



Press Release

9 November 2009

Berlin Wall in Taiwan Unveiled

Witness to the pursuit and realization of democracy, human rights, and freedom

The “Berlin Wall in Taiwan” donation and unveiling ceremony took place today at 11 am at the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD), organized by the Memorial Foundation of 228 with assistance from the TFD. Invited guests from the government, the diplomatic corps, and related scholars and experts attended this historic occasion, at which the keynote speech was delivered by former East German human rights activist Jörn Mothes.

In their opening remarks, TFD Chairman and Speaker of the Legislative Yuan Wang Jin-pyng and Memorial Foundation for 228 Chairman Chan Chi-shean expressed the deep significance of the Wall as a symbol of democracy, human rights, and freedom. They also thanked the Landrat of Oberhavel County, Mr. Karl-Heinz Shröter, for his generous donation of the wall segment to the people of Taiwan as a symbol of their pursuit of these universal values.

Dr. Chen Jin-huang, founding Chairman of the Hsin Kang Foundation and former Chairman of the Memorial Foundation of 228 played a key role in bringing the Wall to Taiwan. In his speech he described how the the people of Oberhavel and Hsin Kang (a township in Chaiyi County) have had increasingly deep exchanges since 1998. On his visit to Germany in April 2009 as Chairman of the Memorial Foundation of 228, he paid another visit to Oberhavel. When Landrat Shröter learned of the mission of the Memorial Foundation of 228, he offered to donate a 2.5 ton segment of the Wall in appreciation of the mission of the foundation to promote democracy and the protection of human rights. As Chairman Chen stated, “I thought such a precious gift ought not to be the sole property of our foundation, but we needed to find the best place for its permanent display.” Meeting with Chairman Wang after his return, the two foundations agreed to cooperate to realize this initiative.

Speaking at the ceremony on behalf of Foreign Minister Timothy Chin-tien Yang, Deputy Foreign Minister Shen Lyushun related how he had visited Berlin just one month before the Wall fell, and how, viewing the elaborate security mechanisms at the Wall, could not imagine that it would be gone so soon, and the whole East German regime with it. As he stated, “This shows the victory of the soft power of democracy and freedom.” Mrs. Birgitt Ory, Director General of the German Institute Taipei introduced the keynote speaker, Mr. Mothes, who is renowned in Europe for his work to promote human rights in East Germany. In his address, Mr. Mothes not only described the process by which the Wall was brought down peacefully by the people, but also highlighted the sacrifices made by so many for democracy and freedom.

In his speech, Chairman Wang stated, “Now, twenty years to the day after it fell, the Berlin Wall is standing here before the people of Taiwan. In this temporary placement in the TFD’s garden, it fits quite well with our original display of works by the renowned Taiwanese sculptor Ju Ming. Here, the Wall which symbolizes the pursuit of democracy, freedom, and human rights meets the statues of Tai Chi, which are full of harmony. It is my fondest wish that the people of Taiwan will be blessed with harmony as we continue to develop our democracy.” He also promised that the Wall will be given a permanent home in the TFD’s new building site, as a public monument for all to see.

Both the TFD and the Memorial Foundation of 228 are established to deepen and consolidate Taiwanese democracy. Always remembering that democracy, freedom, and human rights are a joyous way of life, they will continue to work together with the people of Taiwan to build a beautiful future for the country.

Media Contacts:

- Memorial Foundation of 228: Mr. Liu, 02-23610028, ext. 250
- Taiwan Foundation for Democracy: Ms. Liu, 02-2708-0100, ext. 133