

MAC Warns Taiwan Affairs Office that Gratuitous Insults Create Cross-Strait Tensions and Arouse Resentment of Taiwan People

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The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) issued a response regarding deceptive claims by the Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) spokesperson that Taiwan's Premier spread rumors about mainland China's cover-ups of the epidemic situation to incite discrimination and hatred (March 24, 2020). The MAC noted that in the face of the highly severe COVID-19 outbreak across the world and government authorities all prioritizing their disease prevention work, rather than cooperating genuinely with other parties to combat the epidemic, the Mainland authority resorted to repeated provocation and launched propaganda campaigns around the world, which sent messages completely contrary to the facts recognized by the international society. Meanwhile, the Mainland authority steps up their verbal menace, military threats, and vile criticism against Taiwan with an intent to fuel cross-Strait tensions. The MAC expressed deep regret over these actions.

Premier Su Tseng-chang stated during an interview that pandemics recognize no borders. The COVID-19 pandemic would not have been so grave had mainland China not concealed the epidemic but released warnings to the world in the early stages. Such statement was not far from the widely recognized facts regarding the epidemic. From the silencing and suppressing of the late Dr. Li Wenliang, who issued an "early warning" of the coronavirus, it was evident that mainland China has inappropriately covered up the virus cases, which later led to the pandemic outbreak that took a major toll around the world. In fact, even mainland netizens labeled the government's actions to conceal the epidemic and simultaneously suppress freedom of speech as "silencing the whistleblowers, locking-down the cities." Premier Su's statements are true. Taiwan does not accept the repeated vulgar language and political nonsense spouted by the TAO. Their incessant politicizing and buck-passing makes it

difficult to deal with problems rationally and was entirely unhelpful to cross-Strait interaction.

The MAC sternly warns the TAO that gratuitous insults cannot divert the public' s attention or allow the authorities to shirk responsibilities. Escalation of cross-Strait tensions will only fuel resentment in people of Taiwan.