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**STRATEGIC ALLIANCES WILL OPEN DOOR TO FREEDOM, SAYS LEE
FORMER TAIWAN PRESIDENT ADDRESSES INFLUENTIAL CROWD AT
FORMOSA FOUNDATION EVENT**

LOS ANGELES— Former Taiwan President Lee Teng-Hui today addressed a prominent crowd of public officials, business leaders, key scholars, and national and international media at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in an event sponsored by the Formosa Foundation. The focus of Lee's remarks was strategic directions for freedom in Asia.

"Free nations must develop and strengthen their global and regional cooperation in supporting the people of China in their struggle for freedom and democracy," Lee told attendees. "Only in this way will we eventually see a China that respects the universal human rights of its people, a China that has renounced tyranny, and a China that is ready to take its place among the family of free nations in Asia.

"As long as the capital from free countries continues to pour into China, China's already oppressive practices will become more entrenched and the ensuing and ever-expanding militarism will make the likelihood of a transition to a peaceful country ever more unlikely."

Lee noted Taiwan's emergence as a democracy. "During the past 300 years, Taiwan had been a colony of Holland, under the rule of Koxinga, the Manchu empire, Japan, and the Chinese Nationalist Party," he said. "In the decade between 1986 and 1996, Taiwan transitioned from rule by a foreign power—the Chinese Nationalist party or KMT, to a democracy. The people of Taiwan gave me an opportunity to become witness to history."

Lee concluded his remarks with a call to action for democratic Asian countries: "to cooperate fully, join together to resist China's strategy of division, and bring the light of freedom to the darkest corners of Asia."

Lee's visit to the United States has sharpened the debate on Taiwan's sovereignty and engendered widely reported criticism from China. "Why is the principle of democracy which our county is founded considered so radical when applied to Taiwan?" said Terri Giles, executive director of the Formosa Foundation. "President Lee stands for freedom and liberty, as does the United States."

Lee was Taiwan's first freely elected head of state, serving as president from 1988 to 2000. He paved the way for political reforms in the nation, peacefully transforming the once totalitarian regime into a democracy. As a private citizen, Lee remains highly respected in Taiwan for his dedication to building and solidifying the sovereignty of Taiwan.

Lee's 1995 trip to the U.S., to deliver a speech at his alma mater, Cornell University, angered China who subsequently launched test missiles into shipping lanes of Taiwan's two major ports, intensifying the ongoing date over Taiwan's sovereignty.

The Los Angeles-based Formosa Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting greater understanding of the relationship between Taiwan and the United States, and preserving and enhancing democracy, human rights and freedom for the people of Taiwan.