

# **President Tsai Calls on the Ruling Parties of Both Sides to Set Aside the Baggage of History and Engage in Dialogue**

Date: October 26, 2017

MAC Press Release No. 075

The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) held the "Symposium on the 30th Anniversary of Cross-Strait Exchanges: Review and Outlook" on October 26 at the International Conference Hall of the National Library. President Tsai Ing-wen presented a keynote speech in which she again called on the leaders of the two sides to adhere to the traditional political wisdom of harmony and moderation, seek a breakthrough in cross-Strait relations, and work for the long-term well-being for the people of both sides. She also emphasized that the ruling parties on both sides should set aside the baggage of history, begin healthy dialogue, and create benefits for the people on both sides.

The MAC invited domestic scholars and experts to discuss the significance of cross-Strait exchanges over the past 30 years and look ahead to the future development of relations between the two sides. In her opening ceremony speech, President Tsai indicated that cross-Strait contact and exchanges that put people at the core represent the best commentary in the transition of cross-Strait relations from hostility to peace over the past 30 years. The government respects the historical fact of institutionalized cross-Strait negotiations and the agreements that have been signed and legislated since 1992. The president noted that cross-Strait ties remain basically stable at present and expressed hope for further improvement. She said that the commitments made at the time of her inauguration on May 20 last year provide a strong guarantee for continued promotion of the peaceful and stable development of cross-Strait relations. The president further stated that, as important members of the regional and global communities, the two sides should present new ways of thinking and, through efforts and cooperation from both sides, contribute to regional peace, prosperity, development, and globalization.

MAC Minister Chang Hsiao-yueh said in her speech that the two sides have chosen different political systems and development models, yet this has not created barriers to cross-

Strait exchanges. Cross-Strait exchanges and interaction represent a natural outpouring of emotion that spans the Taiwan Strait and offers the dream of the people's happiness. Minister Chang also cited a well-known quote by former British prime minister Winston Churchill: "The longer you can look back, the farther you can look forward." She hoped that the two sides would cherish hard-won results, adhere to the principle of "putting the people first," find new opportunities for cross-Strait cooperation in the changing situation, and jointly consider a new model for cross-Strait interaction to open a new chapter in the history of cross-Strait exchanges for the 30 years ahead.

The MAC said that scholars and experts from various fields were invited to attend and speak at the symposium, including Foundation on Asia-Pacific Peace Studies (FAPS) Chief Adviser Chao Chun-shan, Professor Chen Ming-tong of the Graduate Institute of National Development at National Taiwan University, Adjunct Associate Professor Johnnason Liu Tehsun of the Department of Law at National Chengchi University, Chinese National Federation of Industries Chairman Rock Hsu, and China Times Senior Correspondent in Beijing Wang Ming-i. The participants reviewed the social, cultural, education, economic, and trade exchanges and overall situation between the two sides, and also considered the outlook ahead. Looking back on the history, the participating scholars felt that the values chosen by the people are central to the development of cross-Strait relations. The governments of the two sides should shelve disputes and step into the future, seek to resolve cross-Strait problems despite their differences, learn from each other's respective development, and create space and niches for cooperation. Moreover, building on the foundation of achievements from interaction and exchange over the past 30 years, the two sides should seek to resolve differences through communication, dialogue, exchange, and cooperation and jointly promote the peaceful and stable development of cross-Strait relations.

More than 200 domestic scholars, experts, representatives of private organizations, government agencies, and diplomatic missions in Taiwan attended the symposium, including Secretary-General to the President Jaushieh Joseph Wu, Secretary General of the National Security Council Yen Teh-fa, National Security Bureau Director-General Peng Sheng-chu, FAPS Chairman Hsu Hsin-liang, and Straits Exchange Foundation Chairman Tien Hung-mao. The symposium concluded successfully.