

**The 30th MAC Advisory Committee Meeting:
Highlights of Discussion by Advisory Members***

News Reference Material

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The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) recently held its 30th Advisory Committee Meeting on the topic of "Observations on Maritime Legislation and Related Actions by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) this Year." Key statements and highlights of discussion by the advisory members are as follows:

1. The introductory report presented by the scholars outlined the CCP has amended and implemented the Coast Guard Law and Maritime Traffic Safety Law successively since this year. These moves are viewed as acts of maritime expansion and threats to international waterways, and have attracted close international attention. The US, Japan, the Philippines and other countries in the region have lodged protests and voiced displeasure over these actions. They have expressed their position on the disputed waters by freely navigating the South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait, and held joint military exercises to demonstrate their force. The CCP will continue to strengthen legislation related to maritime affairs. Taiwan must adopt a flexible strategy, cooperate with others on the front of international mechanism, maintain peace in the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea, pioneer humanitarian services, serve as a driving force of economic

* The MAC Advisory Committee Meeting is formed by experts and scholars in related fields. The views and opinions expressed in the meetings or excerpted in this article belong solely to the speakers.

development among neighboring countries, and play a key role in the Indo-Pacific and Asia-Pacific regions.

2. Some members indicated that the China Coast Guard constitutes a "second navy" as it increased the size and amount of its armaments and vessels, which is pressuring the neighboring countries. The Taiwan Strait, the South China Sea, and Diaoyutai areas are sensitive waters. Enforcement conflicts can easily erupt if the China Coast Guard ships interfere when the Coast Guard Administration is clamping down on border-crossing mainland Chinese fishing boats, spot-checking mainland Chinese merchant ships, or seizing mainland Chinese stowaways as part of its maritime law enforcement duties. Some members noted that, the fact that the China Coast Guard is subordinate to the Central Military Commission and the CCP's recent maritime legislation have led to tensions in regional waters. The Coast Guard Administration must improve current relevant laws and regulations on maritime enforcement, review enforcement legitimacy, and strengthen personnel education and training to avoid conflict.

3. Some members further expressed that, under the "Memorandum of Understanding to Establish the Coast Guard Working Group" signed between Taiwan and the US in March this year, coast guard administrations of Taiwan and the US can closely exchange on search, rescue and fishery law enforcement. They can also establish cooperation and information sharing platforms to concretely cooperate and make substantial progress on maritime law enforcement and marine search and rescue.

4. In addition to focusing on the aforementioned maritime law enforcement front, some members suggested that the government move beyond the existing legal framework to preserve the ecological environment of the Taiwan Strait from the perspective of environmental conservation and humanitarianism. Minister Chiu Tai-san noted that mainland Chinese sand dredgers operating illegally in waters

near Kinmen, Matsu, and Penghu have seriously affected Taiwan's fisheries and precious ecological resources. The media has reported that the protected "legendary bird" (Chinese crested terns) in Matsu have "abandoned nests" and even left unhatched eggs. Members recommended that law enforcement agencies continue to clamp down more strongly on illegal border crossings by mainland Chinese boats, and increase the amount of joint enforcements with mainland China under the mechanism of the Agreement on Joint Cross-Strait Crime-Fighting and Mutual Judicial Assistance. They also suggested Taiwan provide mainland China with related evidence of illegal actions by mainland Chinese ships, and request mainland China to restrain their ships and personnel to protect the marine ecological resources.