

**TAIWAN'S POLITICS IN 2016:
MOVEMENT GOVERNMENT AND
MOVEMENT SOCIETY**

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Executive Summary

1. The year 2016 has been an eventful year for Taiwan, a year marked by presidential and legislative elections, regime change, frequent social protests and rapidly deteriorating cross-strait relations.
2. The Tsai administration adopted a least provocative China policy to allow it to focus on solving difficult domestic issues. Industrial upgrade, pension and judicial reforms are among the administration's top priorities.
3. The Tsai administration had a tumultuous first seven months in office. Negatively impacted social groups organised several large scale protests against the pension and the Labor Standards Act reforms and the legalisation of same-sex marriage promoted by the Tsai administration.
4. The approval ratings of Tsai and her administration have since trended downwards; by end 2016, the majority of the public were dissatisfied with Tsai.
5. The Kuomintang (KMT) on the other hand has been beset by an unpopular pro-China leader, open internal conflicts, lack of financial sources and significantly low popularity. The Hung Hsiu-chu and Xi Jinping meeting did not boost the party's popularity nor its members' morale.
6. The Chinese government has frozen all official connections with Taiwan at the central level, provided favourable programmes only to Taiwan's local governors of the blue (pro-KMT) camp, blocked Taiwan's participation in some international conferences, and criticised Tsai's "soft and gentle pro-independence activities".
7. The phone call between Tsai and US President-elect Donald Trump has been considered a breakthrough in the Tsai administration's struggle for international recognition; it also signals unstable Taiwan-China-US triangle relations for the coming Trump presidency.