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To the citizens of Taiwan

By Arnold Dix

I write to congratulate Taiwan for its effective response to the Typhoon Morakot disaster of 2009.

In my view Taiwan's response is testament to the high quality of governance in your country, the kind will of your people and a clear and effective mandate of your politicians for effective government.

From my external perspective this is reflected in Taiwan's willingness and ability to pass emergency laws, engage in co-operative arrangements between different levels of government, the private sector and NGOs, and, most importantly, to facilitate the rebirth of devastated parts of your community at a personal human level.

My inspection of your new rebuilt communities including housing, places of worship, businesses and farming enterprises (and discussions with those

whom call these new places home) proved to be an excellent example for the world on how to transform disaster into new opportunities and rebirth.

Please do not misunderstand my commendations — in no way do I seek to obscure the extraordinary efforts of so many and the enormous obstacles to success which must have been overcome to achieve this success. I congratulate the individuals, ministers, President, NGOs and Taiwan's private sector for their achievements — I congratulate Taiwan.

Your achievements provide both inspiration and learning's for other countries, cities, communities and individuals responding to disasters.

(Arnold Dix is a lawyer, scientist and professor of population mental health and disasters at University of West Sydney Australia)