TERRY MILLS TALKS HUMAN RIGHTS AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES IN TAIWAN

Terry Mills' study leave in Taiwan has seen the Deputy Leader of the Opposition join a press conference with the Vice President of Taiwan to voice joint support for the pro-democracy movement in Burma, as well as taking positive steps to better position the Northern Territory to participate in the expanding trade links between Australia and Taiwan.

"I must say, it was quite an honour to share the national spotlight with the Taiwanese Vice President, Annette Lu, and have the opportunity of promoting the cause of democracy in Burma," say Mr Mills.

"In the eighties, I spent time supporting the Karen ethnic group on both sides of the Thai/Burma border, so the issue is one close to my heart.

"Vice President Lu is acutely aware of the importance of democratic rights, having spent five years in gaol as a prisoner of conscience in her own country.

"As the Vice President stated: 'The continued oppression by the military junta is not just detrimental to the Burmese people, but also to the stability and prosperity of South East Asia.'

"Tapping into the growing prosperity of Taiwan has also been a prime objective of this trip. Taiwan is Australia’s seventh largest export market. In addition to being a secure trading partner, it is also provides unique access to the market in China. The economic boom in China is driven by Taiwanese capital and know-how.

"Western Australia and Queensland have richly benefited through establishing offices in Taipei to promote trade and investment with the respective states.

"The establishment of a presence in Taiwan is in the Territory's interest; meetings with Australian and New Zealand exporters here confirm this.

"A senior member of the Taiwanese Parliament (Yuan), Professor Wu has accepted my invitation to visit Darwin in December to access the Taiwan NT trade opportunities. Professor Wu is a member of the Yuan’s Economics and Energy Committee, Chair of the Taiwan Agricultural Academia Alliance and a member of the Executive Committee of Taiwan Thinktank, a peak advisory body to the President of Taiwan.

"I’ve also met with Taiwan’s Deputy Minister for Economic Affairs, Fadah Hsieh, Yuen-Chuan Chao the President and CEO of Taiwan’s External Trade Development Council and Victor Te-sun Yu, Deputy Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"My original assessment has been confirmed; in order for the Territory to punch above weight in regional trade we must work hard and smart. Taiwan presents an excellent opportunity to do just that.”

Further comment: Terry Mills 0418 833 594