

**THE FIRST 100 DAYS: TSAI ING-WEN'S
“HONEYMOON” PERIOD IN OFFICE**

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Executive Summary

1. Taiwan's president-elect, Tsai Ing-wen, has since assumption of office remained faithful to her campaign-era philosophy of presenting herself as a moderate individual, and an experienced and prudent leader. Her actions are in line with her status quo preference.
2. Tsai has prioritised economic development, in particular R&D, and greater economic ties with South and Southeast Asia.
3. She has appointed to her cabinet, mostly scholars, the classes most associated with officialdom in Chinese politics, not much different from the Ma administration.
4. After 100 days of assumption of office, surveys reflected that 80% of the Taiwanese think that the economy is bad.
5. Tsai made her first formal apology to Taiwanese indigenous people for past unfair practices. She pledged to increase the autonomy and rights of the indigenous people during her election campaign, which won many votes for the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in the January 2016 general election.
6. For cross-strait relations, both Tsai and Beijing will have to find common interests even as they draw their boundary markers.
7. Taiwan's response to the Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling also presents an opportunity for cross-strait relations as China and Taiwan share similar historical linkage and interests in the South China Sea. Tsai's weakening stance on the issue has negatively affected her public support.
8. Tsai's approval rating has dropped to 45.5% since she took office. Nearly 45% of respondents identified with the DPP, more than double the number of people who identified with the Kuomintang. Poll results show that Tsai's falling approval rating is due to poor crisis management of cross-strait, diplomatic and domestic issues.

9. The bilateral communication mechanism between Taipei and Beijing has been suspended after the new Tsai government failed to recognise the “1992 consensus” which is highly emphasised by China.
10. Overall, due to the power transition in China and Taiwanese attempts to maintain status quo, Beijing-Taiwan relations are likely to be risk-averse for the near future.