

# **Mainland China Should Courageously Face the Tiananmen Square Incident, Promote Democratic Reform, and Protect Human Rights**

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The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) today (June 3, 2018) issued a statement on the 29th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Incident. It indicated that, in June 1989, mainland Chinese students and workers courageously rose up in defiance of totalitarian oppression and the threat to their lives to demand democracy, freedom, the rule of law, human rights, and other universal values, only to be forcibly suppressed by the Mainland authorities. They have yet to be vindicated as the truth of the incident remains covered up. We deeply regret this. In recent years, the Mainland has, expanded reforms and anti-corruption policies, while at the same time intensifying suppression of the people's free rights and consolidating its one-party dictatorship. We call on Beijing to promptly embark on political reforms, transition to democracy, institutionalize protections of the people's freedom of speech and religion, and truly face the historical truth of the Tiananmen Square Incident.

The MAC stated that, mainland China has steadily increased its overall strength. On human rights protections, however, it has not advanced, but rather retreated. In implementing a dictatorship policy of "the party leads everything," the Mainland authorities ignore their self-professed principle of "people-centered" development, continue to strengthen ideological controls, strictly control social and news media, and limit teaching freedom and the right of students to express their opinions. Beijing has also forcibly promoted the "Sinification" of religion, oppressed Christianity and Catholicism, and undermined the cultural heritages of the Xinjiang and Tibetan minority peoples. The Mainland authorities' interference in religion and intensive supervision of the free activities of the people have been criticized by the international community and seriously affected the Mainland's international image.

The MAC indicated that Taiwan also experienced a long period of martial law under an authoritarian government that viewed freedom of speech as a scourge. However, history teaches us that freedom of speech is a key driving force for promoting civilized society. The

MAC made two solemn appeals: First, as mainland China advances to a new development stage, Beijing needs to advance political reforms, return to the universal values of the international community, and inclusively and courageously respond concretely to the demands of the mainland Chinese people, improve internal human rights protection, and restore power to the people. Secondly, in cross-Strait interactions, the Mainland should respect the basic human rights of the Taiwanese people in the international community and replace the wishful thinking of its united front enticements and political and military intimidation of Taiwan. This is the only way to genuinely promote harmonious cross-Strait relations on a people-centered basis, as well as truly narrow the psychological distance between the two sides. The government also reiterated that it will never accept the improper trial and imprisonment of Taiwan national Mr. Li Ming-che by the Mainland authorities. Beijing should promptly release Mr. Li Ming-che and allow him to return safely to Taiwan.