

Majority of the Public Adhere to Defending the ROC and Strongly do not Identify with Beijing's Political and Military Intimidation and Pressuring of Taiwan

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The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) announced the results of a routine public opinion survey on November 1, 2018. The survey indicated that nearly 80% of the public believe that mainland China's persistent political, diplomatic, and military intimidation and suppression of Taiwan undermine the cross-Strait status quo and regional peace (78.3%). Nearly 70% do not identify with the Mainland's repeatedly stressed position that "the two sides belong to one China" as a political precondition for cross-Strait interaction and Taiwan's international participation (68.7%). A majority of the public support the president's position that defending the sustainable development of the Republic of China and maintaining cross-Strait peace and regional stability are the greatest common denominators among all people of Taiwan (63%).

The survey showed that more than 60% of the public support the president's guarantee that, facing pressure from mainland China, Taiwan will not escalate confrontation, will not give in, will not be provoked into confrontation or conflicts, and will not deviate from the will of the people (62.1%). More than 80% of the public believe that Taiwan's future and the development of cross-Strait relations must be decided by the 23 million people of Taiwan (85.9%). In addition, the mainstream public in Taiwan supports the government's approach of adhering to the values of freedom and democracy, cooperating with other like-minded countries, and jointly promoting peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait and the larger region (79%).

The MAC further stated that the government has been firm and consistent on its cross-Strait policy position of maintaining diverse and benign exchanges and interaction across the Taiwan Strait and protecting national security and interests and the rights and interests of the people. The survey showed that more than 50% of the public believe that mainland China's recent promotion of the issuance of residence permits to Taiwanese people is part of its political united front (55.7%) strategy. Nearly 50% of the public support the government's

proposal to amend rules to require Mainland residence permit holders to report and register with the competent authorities (49.3%). Over 70% of the public support strengthening cross-Strait related laws and regulations and carrying out necessary management measures (72.5%). More than 80% support the government's position that before having cross-Strait exchanges and cooperation concerning the rights and interests of the people and government authority, the two sides should first communicate and interact (86.8%).

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" (83.4%), maintaining a stable long-term trend. As for views on the pace of cross-Strait exchanges, 33% of the public believe it to be "just right," followed by the percentages believing the pace to be "too fast" and "too slow" at 10% and 39.7%, respectively.

The MAC stressed that mainland China has never abandoned its two-pronged strategy against Taiwan of strong-arm pressuring and united front roping in. Recently, it has gone even further with political manipulation, improper public opinion propaganda, and other tactics to increase its polarization and infiltration of Taiwan. It has also deliberately obstructed normal contact and exchanges between the two sides, heightening cross-Strait opposition. The government will continue to strengthen exchanges, legislative acts, and supporting measures, as well as join with pro-Taiwan forces in the international community to maintain peace in the Taiwan Strait and region. It also calls again on the other side to stop its malicious acts against Taiwan and resolve differences through communication and dialogue without political preconditions. This is the fundamental way to improve cross-Strait relations.

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 24 to 28, 2018. A total of 1,085 valid samples were collected, with a sampling error of 2.98% at a 95% confidence level.