabriel originally proposed putting a levy on CO2 emitted by the oldest and most-polluting power stations above a certain threshold to help reach a target of cutting CO2 emissions from the coal sector by a further 22 million tons by 2020.

But he faced a backlash from industry, with unions saying the plan could put up to 100,000 jobs at risk and lead to the decline of the mining and power generation industries.

The utility companies have lobbied hard against the levy and demanded

compensation for an alternative reserve option.

While the levy now seems to be scrapped, it remained unclear whether companies such as RWE or Vattenfall Europe would get compensation payments or not.

Unconfirmed media reports earlier in the week have said the utilities may be allowed to move 2.7 gigawatts of old coal-fired capacity into a reserve scheme in the coming years, netting a few hundred million euros in the process. (7/2 Reuters)

Waste oil generated by car oil changes is recycled to make clean industrial oil

Each time thousands of mechanics and workshops across Spain carry out oil changes on vehicles, wasted contaminated oil is generated, which has to be disposed of. This dirty oil is also a side product of many manufacturing processes, generating thousands of tons of dirty oil every week right across Spain.

Disposed of incorrectly, this oil could easily contaminate water tables or end up in rivers, water ways, lakes and even the sea, so correct disposal is essential to protect the environment from the disaster.

Waste oil across Spain is collected by an organization called SIGAUS, a body financed by the major names in vehicle manufacturing and vehicle fuel provision, who collect this waste oil and recycle it, collecting the dirty oil drained out engines during an oil change and converting it into clean fuel and a clean product, which can be used in a number of manufacturing applications as well as for industrial fuel.

Recovered oil is treated in different ways depending on the results of an

initial evaluation of its quality in order to minimize its impact on the environment. The majority of waste oil can be regenerated, yielding new lubricant bases. And the rest can be treated to produce fuel for industrial use. During 2014, SIGAUS carried out 174,000 waste oil collection operations, collecting 510 tons of waste, some 5710, 000- liter tankers each day of the year.

Turkey hosts G-20 meetings, symbolizing progress

Turkey has just hosted important meetings of top representatives of the Group of 20 (G-20) nations. Finance ministers met Sept. 4-5, labor and employment ministers Sept. 3-4, both in the capital city, Ankara. The organization began in 1999 to further coordinate monetary policies in the aftermath of the enormous Asian financial crisis. The member nations together account for approximately 85 percent of the world's gross economic product.

Much discussion was devoted to the financial and growth problems of China. This is nothing new. At the 2010 G-20 summit, held in Seoul, the United States spearheaded criticism of the extremely large financial surpluses accumulating in China. Other nations at that time criticized growing U.S. debt.

This time, the most significant news is that Turkey holds the G-20 presidency in 2015. Earlier finance minister meetings were held in February and April in Istanbul and Washington, D.C. A summit of national leaders is planned for November.

Over the past quarter century, Turkey's economy has moved from uncertainty to become a powerhouse. Growth has been strong, both corruption and inflation have been greatly reduced,

and government red tape and bottlenecks have been steadily eliminated.

Much of the credit belongs to reform Prime Minister and President Turgut Ozal, who held office from 1983 to 1993. He was a close friend and ally of President George H.W. Bush. Their partnership was vital during the Persian Gulf War of 1990-91.

Good News for Everyone

The G-20 partnership is of consequence to military and security concerns, especially given the membership of China and Russia, but of most direct importance to economic problems — and opportunities. In today's rapidly evolving global societies as well as economies, there is a large policy agenda.

The fact that poor people worldwide are becoming better off is good news for everyone. They represent new competitors in the global economy, but also our potential consumers and commercial partners. Thanks to trade and investment, general war is less likely — though possible.

U.S. President Barack Obama shrewdly picked Pittsburgh as the site for the fall 2009 G-20 summit. In the 1980s, that city symbolized economic decline, as domestic steel manufacturing faded and unemployment approached 20 percent. Sustained high-tech investment has turned that around.

At the 2009 summit, Bill Gates of Microsoft dedicated a new computer science complex at Carnegie-Mellon University. Apple, Disney, Google and Intel are some of the other relatively recent investors in the city.

The cataclysmic experience of 20th century wars demonstrated that protectionism is ultimately self-defeating and nationalism is dangerous. Likewise, market

competition is generally advantageous. The G-20 provides a workable means of encouraging prosperity and stability. The American people made a fundamental commitment to international leadership early in our direct participation in World War II. In early 1942, the Gallup Poll recorded the rapid decline of traditional isolationism. A majority of respondents indicated for the first time that the U.S. should play an active role in world affairs. This commitment has been sustained, though notably reduced for a time after the Vietnam War.

At the same time, there has been noticeable growing public support for protectionism. International and regional economic institutions have become targets. This is also a long-term trend. In 1999, enormous public demonstrations occurred against the World Trade Organization summit being held in Seattle. Even President Bill Clinton was taken by surprise. In future, the G-20 and other leaders must do a better job of public education, especially in the U.S. as American leadership is crucial. (9/13, The China Post)

Asia & Oceania

Thaksin tells Thailand's red shirt opposition: 'play dead'... for now

From self-imposed exile, the influential leader of Thailand's rural "red shirt" opposition movement has delivered a simple message to followers chafing at the military junta's iron rule: lay low for now, don't panic, "play dead".

Billionaire former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, long-time political leader of the north's disenfranchised electorate, is watching events at home closely and urging patience from those who want to see his

allies return to power.

"When I spoke to Thaksin, he told me to pretend to be dead a little longer," red shirt leader Kwanchai Praipana, a popular pro-Thaksin leader in the northeastern province of Udon Thani, told Reuters.

"He told me to ... wait until the next election. That will be the moment that we will win. The only question is whether an election will ever take place."

Kwanchai said he spoke to Thaksin a month ago, though he did not specify how they communicated. Thaksin, who lives abroad to avoid a jail sentence for graft, was ousted in a coup in 2006, but remains a major figure in Thai politics. While the military has kept a firm grip on power since it felled the remnants of the government of Thaksin's sister Yingluck in another coup last year, he and his allies have won every election since 2001 and anger is mounting among farmers and political opponents. The military government has slashed rural subsidies and coup leader and Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha said this month the next election would not be held until "around" July, 2017, the latest delay to Thailand's return to democracy.

DRIVE-BY SHOOTING

The reference to playing dead resonated with Kwanchai, who rolled up his sleeve to show a scar the length of his upper arm from a drive-by shooting at his rural home when Bangkok was paralyzed by protests that preceded the coup.

Prayuth's ban on political activity has severely curtailed the red shirt movement and his junta has quashed any sign of open dissent.

"They have bullied us too much," said Kwanchai, adding that he has to report his movements to the military every

day.

Prayuth staged the coup and banned political activity after months of sometimes deadly street clashes, saying he had to reconcile a dangerously divided society. Many Thais, especially Bangkok's middle class and urban elite, backed the intervention.

But sharp divisions remain and the Shinawatras retain their popularity in northern strongholds.

A draft constitution that critics said was an attempt by Prayuth to prevent a comeback by the Shinawatras was rejected by a military-appointed reform council rather than taken to a national referendum that may have become a public test of the junta's popularity.

"At first we thought the drafting of the constitution, had it been passed, would have been the time to protest," said Sabina Shah, a red shirt leader and radio DJ in the northeastern city of Khon Kaen. The radio station was shut down after the coup and remains off air. "People want to protest. But they are afraid, despite facing difficulties and hardship...The economy's been going backwards."

Hundreds of activists on Saturday defied a ban on protests and marched in Bangkok in a rare rally against the military to mark the ninth anniversary of the coup against Thaksin.

Lines of police stood by as crowds of people chanting "no dictatorship" and carrying anti-junta banners marched to the city's Democracy Monument.

"ALMOST DYING"

Compared with the Shinawatra clan, Prayuth has done little for Thailand's farmers.

He ended subsidy schemes that funneled billions of dollars to agricultural communities.

The populist schemes were fiercely criticized as vote buying by opponents

of the Shinawatras.

Without the subsidies, rice farmers have seen their income per kilogram of rice fall by about a third and are struggling to pay down debt they took on when times were good.

"I'm not that happy at the moment because agricultural prices for us have not been good at all," said farmer Samrong Pongthai in lush rice fields outside Udon Thani.

"The government won't increase the price. It's been a struggle really. You make a loss if you sell it these days."

Despite his distaste for populism, Prayuth has turned to one of the architects of Thaksin's economic policies in an attempt to revive Thailand's stumbling economy.

But farmers say the soft loans and spending on small projects announced so far are not enough.

"This government tells us to stop making demands, and to live sustainably," said Samai Sribang, who owns a rubber plantation in Nong Khai province near the border with Laos.

"But how can it be sustainable if we can't sell our goods? If Thaksin can hear us, tell him we are almost dying."

Prayuth's government is considering asking farmers to not plant an off-season crop next year after drought left many reservoirs low. It has also tried to encourage rubber farmers to cut down trees to reduce oversupply.

Both measures will only add to farmers' resentment, said Teerasak Teecayuphan, the mayor of Khon Kaen.

"If that is all the government can come up with there is little hope of restoring political faith," Teerasak said.

"Sooner or later this pot will boil over. You can't suppress it for long if you don't solve the problems." (9/19 Reuters)

Park seeks reform of South Korea's rigid labor laws

SEOUL – In the past year, Kim Yoon-sung applied to about 120 companies for a job, and could not land even one.

Instead, the 26-year-old is on her fourth outsourcing contract, one of tens of thousands of young South Korean graduates struggling to get regular employment in Asia's fourth-largest economy.

"It's become normal for people in my generation to fail even after writing applications for well over 100 companies," Kim said. "The situation is just getting tougher."

South Korea's rigid labor market is increasingly seen as a drag on an ailing economy that President Park Geun-hye says needs "major surgery."

Park is pushing a revamp in labor laws that would be the biggest in nearly two decades. It would change the system of stable employment and seniority-based remuneration that was part of a social contract enforced by the unions and underpinned South Korea's breakneck economic growth into the 1990s.

Park wants to make it easier for companies to fire low performers, base wages on merit, shorten work hours, ease outsourcing rules and expand unemployment insurance.

Her ruling party hopes to push labor reform legislation through the current session of parliament ending in December, but faces opposition from some unions and the main rival party.

However, the conglomerates that have driven South Korea's emergence as an industrial power support more flexible labor laws.

"This is the first time in many years that we are trying to do something to change a problem that is getting ever more serious," said Kim Dong-one, the

dean of Korea University's business school.

Limited labor flexibility makes it harder to build the service sector in an economy dominated by companies like Samsung Electronics and Hyundai Motor. Young graduates covet the conglomerates for their better-paid jobs and are less inclined to join smaller companies that would follow Park's "creative economy" push.

The World Economic Forum ranks South Korea 86th for overall labor market efficiency and 106th for flexibility in hiring and firing; Japan, whose decades of stagnation are often invoked by South Korean policymakers as a cautionary tale, ranks 22nd and 133rd.

The Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU), the more strident of two big labor umbrella groups, says the reforms would hurt job security and wages and destroy collective bargaining and has vowed to oppose all ruling party candidates in parliamentary elections due next April.

On Wednesday, it called a nationwide strike and held a rally in Seoul that drew thousands of people.

The opposition New Politics Alliance for Democracy (NPAD) is demanding any change in labor laws be tied to requiring firms to share more profits and increase employment. With 47 percent of parliamentary seats, the opposition cannot by itself block law changes, although the NPAD holds the chairmanship of a key committee that would review law revisions.

The government is betting that enough voters are discouraged by their job prospects to make it worth pushing the legislation ahead of the parliamentary elections.

The last time South Korea made major changes to labor rules was in 1998, when it enabled companies to lay off

workers under emergency circumstances in exchange for a bailout from the International Monetary Fund. At 22 percent, the share of temporary workers in South Korea is double the OECD average. Nonpermanent workers are falling further behind on wages, earning 54 percent of what regular employees earn for similar work, compared with 65 percent in 2004. Youth unemployment hit a 16-year high early this year and could worsen as the retirement age begins to rise in 2016. (9/24 Reuters)

Vietnam defies emerging market slowdown

With the clouds hanging ominously over emerging markets darkening by the week, there are not many bright spots to lift the gloom. Arguably one of the remaining shafts of light is emanating from Vietnam.

Number crunching by Capital Economics suggests Vietnam is among a small band of developing markets to have delivered stronger economic growth in the past year than their average growth rate since 2010.

All of its four peers in this select group — Hungary, the Czech Republic, Romania and Poland — are eastern European nations that have benefited from tumbling oil prices and the relative resilience of the German economy, a big export market.

Moreover, most of these countries are merely recovering from a global financial crisis-induced slump.

While Romania, the Czech Republic and Hungary saw no rise in real gross domestic product between 2008 and 2014, Vietnam's economy expanded by 40 per cent (more than twice the rate of Poland).

Many believe this success story has further to run. Vietnam's economic

growth has accelerated from 5.2 per cent in 2012, to 5.4 per cent in 2013 and 6 per cent last year. Market forecasts collated by Consensus Economics suggest the rate will rise again to 6.1 per cent this year and 6.2 per cent in 2016.

Dominic Scriven, chief executive of Dragon Capital, the biggest investor in the Vietnamese stock market bar the government, is more upbeat still, pencilling in growth of 6.5 per cent this year and "close to 7 per cent" in 2016. "It's the only economy I know of that is accelerating," he says.

As to why Vietnam has seemingly been able to defy gravity when others are sinking into the mire, analysts point to the country's success in attracting the sort of low-wage jobs China is attempting to move beyond.

"It is benefiting hugely from rising wages in China, which is seeing the relocation of low-end manufacturing elsewhere, mostly within Asia," says Gareth Leather, Asia economist at Capital Economics.

"It has integrated itself into the supply chains of southern China [in sectors such as] textiles and low-end assembly. China doesn't really want to be in the position of making T-shirts etc."

While regional rivals such as Bangladesh and Cambodia are vying for the same jobs, Mr. Leather says Vietnam has a geographical advantage over them, as well as political stability, courtesy of its Chinese-style Communist government (9/22 Financial Times).

Profile: Malcolm Turnbull

Australia's Minister for Communications Malcolm Turnbull is set to become Australia's next leader after successfully challenging the leadership of Prime Minister Tony

Abbott.

Mr. Turnbull is known as a competent minister and confident communicator who is well-liked across the political divide, polls have shown.

The Liberal Party is conservative, but the communications minister is known for his progressive views, notably his support for climate change action and gay marriage.

Those views are unpopular among the more right-wing members of the party, and some are unconvinced that Mr. Turnbull will stick to core party policies.

The question of internal support has become more crucial in recent months. Amid plummeting support for Prime Minister Tony Abbott, Mr. Turnbull had been touted as a strong contender to replace him.

Polls conducted by research company Ipsos Australia, including the latest done in August 2015, had consistently found him to be the most preferred person to be the Liberal leader and prime minister, over Mr. Abbott and Foreign Minister Julie Bishop.

In February, Mr. Turnbull was widely expected to challenge the leadership, but the Liberal party voted not to open up Mr. Abbott's position to challengers.

Lawyer and businessman

A successful former lawyer and businessman, Mr. Turnbull is now one of the richest politicians in Australia, having made the Business Review Weekly Rich 200 List several times.

Raised by a single parent, he grew up in the Vacluse and Double Bay neighbourhoods of Sydney.

He attended a state school as a child and later received a scholarship to attend a private high school. After studying law at the University of Sydney, he won a Rhodes scholarship

to further his studies at Oxford University.

Mr. Turnbull briefly worked as a journalist for several outlets, including The Sunday Times in the UK, before embarking on his law career.

One of his biggest achievements was defending former British spy Peter Wright in the "Spycatcher" case in the 1980s. Mr. Wright wrote a memoir about his time in MI5, and the British government sought to ban its publication in the UK. Mr. Turnbull successfully overturned the ban.

He went into the technology business in the 1990s, and co-founded one of the biggest Australian internet service providers at that time, OzEmail.

In 2004, Mr. Turnbull was elected as the MP for Wentworth, the electoral seat where he grew up and where he continues to live with his wife Lucy Hughes, who was the first female Lord Mayor of Sydney.

He quickly rose through the parliamentary and party ranks, serving on various committees. He was briefly the environment and water resources minister in John Howard's government before his party's coalition lost to Labor in the 2007 federal election.

He was elected as leader of the opposition in 2008, but a year later faced two leadership challenges, losing the second one narrowly to Mr. Abbott by just a single vote.

Mr. Turnbull's downfall was attributed to his views on climate change and support for an emissions trading scheme.

However, his credibility was also severely damaged when he attacked then-PM Kevin Rudd over an email purportedly showing corruption, but which was later found to have been faked by a top civil servant. The

so-called "OzCar" affair damaged his standing with his colleagues and the public.

'Not greatly loved by party'

In his current role as the communications minister, Mr. Turnbull earned plaudits for doing his job well and having a good grasp of public policy. He is also known as a skilled orator and debater.

Dr. Peter John Chen, a politics lecturer at the University of Sydney, says: "He has the hallmarks of an effective leader... But he is not greatly loved by his party, because he tends to be on the left while his party is moving towards the right."

Mr. Turnbull is also known for his tendency to be abrasive with colleagues; he has for instance previously publicly blasted Mr. Abbott's climate change plan.

Mr. Turnbull has also been criticised for failing to consult with his colleagues before announcing his position on issues, such as his support for an apology to Australia's indigenous "Stolen Generation".

Dr. Sally Young, associate professor of politics at the University of Melbourne, says Mr. Turnbull is "more of his own man", describing him as "less intimidated" by powerful media baron Rupert Murdoch. (9/14 BBC News)

Africa

'Big Five' growth opportunities could lift economy

This is one of the findings of a new study by management consultancy McKinsey, which identifies a "Big Five" set of priority growth opportunities that could add more than 1% to SA's growth rate and create

3.4-million jobs by 2030. This would bring the economy closer to the targets set out in the National Development Plan.

The "Big Five" list, the product of research into more than 100 ideas, includes advanced manufacturing, infrastructure investment, natural gas and agricultural exports. The analysis suggests SA, whose manufacturing sector has shrunk by half to just 13% of the economy, could develop a more globally competitive manufacturing base, which will present the most significant of the five opportunities.

But — in contrast to the long list of manufacturing sectors contained in the Industrial Policy Action Plan — the McKinsey report says the opportunity for SA is at the more sophisticated, innovative end of the sector, where local firms have significant expertise and intellectual property in areas such as motor and machine components.

McKinsey also worked with the government and the private sector on an initiative to establish the potential to develop SA's natural gas sector, and this has fed into the "Big Five" study's findings on that sector. McKinsey sees the natural gas sector offering SA a chance to meet its power generation needs within the coming decade while also providing the platform for it to develop a gas industry.

McKinsey's list of priorities focuses more on nonresources-driven opportunities to boost investment and exports. The report argues that SA has an opening to use its expertise to become a leading service provider to the continent, just as Brazil is in its region, accounting for 26% of Latin America's service imports. Currently, China, the UK and the US have much bigger shares of Africa's market for services than SA does, even though SA has highly regarded companies, such as

MTN and Standard Bank, with extensive African operations.

On infrastructure, McKinsey proposes more effective delivery mechanisms that would bring in the private sector and help to close the R1.2-trillion funding gap.

The consultancy highlights SA's strengths, which include productivity levels that compare well with China and Brazil. (9/1, Business Day)

Sacci braces for minimum wage fallout

The South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Sacci) will work against the "unintended consequences" — particularly for small businesses — arising from the establishment of a national minimum wage.

SA's largest business chamber resolved at its annual conference on Wednesday to push for a system that could include different national minimum wages for provinces. While its view remained that any national minimum wage would be "ill-timed" given the current economic fundamentals, it recognised that the government had all but committed to it. Sacci president Vusi Khumalo warned that a number of Sacci member companies had withdrawn from the chamber, citing tight profit margins. Sacci remains SA's largest business chamber with more than 20,000 member companies. It is represented at the National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) through Business Unity SA (Busa). Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa told Parliament earlier this month negotiations between the government, business and labour on a minimum wage were proceeding well, while Nedlac was still discussing its scope, mechanism of enforcement and the

actual level.

Nedlac constituents have already agreed on the definition of a minimum wage and that it should be a legal floor for a defined period of time — unless provided for by an exclusion, phase-in or phase-out agreement, or any other upfront agreement.

Sacci — through its representatives at Business Unity SA — would push for, among other things, linking any wage adjustment to productivity and not inflation and that the minimum wage be determined by local economic circumstances — even differing at a provincial level. (9/25 Business Day)

America

Colombia peace deal with Farc rebels 'within six months'

President Santos and the rebel leader known as Timochenko shook hands in Cuba, where the two sides have been holding peace talks since 2012.

On Wednesday, they reached agreement on how to punish human rights abuses committed during the conflict.

The issue had been seen as one of the biggest hurdles on the road to peace.

'Chance for peace'

"We're not going to fail! This is the chance for peace!," President Santos said.

"On 23 March 2016 we will be bidding farewell to the longest-running conflict in the Americas," he added.

"Let's join efforts to achieve peace," Farc leader Timochenko later posted on the rebels' Twitter feed.

The guerrilla group also agreed to surrender its weapons within 60 days of a final accord being signed.

US Secretary of State John Kerry hailed the deal as "historic progress" and expressed his "deep appreciation to Pope Francis for his moral leadership

and the Vatican's good offices in the quest for peace".

During his visit to Cuba, Pope Francis had alluded to previous failed peace negotiations between the two sides and warned them that "we can't allow another failure on the road to peace and reconciliation". (9/24 BCC)

Brazil's Real recovers ground after Central bank promises to use all 'instruments available'

"In this process [to tame volatility], all instruments are available for the central bank," Tombini said. "Foreign reserves are an insurance that could and should be used."

The currency rallied further, bringing its gains for the day to 3%, after the Treasury announced a program of daily debt auctions to provide liquidity to the local debt market. But Tombini also reaffirmed the central bank's policy of keeping interest rates at current levels for a prolonged period, even as it raised its inflation forecast to well above its official target.

With investors fretting about the future of Latin America's largest economy, Brazil's main stock index, Bovespa suffered early losses of as much as 2% on Thursday but rebounded and was up 0.2% in late-afternoon trading.

A growing political crisis that threatens to unseat President Dilma Rousseff and a deepening economic recession have dragged the Brazilian real to its weakest level since the currency was created in 1994. The currency's weakness has offset the central bank's efforts to contain rising inflation through interest rate rises.

In its quarterly report released Thursday, the bank raised its 2016 inflation forecast to 5.3% from 4.8% previously.

Data released on Thursday showed that Brazil's unemployment rate rose for an eighth straight month in August to its highest point in over five years, although the increase was slightly smaller than markets expected.

The crisis has fueled concern that another credit rating agency will follow Standard & Poor's example and cut Brazil's rating to junk, forcing many global funds to dump its bonds from their portfolios.

Treasury Chief Marcelo Saintive said on Thursday that Brazil would be able to avoid further credit downgrades if it succeeded in approving its latest fiscal package and showing long-term commitment to rebalancing its public accounts.

Brazil's Senate will vote next week on whether to overturn presidential vetoes averting a surge in public spending, a major threat to Rousseff's efforts to shore up deteriorating government finances. (9/25 Merco Press)

President Barack Obama and Raul Castro meet in New York

It was the second time the two leaders met in person this year after decades of estrangement between the two countries.

They shook hands before beginning private talks. On Monday, Mr. Castro called for an end to US economic sanctions on Cuba. Mr. Obama had earlier expressed confidence that Congress would lift the embargo.

President Castro told the UN that normal relations with the US would only be possible if the US abolished its trade embargo. The embargo has been in place since 1960 and remains a contentious issue in relations between Cuba and the US. In his speech to the UN, President Obama said he was confident Congress would "inevitably

lift an embargo that should not be in place anymore".

On 27 October the UN General Assembly (UNGA) is again scheduled to discuss a resolution condemning the embargo and calling for its abolition. It is the 24th time the UNGA will vote on the issue, which generally is only opposed by the US and Israel.

Speculation is already rife about how the US will vote this year after its own president dismissed the embargo as counterproductive and behind the times. The resolutions are unenforceable, but a US abstention on a resolution critical of US behavior would be unprecedented.

The Republican-controlled US Congress has so far refused to lift the embargo. Cuban-American Senator and presidential candidate Marco Rubio warned that an abstention would be "putting international popularity ahead of the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States". (9/30 BBC)

Paraguay first ally to speak up for Taiwan in U.N. General Debate

Paraguayan President Horacio Cartes praised efforts by the Republic of China in lowering tension in the Taiwan Strait Monday, the day the General Debate of the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly opened.

Cartes said his country welcomes the efforts and contributions by the ROC government on lowering the tension in the strait, which he said ensures peace and stability in East Asia.

He said the international community is positive of the improvements in cross-strait relations, and he called on both sides of the Taiwan Strait to continue dialogues and exchanges in a pragmatic manner.

Paraguay was the first diplomatic ally

of Taiwan to speak for it at the debate. The government's strategy in its bid to join the United Nations in recent years has been meaningful participation in U.N. agencies and encouraging diplomatic allies to speak on Taiwan's behalf.

For the past two years, the presidents or leaders of 18 countries have spoken in the general debate to support Taiwan, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is hoping that the number this year will not be any lower.

Chinese President Xi Jinping (習近平) also spoke in the General Debate.

He spoke of the importance of global cooperation to create a win-win situation, but did not mention Taiwan or cross-Taiwan Strait issues.

Leaders from 39 countries spoke on the first day of the General Debate, which will last for eight days until Oct. 6. (9/29 CNA)

Trade & Investment Delegation

The 15th Taiwan-Germany Joint Business Council Meeting

"The 15th Taiwan-Germany Joint Business Council Meeting" was held on September 3rd, 2015 in Taipei, Taiwan. The conference was co-chaired by Mr. Jimmy Chu, Chairman of the Germany Committee of CIECA, and Dr. Michael Fuchs, Chairman of the German Economic Committee of Taiwan. A total of 160 participants from Taiwan and Germany attended the meeting. Mr. Jong-Chin Shen, Vice Ministry of Economic Affairs, and Mr. Matthias Machnig, State Secretary of Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, Germany came to give welcome remarks.

The meeting focused on the topic of "Industry 4.0: Germany and Taiwan – Partners in Automation and Smart Manufacturing". Several speakers were

invited to make presentations as follows:

- “Industry 4.0- The Siemens Perspective” by Dr. Roland Busch, Member of the Managing Board, Siemens AG, Germany
- “Productivity 4.0- Now & the coming Future” by Dr. Ming-Ji Wu, Director General, Industrial Development Bureau, Ministry of Economic Affairs
- “Making Use of Industry 4.0 – Technology Improves Quality” by Mr. Charlie Chen, Sales Director of Factory Automation, Bosch Rexroth
- “Advancing Intelligent Automation toward Taiwan Productivity 4.0” by Dr. Shuo-Hung Chang, Executive Vice President, Industrial Technology Research Institute
- “Digitalisation and Its Impact on Trading Practices ” by Mr. Dirk Sanger, Managing Partner, C. Melchers GmbH & Co. KG
- “Smarter and Greener Manufacturing” by Mr. Yancey Hai, Chairman, Delta Electronics
- “Industry 4.0- a SME Perspective” by Mr. Lukas Czaja, International Industry Manager-Machine Tools, Iigus GmbH
- “Enabling Industry 4.0 with IoT Innovations” by Mr. Albert Huang, Vice President, Industrial Automation Group, Advntech Co., Ltd.

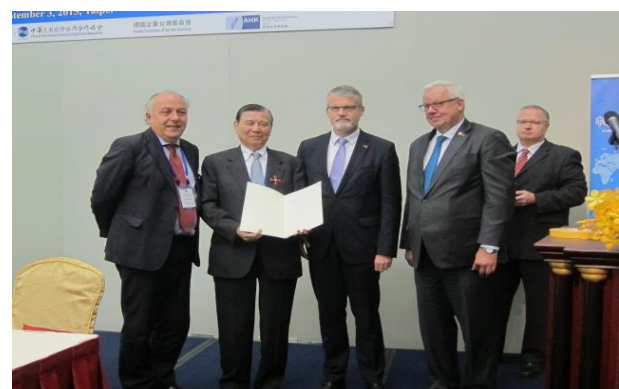
During the meeting, Former Chairman of the Germany Committee of CIECA, Dr. Theodore M. H. Huang, the long-standing chairman of TECO-Group, was presented with the Officer’s Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany in honor of his distinguishing contributions to German-Taiwanese relations.

A Joint Agreement was signed by Mr. Jimmy Chu, Chairman of the Germany

Committee of CIECA, and Dr. Michael Fuchs, Chairman of the German Economic Committee of Taiwan. It was agreed that “The 16th Taiwan-Germany Joint Business Council Meeting” will be held in 2016 in Germany.



Photo of both Chairmen and VIP guests (Left1 : Dr. Theodore M. H. Huang, the long-standing chairman of TECO-Group, Left 2 : Mr. Jong-Chin Shen, Vice Ministry of Economic Affairs, Left 3 : Dr. Roland Wien, Executive Director, German Trade Office Taipei, Left 4 : Mr. Jimmy Chu, Chairman of the Germany Committee of CIECA / Right1 : Mr. Martin Eberts, Director General, German Institute Taipei, Right 2 : Mr. Matthias Machnig, State Secretary of Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, Germany, Right 3 : Dr. Michael Fuchs, Chairman of the German Economic Committee of Taiwan and Right 4 : Dr. Roland Busch, Member of the Managing Board, Siemens AG, Germany)



Mr. Martin Eberts, Director General,

German Institute Taipei (Right 2) presented the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany to Dr. Theodore M. H. Huang (Left 2)

The 29th Joint Conference of ROC-Australia & Australia-Taiwan Business Councils

The 29th Joint Conference of ROC-Australia & Australia-Taiwan Business Councils” was held on September 4, 2015 in Darwin, Australia. The conference was co-chaired by Chairman Jo-Chi Tsou of ROCABC and Chairman Ross Maddock of ATBC. The Lord Mayor Katrina Fong Lim of the City of Darwin was invited to give greetings at the plenary session. Various issues, namely “Infrastructure, Investment and Financial Services”, “Minerals and Energy”, “Tourism and Education” and “Agribusiness” were discussed. A total of 143 participants from Taiwan and Australia attended the meeting.

To increase the time available for discussions and exchange of opinions, The Northern Territory Government proposed the addition of a forum into the agenda to provide the high-level management of the businesses of our two nations with time to exchange their experiences. The Honourable Peter Donald Styles MLA, Minister for Business, was also invited to give a speech on “Opportunities for Partnerships – Unlocking the Potential of Northern Australia” at the forum.

During the meeting, several speakers were invited to make presentations as follows:

- “Chunghwa Post's Strategy as a Conglomerate with an Investment Arm” by Mr. Philip Wen-Chyi Ong, Chairperson, Chunghwa Post. Co. Ltd.

- “SMEs Support and Finance in Taiwan” by Mr. Ruen-Fong Chu, Chairman, Taiwan Business Bank
- “Overview of Resources Import in Taiwan & The New Business of Formosa Plastics Group” by Mr. Y.C. Chen, Chairman, Formosa Ha Tinh Steel Corporation
- “Raw Materials Procurement and Investment of CSC Group in Australia” by Mr. Po-Wen Lo, Geologist, Resources Development Department, China Steel Corporation
- “The Role of Resources in the Development of the Northern Territory” by Mr. Ian Scrimgeour, Executive Director, Northern Territory Geological Survey, Department of Mines and Energy of NT Government
- “CPC Corporation, Taiwan Current E&P Activities and its Outlook” by Mr. Yea-Jer Hu, Director, Exploration & Production Business Division, CPC Corporation, Taiwan
- “The Perspectives on NCYU Promoting International Education and Developing Strategic International Partnerships” by Dr. Yu-Jang Li, Dean of International Affairs, National Chiayi University
- “Tourism and Investment in the Northern Territory” by Ms. Valerie Smith, Director Policy and Planning of Tourism NT
- “The Agricultural Trade and Market Opportunities between Australia and Taiwan” by Dr. Ming-Hong Jean, Director, Agribusiness Management Department, Taiwan Sugar Corporation
- “Agribusiness Investment Opportunities in the Northern Territory” by Ms. Lorraine Corowa, Director of Major Economic Projects, Department of Primary

Industry and Fisheries, Northern Territory Government

After the plenary session, the Australia-Taiwan Business Council Limited organized the ROC delegation to visit Charles Darwin University and a mango farm. CIECA and the Australia-Taiwan Business Council Limited will hold the 30th Joint Conference of ROC-Australia & Australia-Taiwan Business Councils at Kaohsiung in 2016 after the 21st Taiwan-Australia Joint Energy and Minerals, Trade and Investment Cooperation Consultations.



Group photo of VIP delegates from Australia and Taiwan



The 29th Joint Conference of ROC-Australia & Australia-Taiwan Business Councils between Australia and Taiwan—from left Dr. David Tawei Lee, Representative, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Australia; Ms. Catherine Jane Raper, Representative, Australian Office; The Honourable Peter Donald Styles MLA, Minister for Business, Minister for Asian Engagement and Trade; Dr. Jo-Chi Tsou, Chairman, ROC-Australia Business Council and China Steel Corporation; Mr. Ross Maddock Chairman, Australia-Taiwan Business Council Limited

The 40th Joint Conference of ROC-Korea and Korea-Taiwan Business Councils

In order to promote the economic and trade relations between Taiwan and Korea, Mr. Francis K.H. Liang, concurrently Chairman of ROC-Korea Business Council, CIECA and TAITRA led the delegation to Korea and attended the 40th Joint Conference of ROC-Korea and Korea-Taiwan Business Councils, which was held on September 9, 2015 at FKI Conference Center in Seoul, Korea. The Meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Kwangjoo Choi, Chairman, Korea-Taiwan Business Council, FKI. Around 75 participants from Taiwan and Korea attended the meeting. Mr. Lee Sang-jin, Director General for Trade Cooperation Bureau, MOTIE, Korea and Amb. Ting Joseph Shih, Representative of Taipei Mission in Korea were invited to give special remarks as guests of honor.

The Plenary Session discussed 5 topics and a total of 9 guest speakers from both Taiwan and Korea gave presentations on relevant topics as follows:

Topic	Speaker	Position/Organizat ion
“Expanding	Mr.	Head of Invest

Trade & Investment Cooperation”	Ki-Won Han	Korea, KOTRA Invest Korea
	Mr. Tom Tung-Chung Tseng	Director, Taiwan Trade Center, Seoul
“Opportunities for Cooperation in ICT Industry”	Mr. Joung-Wo Lim	Head of Industry 4.0, Smart Factory Project, SK Holdings
	Dr. Chi-Yuan Chin	Chairman of New Taipei City Computer Association and Chairman of Silicon Touch Technology Inc.
“Opportunities for Cooperation in Smart-City”	Mr. Lee, Jae-Yong	Research Fellow, the Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements (KRIHS)
“Opportunities for Cooperation in Bio & Pharmaceutical Industry”	Mr. Soo-Young Choi	Executive Director, Chong Kun Dang Pharm
	Dr. Leah Lo	President, Medical and Pharmaceutical Industry Technology and Development Center
“Opportunities for Cooperation in Tourism”	Mr. You, Se-Joon	Executive Director for Overseas Marketing Department, Korea Tourism Organization
	Ms. Lydia Huang	Director, Seoul Office, Tourism Bureau, Ministry of Transportation and Communications R.O.C.

During the visit in Seoul, the ROC delegation visited Celltrion Inc., a South Korean biopharmaceutical company, is making headway in a newly emerging category of medicine known as biosimilars. It already developed its first biosimilar drug Remsima, a copy of Johnson & Johnson and Merck & Co.’s anti-inflammatory biologic drug Remicade. The delegation also visited Songdo International City, which is more than a hi-tech business district, but a template for future developments for Korea. They toured G-Tower Information Hall, U-city Integrated Management Center and the Zones 5 Automated Waste Collection Plant. Both Korea and Taiwan hope that this tour can explore future business cooperation.



Welcome Dinner hosted by FKI at Samcheong Gak on September 8, 2015



Opening Ceremony of the 40th Joint Conference of ROC-Korea and Korea-Taiwan Business Councils



Chairman Liang and Chairman Choi exchange gifts



ROC delegation visit Songdo U-City Integrated Management Center

The 11th Taiwan-Hungary Joint Business Council Meeting

“The 11th Taiwan-Hungary Joint Business Council Meeting” was held on September 15th, 2015 in Taipei, Taiwan. The conference was co-chaired by Mr. Robert Ou Young, Acting Chairman of the Hungary Committee of CIECA, and Dr. László Parragh, President, Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Nearly 70 participants from Taiwan and Hungary attended the meeting. Ms. Shu-Mei Yang, Deputy Director General, Bureau of Foreign Trade, MOEA, Mr. Albert János, Acting Representative, Hungarian Trade Office, Taipei and Mr. Frank Liu, Founder & CEO, Chi Fu Investment Holdings Group came to give welcome remarks.

The meeting focused on the topic of “Taiwan ICT Outlook”, “Pharmaceutical and Biotech Industry”, “Economic Environment of Hungary” and “Successful Experience Sharing in Europe”, several speakers were invited to make presentations as follows:

- “Taiwan ICT Outlook and Collaboration Opportunities between Taiwan and Hungary” by Ms. Meili Hsiao, Director General, International Division, Institute for



ROC delegation visit Celltrion Inc.



ROC delegation visit Songdo G-Tower

- Information Industry
- “Introduction of the Hungarian National Trading House” by Ms. Mengyi Li, Director of Sales Asia, Hungarian National Trading House
 - “Click on Hungary” by Mr. Daniel Lorincz, Investment & Trade Director, Hungarian Trade Office, Taipei
 - “The Demand of Pharmaceutical and Biotech Industry in Taiwan” by Mr. Muh-Hwan Su, General Manager, SynCore Biotechnology Co., Ltd.
 - “The Agriculture/Food Industry of Hungary provides High-Quality Product Propositions and Business/Trade Opportunities” by Dr. Füle János Róbert & Mr. Gyula Weeber, Vice President, Chi Fu International Co., Ltd. (Exclusive Representative of Hungarian National Trading House)
 - “FFG Successful Experience Sharing in Europe” by Mr. Jimmy Chu, Chairman, Fair Friend Group

A MOU was signed by Mr. Robert Ou Young, Acting Chairman of the Hungary Committee of CIECA, and Dr. László Parragh, President, Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. It will strengthen the business relationship for both countries.



Photo of both Chairmen, VIP guests and Hungarian delegation (left 3 in the front row: Mr. Jimmy Chu, Chairman,

Fair Friend Group, left 4 in the front row: Mr. Frank Liu, Founder & CEO, Chi Fu Investment Holdings Group, left 5 in the front row: Mr. Robert Ou Young, Acting Chairman of the Hungary Committee of CIECA, left 6 in the front row: Dr. László Parragh, President, Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry)

The 31th Sweden–Taiwan Joint Business Council Meeting

“The 31th Sweden–Taiwan Joint Business Council Meeting” was held on September 21, 2015, in Stockholm, Sweden. The Meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Mats H Olsson, Chairman, Senior Vice President and Head of Asia-Pacific, Ericsson, and Mr. Mu-Piao Shih, President, Chunghwa Telecom Co., Ltd. The following VIP guests were invited to present greeting remarks. More than 100 participants from Sweden and Taiwan attended the meeting.

1. Mr. Jong-Chin Shen, Vice Minister, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Taiwan
2. Mr. Oscar Stenström, State Secretary, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Sweden
3. Mr. Fredrik Fexe, Vice President Strategy and Business Development, Business Sweden - the Swedish Trade & Invest Council

During the meeting, participants focused on the relevant issues of these sectors: “ICT (4G/5G, Smart City, IoT),” “Green Energy (Renewable energy & energy efficacy)” for discussion and the speakers invited to make presentations are as follows:

1. “Road to 5G” by Mr. Ulf Pehrsson, Vice President Government and Industry Relations, Ericsson AB
2. “IoT, Big Data and Cloud

Development” by Dr. Lir-Fang SUN, Vice President, Data Communications Business Group, Chunghwa Telecom Co., Ltd.

3. “Enabling the Nordic IoT Future” by Mr. Hans Dahlberg, Vice President, TeliaSonera Global M2M Services
4. “Make a City Smarter-Virtual Power Plant” by Mr. Wu-Chi HO, Deputy General Director, Green Energy and Environment Research Laboratories, Industrial Technology Research Institute

The programs were also arranged for delegates to visit local companies, namely Ericsson, and Sungard Data Center, conduct on-site study and exchanges. The visit started a new page of Taiwan-Sweden bilateral economic relations.



Co-Chairmen of “The 31th Sweden-Taiwan Joint Business Council Meeting”: Mr. Mats H Olsson (right) and Mr. Mu-Piao Shih (left)

The 4th Finland-Taiwan Business Forum

The 4th Finland-Taiwan Business Forum” was held on September 24, 2015, in Helsinki, Finland. The Meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Markus Suomi, President & CEO, Finpro, and Mr. Mu-Piao Shih, President, Chunghwa Telecom Co., Ltd. The

following VIP guests were invited to present greeting remarks. A total of 50 participants from Finland and Taiwan attended the meeting,

1. Mr. Severi Keinälä, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Employment and the Economy of Finland
2. Ms. Angela C.L. Lin, Representative, Taipei Representative Office in Finland

During the meeting, participants focused on the relevant issues of these sectors: “ICT (4G/5G, Smart City, IoT),” “Green Energy (Renewable energy & energy efficacy)” for discussion and the speakers were invited to make presentations as follows:

1. “Industrial Internet in Business and Society - Tieto's View” by Mr. Olli Nurminen, Sales Director, Industrial Internet, Tieto
2. “5G MTC Small Cell Testbed Development in Taiwan” by Mr. Yi-Chieh Chang, Deputy Director General, Smart Network System Institute, Institute for Information Industry
3. “Mastering the Energy Transition - Increasing Energy System Flexibility” by Professor Peter Lund, Department of Applied Physics, Aalto University, School of Science
4. “Make a City Smarter-Virtual Power Plan” by Mr. Wu-Chi Ho, Deputy General Director, Green Energy and Environment Research Laboratories, Industrial Technology Research Institute

Taiwan delegation also visited private companies and government agencies, namely Smart Kalasatama, Digile, and Nokia.



Co-Chairmen of “The 4th Finland-Taiwan Business Forum”: Mr. Markus Suomi (left 2) and Mr. Mu-Piao Shih (right 5)

The 3rd Norway-Taiwan Joint Business Council Meeting

“The 3rd Norway-Taiwan Joint Business Council Meeting” was held on September 25, 2015, in Oslo, Norway. The Meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Lars Kåre Legernes, Managing Director, Oslo Chamber of Commerce and Mr. Mu-Piao Shih, President, Chunghwa Telecom Co., Ltd. The following VIP guests were invited to make greeting remarks. A total of 45 participants from Norway and Taiwan attended the meeting.

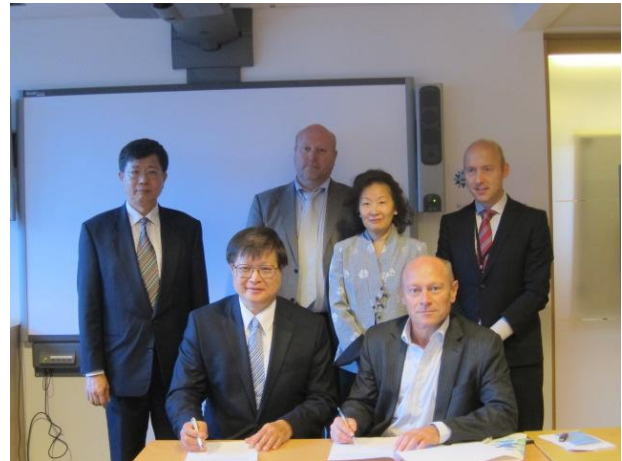
1. Mr. Svend Haakon Kristensen, Head of Customer Operations & Regional Director Asia, Innovation Norway
2. Ms. R. Jane Cheng, Representative, Taipei Representative Office in Norway

During the meeting, participants focused on the relevant issues of these sectors: “ICT (4G/5G, Smart City, IoT),” “Green Energy (Renewable energy & energy efficacy)” for discussion and the speakers were invited to make presentations as follows:

1. “New Technology for Electric

- Production in Rivers” by Mr. Reidar Vestby, CEO of Deep River
2. “5G MTC small cell testbed development at Taiwan” by Mr. Yi-Chieh Chang, Deputy Director General, Smart Network System Institute, Institute for Information Industry
3. “e-Government” by Mr. Frode Preber Ettesvoll, Adm. dir., More Software Solutions AS
4. “Global Partnerships” by Mr. Petter L. Johannessen, Director, Telenor Group

Taiwan delegation also visited relevant companies and agencies, namely DNV GL and The Bellona Foundation.



Co-Chairmen of “The 3rd Norway-Taiwan Joint Business Council Meeting”: Mr. Lars Kåre Legernes (front right) and Mr. Mu-Piao Shih (front left)

Trade & Investment Opportunities in El Salvador

Vice President Óscar Samuel Ortiz Ascencio of El Salvador led a high-powered delegation to visit Taiwan on September 6-10 to promote bilateral ties and seek more cooperation opportunities between R.O.C. and El Salvador.

The Chinese International Economic Cooperation Association (CIECA)

organized a seminar on “Trade & Investment Opportunities in El Salvador” at Regent Taipei Hotel on September 8, 2015. Mr. C. Y. Wang, Chairman of CIECA, presided over the seminar.

H. E. Óscar Samuel Ortiz Ascencio, Vice President of El Salvador and H.E. Amb. Simon S. Y. Ko, Acting Minister of MOFA were invited to make special remarks. H.E. Sra. Luz Estrella Rodríguez, Vice Minister of Economy, made a presentation on “Trade and Investment Opportunities in El Salvador.” A total of 130 participants from both sides attended the meeting.



Welcome Remarks by Mr. C. Y. Wang, Chairman of Chinese International Economic Cooperation Association



Special Remarks by H. E. Amb. Simon S. Y. Ko, Acting Minister of MOFA

Taiwan Reports

MOEA hoping to keep economic growth above 1%

Economics Minister John Deng (鄧振中) admitted Thursday that it will be difficult for Taiwan to keep its economic growth above 1 percent this year but he pledged that his ministry will do its best to achieve that goal.

Deng made the remarks during a legislative hearing when he was asked by a legislator if the government will have any problems keeping the country's economic growth above 1 percent this year.

"Of course there are problems, but the Ministry of Economic Affairs will work hard (to overcome the problems)," he said.

As of August, Taiwan's exports had declined for seven consecutive months. Industrial production, meanwhile, had dropped for the fourth month in a row, while sales of trade and food services had fallen for the sixth straight month.

The Directorate General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics (DGBAS) has already lowered its economic growth forecast for this year to 1.56 percent, down from the previous projection of 3.28 percent made in late May. It is widely believed that the DGBAS will further trim its forecast.

Asked if there has been an increase in the number of workers put on unpaid leave this year, Deng said there has not been an obvious increase.

Citing data from the Ministry of Labor, Deng said 946 workers from 21 companies had been put on unpaid leave as of Sept. 15. Of these, 116 were working for optoelectronics companies, he said. (9/24 CNA)

Yuanta-Polaris reduces GDP growth forecast to 1.15%

Yuanta-Polaris Research Institute (元大)

寶華研究院) yesterday slashed its economic growth forecast for Taiwan to 1.15 percent this year, amid slowing global trade due to developing markets' worse-than-expected performances.

The institute's latest forecast is 2.14 percentage points lower than its previous estimate in June and less than the 1.56 percent predicted by the government last month.

However, given the low basis set this year, Taiwan's GDP might grow by 2.3 percent next year, it said.

"Taiwan's slowing economic growth has become a matter of national security, and persistent stagnation is expected as the nation has accomplished little to address lingering structural factors hampering its long-term prospects," institute chairman Liang Kuo-yuan (梁國源) said at a news conference.

Liang said that slowing global trade is the greatest structural factor hampering growth for the nation's export-oriented economy.

GDP is likely to contract by 0.35 percent from a year earlier this quarter before expanding by 0.79 percent next quarter, the institute said.

"Global GDP growth in 2012 outpaced the increase in global trade for the first time since the 1950s," Liang said.

However, tangible progress toward eliminating tariffs and trade barriers has been lacking in recent years, he said, adding that global investment sentiment has been on the decline since the global financial crisis of 2008-2009, leaving a significant amount of funds dormant, despite near-zero interest rates.

Other structural factors affecting Taiwan include the rise of China's so-called "red supply chain," the global transition from production-based to knowledge-driven industries and a rapidly aging population.

"Although Taiwan's prospects will continue to face long-term headwinds, near-term demand for Apple Inc's iPhone 6S and Internet of Things applications might bring intermittent relief to the nation's electronic components sector," Liang said.

The institute cut expected export growth this year to 0.31 percent from its previous estimate of 3.59 percent in June, saying exports might shrink by 1.24 percent this quarter and 1.7 percent next quarter.

The institute forecast that exports would grow by 1.79 percent annually next year.

Regarding rising concern that Taiwan is poised to see deflationary pressure, Liang said that the anticipated devaluation of the New Taiwan dollar against the greenback will continue to keep the issue at bay, adding that the nation's consumer price index for this year is forecast to fall by 0.21 percent annually and grow by at most 0.82 percent next year.

"In light of the current political atmosphere, it is likely that the central bank will be compelled to reduce interest rates, but this should not be the focus," Liang said.

"Politicians might not be aware of the fact that interest rate cuts have little positive effect in times of stagnant economic growth. The nation should instead contemplate its diminishing competitiveness," Liang said.

"An interest rate cut would further exacerbate Taiwan's income disparity and create gains for very few," he said. (9/23 Taipei Times)

Summary of Exports and Imports for September 2015

Highlights

For the month of Sep. 2015, total exports contracted 14.6% year on year

to US\$ 22.54 billion. However, total imports fell 16.7% from a year earlier to US\$ 17.3 billion. The trade balance of this month was favorable, amounting to US\$5.25 billion.

1. Exports

In Sep. 2015, comparing with the same month of last year, exports of electronic products, basic metals and articles thereof, plastics & rubber and articles thereof, machinery, chemicals declined 9.9%, 16.9%, 10.6%, 11.4% and 20.5% respectively.

2. Imports

In Sep. 2015, comparing with the same month of last year, imports of mineral products, electronic products, chemicals, machinery, basic metals and articles thereof declined 45.1%, 13.8%, 22.2%, 5.9% and 36.9% respectively.

Trade Performance for September 2015

Unit : US\$ million ; %

	September		Jan. - September	
	Amount	Annual Change Rate	Amount	Annual Change Rate
Exports	22,540	-14.6	212,4009	-9.4
Imports	17,300	-22.4	173,840	-16.5
Trade Balance	5,250	48.4	38,570	45.8

(Dept. of Statistics – 2015-10-07)

Economic Index

% Change on previous year	2013	2014	2015		
			May	June	Aug
GDP	2.23	3.77	0.64	-	0.52
CPI	0.79	1.20	-0.73	-0.56	-0.45
Unemployment rate	4.18	3.96	3.62	3.71	3.74
Export	1.4	2.7	-3.8	-13.9	-14.77
Imports	-0.2	1.5	-5.4	-16.1	-16.69
Export orders	0.4	6.7	-5.9	-5.8	-8.3
Industrial production	0.7	6.4	-3.5	-1.4	-5.46
Monetary aggregate (M2)	5.8	6.1	6.9	6.3	6.01
TWSE Stock Index	8,612	9,307	9,701	9,323	8,156

(Sources: Ministry of Finance 2015-10-07)

General Information

Land Area	36,193 sq. km	Population	23.46 million (06/2015)
Capital	Taipei	Population of Capital	2.70million
National Day	October 10	Country Code	886
Currency	New Taiwan Dollar	Exchange Rate per USD	US\$1=NT\$ 30.36 (2014 Ave.)
Languages	Mandarin, Taiwanese, Hakka, Indigenous languages		
Religions	Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity, Islam		
Participation in IGOs	Member: 1. APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) since 1991 2. WTO (World Trade Organization) since 2002 3. ADB (Asian Development Bank) since 1966 Observer: 1. WHA (World Health Assembly of World Health Organization) since 2009 2. OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) – Competition Committee since 2002, Steel Committee since 2005, Fisheries Committee since 2006		

Government

Head of State	President MA Ying-Jeou
Cabinet	Premier Chi-Kuo MAO, Minister of Foreign Affairs David Y. L. LIN, Ministry of Economic Affairs Cheng-Chung DENG, Minister of Finance Sheng-Ford CHANG
Structure	The ROC government is divided into central, provincial and municipal, as well as county and city levels. The central government is consisted of the Office of the President and 5 branches (called “Yuan”) - the Executive Yuan (Cabinet), the Legislative Yuan, the Judicial Yuan, the Examination Yuan, and the Control Yuan. The Cabinet is headed by the Premier, who is appointed by the President of the R.O.C.
Major Political Parties	Kuomintang (KMT), Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), People First Party (PFP), Taiwan Solidarity Union

Economic Statistics of 2014

GDP	US\$5,297 billion	Economic Growth Rate	3.28%
GDP per capita	US\$24,118	Consumer Price Inflation	-0.65%
		Unemployment Rate	3.68%

Major Industries	electronics, communications and information technology products, chemicals, textiles, iron and steel, machinery, cement, pharmaceuticals
Exports	US\$ 212.4 billion (Jan.-September, 2015) US\$ 313.8 billion (2014) US\$ 305.4 billion (2013, up 1.4% of 2012)
Major Export Items	Electronic integrated circuits, Liquid crystal devices, Petroleum oils and oils obtained from bituminous minerals (non-crude), Telephone sets and other apparatus for transmission or reception of voice and images, Diodes, transistors and similar semiconductor devices, Printed circuit
Major Export Markets	China, Hong Kong, U.S., Japan, Singapore, Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia, Germany, Philippines
Imports	US\$173.84 billion (Jan.-September, 2015) US\$ 274.2 billion (2014) US\$ 270.0 billion (2013, down 0.1% of 2012)
Major Import Items	Electronic integrated circuits, Petroleum oils and oils obtained from bituminous minerals (crude and non-crude), Machines and apparatus of a kind used solely or principally for the manufacture of semiconductor boules or wafers, semiconductor devices, electronic integrated circuits or flat panel displays; machines, Petroleum gases and other gaseous hydro carbons, Coal; briquettes, ovoid and similar solid fuels manufactured from coal
Major Import Markets	Japan, China, U.S., Korea, Saudi Arabia, Australia, Germany, Malaysia, Singapore, Kuwait
Foreign Reserves	US\$426.3 billion (until September, 2015) (Source: Central Bank of the Republic of China (Taiwan))
Outward FDI	US\$ 8.09 billion (2012) US\$ 5.23 billion (2013) US\$ 7.29 billion (2014) (Source: Investment Commission, MOEA)
Inward Investment	US\$ 5.55 billion (2012) US\$ 4.93 billion (2013) US\$ 5.77 billion (2014) (Source: Investment Commission, MOEA)
Foreign Direct Investment	Stock: US\$ 134.8 billion (1952~2015.08) FDI: US\$ 1.38 billion (2015 01~08) (Source: Investment Commission, MOEA)

FTAs signed with Trading Partners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FTA between the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the Republic of Panama – August 21, 2003 2. FTA between the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the Republic of Guatemala – September 22, 2005 3. FTA between the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the Republic of Nicaragua–June 16, 2006 4. FTA between the Republic of China (Taiwan), the Republic of El Salvador, and the Republic of Honduras –May 7, 2007 5. ECFA(Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement)– June 29, 2010 6. ANZTEC (Agreement between New Zealand and Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu on Economic Cooperation)-July 10, 2013 7. ASTEP(Agreement between Singapore and the Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu on Economic Partnership)- November 7, 2013
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Sources: MOFA; Bureau of Foreign Trade, MOEA; Investment Commission, MOEA; EIU; National Statistics R.O.C; Dept. of Statistics, MOEA

2015 CIECA Tentative Event Plan
(Asia, Africa, Latin America, South Asia, Middle East)

Revised on 2015/10/12

No.	Date	Events	Venue
1.	January 27	Trade and Investment Opportunities in La Rioja, Argentina	Taipei
2.	February 4	The 29 th CACCI Conference Planning Committee Meeting	Hong Kong
3.	March 17	ICC's Permanent Heads of National Committees meeting	Singapore
4.	March 18	ICC's Extraordinary meeting of the ICC World Council	Singapore
5.	March 31- April 3	The 2nd Taiwan-Cambodia Joint Business Councils Meeting	Cambodia
6.	April 20	The 15 th Taiwan-Malaysia Joint Economic Conference	Taipei
7.	April-June	Trade and Investment Opportunities in Nicaragua	Taipei
8.	May 16-20 (Postponed)	The 12th Taiwan-Brazil Joint Business Councils Meeting	Taipei
9.	May 20-21	Annual ICC conference on Corporate Responsibility and Anti-Corruption	Paris
10.	May 26	The 14th Taiwan-Mongolia Joint Business Council Meeting	Taipei
11.	June 6-14	The 9th World Chambers Congress	Italy
12.	June 14-17	The 20th Joint Economic Cooperation Conference between Indonesia and Taiwan	Jakarta
13.	June 23	The 8th Taiwan-Argentina Joint Business Councils Meeting	Taipei
14.	July 24	Trade & Investment Opportunities in the Republic of Honduras	Taipei
15.	August 22- September 6	The 1st Taiwan-Morocco Joint Business Council Meeting	Casablanca (Maroco)
16.	August 22- September 6	The 2nd Taiwan-Sao Tome & Principe Joint Business Council Meeting	Sao Tome
17.	September 2-6	The 29th Joint Conference of ROC-Australia & Australia-Taiwan Business Council	Australia
18.	September 9	Trade and Investment Opportunities in El Salvador	Taipei
19.	September 8-10	The 40th Joint Conference of ROC-Korea and Korea-Taiwan Business Council	Seoul
20.	October 5	The 15th Taiwan-India Joint Business Councils Meeting	Taipei
21.	October 6	ICC Arbitration & ADR Seminar	Taipei

No.	Date	Events	Venue
22.	October 21-24 (postponed to 2016)	The 25th Joint Economic Cooperation Meeting between CIECA & FTI	Taipei
23.	October 29-30	The 29th CACCI Conference	Hong Kong
24.	November 9 (postponed to 2016)	The 21st Joint Business Council Meeting between CIECA & VCCI	Taipei
25.	November 14-15	B20	Turkey
26.	December	The 4th Taiwan-Saudi Joint Business Councils Meeting	Taipei

2015 CIECA Tentative Event Plan Europe

Revised on 2015/10/8

No.	Date	Events	Venue
1.	March 25	Seminar on Business Cooperation Opportunities in Ireland	Taipei
2.	May 8	The 21 st Taiwan-Holland Joint Business Council Meeting	Hague (Holland)
3.	May 11	The 1 st Taiwan-Croatia Joint Business Council Meeting	Zagreb (Croatia)
4.	May 18	The 3 rd Taiwan-Portugal Joint Business Council Meeting	Lisbon, (Portugal)
5.	May 21	The 19 th Taiwan-Spain Business Cooperation Committee	Madrid, Bacelona (Spain)
6.	June 3	Seminar on Business Cooperation Opportunities in Romania	Taipei
7.	June 10	The 13th Taiwan-Poland Joint Business Council Meeting	Warsaw (Poland)
8.	June 12	The 4th Taiwan-Bulgaria Joint Business Council Meeting	Sofia (Bulgaria)
9.	June 23	The 4 th Taiwan-Italy Joint Business Council Meeting	Taipei
10.	June 25	Seminar on Business Cooperation Opportunities in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Taipei
11.	The first or second week of September (postponed)	Seminar on Business Cooperation Opportunities in Russia	Taipei
12.	September 3	The 15th Taiwan-Germany Joint Business Council Meeting	Taipei
13.	September 7-11 (postponed to 2016)	The 6 th Taiwan-Turkey Joint Business Council Meeting	Istanbul (Turkey)
14.	September 7-11 (postponed to 2016)	The 3 rd Taiwan-Georgia Joint Business Council Meeting	Tbilisi (Georgia)
15.	September 15	The 11 th Taiwan-Hungary Joint Business Council Meeting	Taipei
16.	September 21	The 31st Taiwan –Sweden Joint Business Council Meeting	Stockholm (Sweden)
17.	September 24	The 4 th Taiwan-Finland Business Forum	Helsinki (Finland)
18.	September 25	The 3 rd Taiwan-Norway Joint Business Council Meeting	Oslo (Norway)
19.	October 1	Taiwan Economic & Trade Delegation to Switzerland and Italy	Zurich (Swiss)

No.	Date	Events	Venue
		The 1 st Taiwan-Swiss Joint Business Council Meeting	
20.	October 4-8	Taiwan Economic & Trade Delegation to Switzerland and Italy	Milan (Italy)
21.	October 13	The 14th Taiwan-Czech Republic Joint Business Council Meeting	Taipei
22.	October 17-20	Taiwan Economic & Trade Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania and Albania	Bucharest
23.	October 21-24	Taiwan Economic & Trade Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania and Albania	Sarajevo , Mostar
24.	October 24-28	Taiwan Economic & Trade Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania and Albania	Tirana
25.	November	The 17 th Joint Meeting of Taiwan Britain Business Council	Taipei (Postponed to 2016)
26.	November 2-8	The 4 th Estonia-Taiwan Business Forum	Taipei
27.	November 9	The 8 th Taiwan-Austria Joint Business Council Meeting	Taipei
28.	November 12	The 8th Taiwan-Luxembourg Joint Business Council Meeting	Taipei
29.	November 19	The 16 th Taiwan- Belgium Joint Business Council Meeting	Taipei