

## **Public Opinion Strongly Approves the Policy Position of Cross-Strait Peace and Support Communication and Dialogue between the Two Sides without Preconditions**

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The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) announced the results of a routine public opinion survey on November 3, 2017. The survey found that more than 80% of the people support the government's firm defense of national sovereignty and dignity and the well-being of the people and commitment to maintaining peaceful and stable development across the Taiwan Strait (81.8%), and support the policy position that Taiwan's future and the development of cross-Strait relations must be decided by the 23 million people of Taiwan (84.9%). Moreover, nearly 90% of the people think that the leaders of the two sides should work together in the changing situation to find a new model for interaction and lay a foundation for peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait (88.6%). More than 70% of the public also think the two sides should pragmatically handle cross-Strait affairs through dialogue and communication without preconditions (76.2%).

The MAC stressed that maintaining benign cross-Strait interaction and achieving the people's well-being is a mutual responsibility and objective of the two sides. Mainland China should present new ways of thinking and face up to the Taiwan people's unshakable conviction on national sovereignty and dignity and the democratic system. The survey found that over 70% of the public agree that mainland China should pragmatically face up to the fact that the Republic of China (ROC) is a sovereign state (73.9%). More than 60% of the public do not agree with mainland China's insistence that its political positions serve as the basis for developing cross-Strait relations (66%). A similar percentage feel that mainland China should stop unilaterally tightening cross-Strait exchanges and intimidating Taiwan with military exercises and training to help the benign development of cross-Strait relations (64.2%).

The survey results further showed that over 70% of the public support President Tsai Ing-wen's position of not changing the government's goodwill and commitments and not reverting to the old path of confrontation nor bowing to pressure in the handling of cross-Strait relations (70.3%). A similar percentage support the position that the two sides should cherish the accumulated achievements and goodwill from the past 30 years of exchanges and seek breakthroughs in cross-Strait relations on the existing basis (78.2%). Regarding other cross-

Strait issues long observed by the MAC, the MAC indicated that the great majority of the public continue to advocate "maintaining the status quo defined in a broader sense" (85.2%), maintaining a stable long-term trend. As for views on the pace of cross-Strait exchanges, 36.3% of the public believe it to be "just right," followed by the percentages believing the pace to be "too fast" and "too slow" at 8.5% and 40.8% respectively.

The MAC stated that during the past 30 years of cross-Strait exchanges, the two sides have upheld the concept of "putting the people first" and the spirit of setting aside disputes and seeking mutual understanding. This is the key to maintaining benign cross-Strait interactions. Facing the new situation, the two sides should set aside differences, seek common ground, and work to create new opportunities for cross-Strait cooperation. The MAC called on the Mainland authorities to discard their hostile, threatening and confrontational thinking and actions. On the basis of interaction and exchanges between the two sides over the past 30 years, the two sides should resolve political differences through communication and dialogue and jointly find a new model for cross-Strait interaction beneficial to the long-term development of relations between the two sides.

The MAC commissioned the Election Study Center of National Chengchi University to conduct a telephone survey of adults aged 20 and over in Taiwan from October 27 to 31, 2017. A total of 1,077 valid samples were collected, with a sampling error of 2.99% at a 95% confidence level. The survey results were weighted by the respondents' gender, age, education level, and region after testing sample representativeness.