

**DOMESTIC POLITICS AND FOREIGN
POLICIES OF THE TSAI ING-WEN
GOVERNMENT: A REVISIONIST
PATH**

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Executive Summary

1. Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen has made great efforts in forming a new government that delinks Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) membership from ministerial level positions.
2. Domestically, Tsai faces difficulties in pushing reforms as campaign promises generally cannot survive reality check. The energy supply reform and importation of US pork are two examples.
3. Her predecessor, the Ma government, was unable to push through economic reforms, leaving Taiwan's economy in stagnancy. The Tsai administration needs to address structural problems by instituting investment-relevant regulations and addressing the wealth distribution issue.
4. Tsai's party leadership is slowly but steadily establishing a foothold. One looming challenge is from the deep green force.
5. Tsai has yet to clarify her position on the "92 consensus" insisted by the People's Republic of China. Taiwan's attendance to the World Health Assembly can be deemed as a test of Tsai's cross-strait position.
6. In Tsai's inauguration statement on 20 May, Tsai had placed cross-strait relation in the broader context of Taiwan's regional relations to balance Chinese growing influence in Taiwan.
7. Tsai has also placed great importance on joining the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). However, its participation in the TPP could be hampered by China in the face of plunging cross-strait relations and the over-politicised atmosphere in Taiwan which blinded rational and objective discussion.
8. Taiwan is also facing difficulties in the South China Sea scenario. Tsai is likely to take a low profile position and skirt around direct confrontations.

9. The Tsai government needs to consider these issues when pushing through domestic reforms: policy communications of various aspects, the president-DPP-government relations, and issues that involve both law and politics.
10. In cross-strait and foreign relations, Tsai could not afford to ignore the Chinese factor. Certain diplomatic tensions could be expected.