

Cross-Party Group on Taiwan

Wednesday, 3rd September 2025 6:00pm

Minutes

Present

MSPs

- **Jamie Greene MSP**
- **Jeremy Balfour MSP**
- **Karen Adam MSP**
- **Clare Adamson MSP**

Invited guest

- **Yi-Chieh Hu**

Non-MSP Group Members

- **Director General Chi-hua Ding**
- **Richard Huang**
- **Hui-lin Ho**
- **Stuart Grant Parliamentary Researcher**
- **Ian Hamilton Parliamentary Assistant**
- **Guy Bewick**
- **Ya-wen Lai**
- **Leeming Chen**
- **Cabybara Liao**
- **Pei-yu Lan**
- **Shan-hao Sung**
- **Yu-chun Hung**
- **Rocco Craven**
- **James Little**
- **Luke Reid**

Apologies

- **Rhoda Grant MSP**
- **Miles Briggs MSP**
- **Beatrice Wishart MSP**
- **Hsien-Lin Ro**

- **Lindesay Low**
- **Chih-Cheng Chen**

Agenda item 1: Welcome Remarks

Jamie Greene MSP chaired the AGM and warmly welcomed the members and friends of the CPG on Taiwan.

Introductions were made, including:

- Karen Adam MSP
- Director General Ding of the Taipei Representative Office in the UK, Edinburgh Office
- A representative from Rhoda Grant MSP's office
- Jeremy Balfour MSP

It was noted that Rhoda Grant MSP had sent her apologies due to a family matter.

Director General Ding delivered welcome remarks, thanking all attendees for their participation.

To commemorate the close ties between Scotland and Taiwan, Jamie Greene MSP and Rhoda Grant MSP had lodged two motions in the Scottish Parliament in June:

1. Celebrating the 160th anniversary of Sin-Lau Hospital and the health ties between Scotland and Taiwan.
2. Recognising the trade relationship between Taiwan and Scotland.

Ding expressed gratitude to all MSPs for supporting these motions and highlighted another example of historical connection: a hospital in Taiwan built by Canadian missionary Rev. Dr. George Leslie Mackay, whose parents were of Scottish origin. He expressed his hope that these initiatives would continue to strengthen Scotland–Taiwan relations.

Agenda item 2: Guest Presentation

Topic: Policing and Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective: Challenges and Lessons from Taiwan and Scotland

Speaker: Hu Yi-Chieh, Taiwanese doctoral student at the University of Edinburgh

Yi-Chieh presented her research on gender equality within the Taiwanese police force.

She began by sharing her personal experiences as a female police officer, describing how members of the public often questioned whether she was a “real” police officer due to gendered stereotypes.

Her presentation traced the development of women’s roles in the Taiwanese police force, starting from the post-1947 period when female officers were largely assigned to cases involving women and children, serving more symbolic than substantive roles.

She explained how Taiwan’s rapid economic growth and industrialisation in the 1970s, together with the rise of feminist movements, gradually expanded opportunities for female officers, although they continued to be treated as exceptions rather than equals.

Key milestones highlighted included:

- The 1996 murder of Peng Wan-ru, which triggered widespread protests and led to the enactment of the Sexual Assault Crime Prevention Act and the Domestic Violence Prevention Act, with women officers playing a critical role in enforcement.

- In 2016, former president Tsai Ing-wen was elected as Taiwan’s first female president, a milestone that sent a powerful message about women’s visibility in public life.

- in 2019, Taiwan became the first country in Asia to legalise same-sex marriage. That same year, two male police officers became one of the very first couples in the force to marry under the new law. Their marriage was not just personal—it symbolised how commitments to equality had reached into the police institution itself.

- Currently the highest-ranking female police officer in Taiwan is Deputy Director-General Liao Mei-Ling. In 2025, she was honoured with the Leadership Award from the International Association of Women Police. She was recognised for spearheading the digitalisation of domestic violence reporting—an innovation that has had a direct impact on victims’ ability to access justice.

- The recent #MeToo movement in Taiwan, which prompted reforms and increased institutional accountability for addressing gender-based harassment and discrimination.

Despite this progress, Yi-Chieh noted continuing challenges, such as the dismissal of Ye Ji-yuan, the “long-haired policeman,” for violating grooming standards—illustrating how entrenched gender norms still affect police officers’ daily lives.

She concluded by emphasising the importance of gender equality in policing, not only for internal institutional culture but also for building trust and positive relationships with the communities served.

Discussion on the Presentation

Members engaged in a lively exchange of views, reflecting on gender equality in policing and other public institutions.

The group acknowledged Taiwan's progress while recognising that significant challenges remain. Comparisons were drawn with Scotland, referencing the recent appointment of a female Chief Constable and ongoing debates about institutional misogyny.

Discussions touched on the potential benefits of having more women in policing, including their capacity to de-escalate tense situations and strengthen community trust.

Members also explored differences in public perception of female officers, particularly in high-pressure contexts such as political protests.

Agenda item 3: General Discussion on CPG

- Members agreed to schedule the next AGM soon.
- Continued engagement and support for the Cross-Party Group was encouraged.
- The next meeting date would be confirmed, with the possibility of an online option to facilitate broader participation.
- Future presentations would cover a wider range of topics to foster exchanges of ideas and further strengthen Scotland–Taiwan ties.

The meeting concluded with informal discussions over refreshments.