

## Foreword

By Patrick Huang, Co-founder of TAAC

### **The season changes but don't forget the sunflower.**

Looking back on Taiwan's Sunflower Movement 10 years afterwards, the most striking result was that Taiwan's so-called "Quiet Revolution" finally blossomed for the first time. Less than two years later, Tsai Ing-wen won the presidential election, bringing unprecedented changes to Taiwan. The series of revolutionary changes we witnessed made the Quiet Revolution finally worthy of its name.

The Quiet Revolution began as early as 1988 when Lee Teng-Hui came to power, determined to introduce democracy to Taiwan. He instituted popular elections, but this is not the same as establishing democracy. Taiwan went through three presidents, two changes of the ruling party over the ensuing quarter of a century.

However, it was not until the Sunflower Movement on March 18, 2014 that real change came to Taiwan. Before the movement, Taiwan was actually neither "quiet" nor "revolutionary." The party-state system remained the same; uncivilized jungle politics continued as usual; successive governments were either unwilling or powerless to effect meaningful reforms. Even the political elites were the same old, lifeless bunch. This was a country skipped by the spring and its fresh breeze.

Fortunately, the young people of Sunflower awakened the sleeping God of Spring. The craze they set off to control their destiny and save the country swept across Taiwan. Not only did they help the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) return to power, but they also in one fell swoop broke down the dominance in Congress that the Kuomintang (KMT) had engineered since 1949. The DPP has become the largest party in Congress. For the first time in history, it had the power to lead changes. And did President Tsai Ing-wen ever disappoint? She took full advantage of the opportunity, leading a very capable and determined government that allowed Taiwan to stand up and stand out in the world. She has tirelessly transformed Taiwan society into a completely new look, and achieved a peaceful revolution that lives up to its name.

Unfortunately, none of the peers of the Sunflower in other countries were as lucky or fared as well. They included the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong (2014), the Independence Square Movement in Ukraine (2013), the Chilean Winter Student Movement (2013), the Arab Spring Movement (2010). The checkered records of their struggle, from having some measured success to being totally crushed, mean that we must continue to stand bravely with them, care for them and help them without hesitation. But this uneven result also in many ways testifies to the unique Goldilocks-like national character of Taiwan, including restraint and tolerance on the part of the ruling and opposition parties and society at large. These characteristics are currently

being displayed in all aspects, making Taiwan stand out in the world and becoming a recognized force for good, even leaving China, which is deliberately trying to blockade and suppress Taiwan, feeling desperate and helpless.

In this age of misinformation, critics with ulterior motives are vilifying the young people of Sunflower as misbehaved children and despising them as brats. The truth instead is we owe them gratitude and a warm hug! Let us stand together, raise our voices, cheer them and thank them for changing and saving Taiwan! They are the true heroes and the pride of the Taiwanese people!

To all friends of freedom, democracy and human rights, I say seasons change and so do we, but whatever you do, Never Forget the Sunflower!

春去秋來歲月流轉 但請勿忘太陽花

10年後回顧台灣的太陽花運動，最鮮明的成果是讓前後歷時25年的所謂「寧靜革命」第一次出現落實的契機，不到兩年蔡英文總統勝選，帶給台灣前所未見的一連串革命性變革，讓寧靜「革命」終於名符其實。

寧靜革命早自1988年李登輝總統上台執政就已經開始，又歷經2000年第一次政黨輪替陳水扁總統上台、2008年第二次政黨輪替馬英九總統上台，但直到2014年3月18日太陽花運動發生之前，台灣其實既不寧靜也沒革命，黨國體制依舊，初暴政治照常，朝小野大改革無力，菁英政治清一色老面孔，死氣沈沈。這是一個被春天跳過的國家。

幸好，太陽花的年青人搖醒了沈睡的春神，他們所掀起的掌握命運改革救國熱潮橫掃全台，不但協助民進黨重新執政，更一舉沖垮國民黨萬年盤據的國會高牆，讓民進黨成為國會最大黨，而且享有國會過半的優勢，第一次歷史性的掌握主導變革的權力。蔡英文總統努力不懈，有政府會做事，讓台灣站起來走出去，讓台灣社會脫胎換骨面貌一新，成就名實相符的寧靜革命。

反觀國際上與太陽花同世代的青年救國運動，包括香港雨傘運動（2014）、烏克蘭獨立廣場運動（2013）、智利之冬學生運動（2013）、阿拉伯之春運動（2010）等等，他們的抗爭前仆後繼，他們的犧牲血跡斑斑，然而他們的曙光都很短暫，命運都很淒涼，熱血澆灌的民主自由的花朵沒有綻放、公平正義的夢想也沒有到來。

他們失去生命所換來的卻是和太陽花運動天差地別的結果，實在令人扼腕唏噓不已。我們必須繼續勇敢的和他們站在一起，關心他們協助他們，義無旁貸。同時我們必須更加重視自己，更加珍惜美麗寶島的特質，包括朝野政黨和台灣社會的克制與包容。這些特質目前

正在各方面大放送，發光發熱，讓台灣在國際上脫穎而出，成為舉世公認的良善力量。桃李不言下自成蹊，讓處心積慮封鎖打壓台灣的中國也徒呼負負莫可奈何。爽！

太陽花的年青人現在被一些別有用心的批評者醜化為大腸花、甚至鄙稱為屁孩...。我們欠他們一個公道，一個熱烈的擁抱！今天讓我們站在一起高舉雙手歡呼他們，大聲感謝他們救了我們的國家！我們要高呼他們是全世界青年救國，改變國家命運的一流典範，是台灣人民心中的英雄和驕傲！直到永遠！