

Remarks by President Chen Press Conference Office of the President

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1.Regarding a complete ballot recount:

Since the Central Election Commission officially proclaimed the electees of the presidential election on March 26, it is clear that a judicial ballot recount will proceed much faster than an administrative ballot recount. As soon as a lawsuit is filed for nullification of the election or nullification of an electee's status, I will be willing to sign a written agreement for the holding of a judicial ballot recount. The Lien-Soong camp will not need to provide evidence, and the task of a complete ballot recount can begin. I will fully accept the result of the ballot recount, and hope that Messrs. Lien and Soong will also pledge that they will unconditionally accept the result of a complete ballot recount.

2.Regarding the gunshot incident:

Everyone is welcomed to recommend the best and most appropriate investigators to participate in solving this case. I am most eager to know the answers to this event and the motivation for the crime. I am very grateful to Lu Ren-fa, State Public Prosecutor General of the Supreme Court, who is willing to act as convener of an independent special case taskforce. Moreover, I am willing to accept participation in this investigation of Dr. Henry Lee and Dr. Shih Tai-ping who have been recommended by the opposition camp. All steps taken will be open and transparent, and I hope the truth will come to light soon.

3.Regarding the national security mechanism:

Initiation of the national security mechanism is not the issuance of an emergency decree, nor is it the imposition of martial law. The national security mechanism has previously been initiated in response to the September 21, 1999 earthquake and during the SARS outbreak to remind heads of national security agencies and ministers to monitor the development of major events, and any related political, economic and social impacts, so that they could make timely responses to control the situation and not impact people's lives.

The effect of initiation of the national security mechanism this time on voting by troops required to be on duty is very clear. Plans had been in place for two months before the election and not a single additional person was placed on duty because of the initiation of the security mechanism. In particular, in comparison with 1996, the proportion of troops required to be on duty was reduced from one-sixth in that year to one-ninth this year. Initiation of the national security mechanism in no way affected the voting by any military personnel on duty.

4.Regarding meetings with opposition leaders:

I hope to arrange meetings with Messrs. Lien and Soong for this coming Monday, and will request Secretary-General of the Office of the President Chiou I-jen to contact their aides as quickly as possible.

Protests in front of the Office of the President have continued for one week already, and this cannot be allowed indefinitely. I hope the crowds will disperse voluntarily, and have requested related government departments to restore social order before Monday. I hope Mayor Ma Ying-jeou will shoulder the responsibility for resolving this illegal gathering, and not have double standards out of consideration for popular support. I hope also that the public will support the government's determination and action.