

The 36th MAC Advisory Committee Meeting: Highlights of Discussion by Advisory Members*

News Reference Material

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The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) recently held the 36th Advisory Committee Meeting on the topic of "The CCP's Push for Unification with the 'One Country, Two Systems Model for Taiwan': Implications and Suggestions for Taiwan from the Legal Perspective." Key statements and discussion points of the participating committee members are as follows:

1. The introductory report presented by the scholars indicated that the Taiwan policy of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is highly subject to international dynamics. The most glaring example is that, in the three years following the year of 2019, when the "Xi's five points" was proposed, there has been a rapid and inextricably intertwined impact of three main global and geopolitical variables, namely the US-China relations, the Hong Kong issue, and the COVID-19 pandemic. The impact of these abovementioned variables has practically reconstructed the macro-environment of cross-Strait relations, the direction of the CCP's Taiwan policy, and Beijing's possible arrangement and application of the "one country, two systems model for Taiwan" (hereinafter the "two systems for Taiwan"). The participating scholars specifically pointed out that the failed implementation of the "one country, two systems" in Hong Kong will make the CCP concentrate more on "one country" than "two systems"; meanwhile, the CCP will also address the effective management of "two systems" and ensure

*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.

that this proposed model will not lead to secessionism. The scholars also warned that the CCP may seek to justify its "two systems for Taiwan" from the legal perspective through "provincializing" Taiwan as one of China's local governments and "internalizing" cross-Strait relations as part of its internal affairs, to which our government should be ready to respond.

2. Some committee members suggested that the CCP has learned from the Russia-Ukraine war that military aggression would trigger international sanctions; therefore, the CCP may build legal justifications for its use of force against Taiwan by strengthening the legitimacy and legality of its invasion. Specifically, the CCP will propagate the narrative that its attack on Taiwan is China's civil war and insist that its unilateral legislation is part of its internal affairs. Such moves are meant for pre-empting potential intervention from the international community. Mainland China's "two systems for Taiwan" is a trap aimed at unification, and we can draw lessons from many past incidents to see that Taiwan should not fall into the same trap that is simply a push for unification in disguise. Vivid examples include the fact that Russia's invasion of Crimea in 2014 did not prevent the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war in late February this year, and the fact that Hong Kong has fared badly as the precedent of implementing the "one country, two systems." Taiwan must closely follow like-minded democracies and be prepared for all possible developments.

3. Some committee members illustrated the main goals of the CCP's recent Taiwan work. On the international stage, the CCP's goal is to "prevent independence" by continuing to block Taiwan's international participation and squeeze the international space of the Republic of China (Taiwan). Regarding cross-Strait relations, however, the CCP's main objective will likely be to co-plot unification or co-devise the "two systems for Taiwan" with certain individuals to create a false foundation of legitimacy for such an arrangement. Some

committee members stressed that people in Taiwan must stand united to pursue and forge a consensus for all. This is the only way to consolidate joint efforts to counter the CCP's united front threat against Taiwan.

4. Some committee members analyzed the trend of the CCP's Taiwan work and concluded that Beijing might have started talking about the "two systems for Taiwan" within the party; as a result, the 20th National People's Congress may see the CCP releasing some information echoing the "Xi's five points" proposed in 2019. It is worth watching whether such information suggests changes in mainland China's Taiwan policy. Some members also drew attention to Beijing's emphasis on law-based governance and speculated that while Beijing may not necessarily seek to promote unification through enacting unilateral legislations, related laws and regulations may still be introduced to oppose independence and facilitate integration as part of its escalation of united front work. In cases where the CCP's united front tactics fall in the gray areas of our current legislations, our government should strengthen relevant preparations in response.

5. Minister Chiu stated at the meeting that the CCP's proposal of the "two systems for Taiwan" in 2019 was aimed at pushing for a political negotiation with Taiwan. Going forward, there is no doubt that the CCP will seek to boost the legality of a military attack on Taiwan as a means to undermine the legitimacy of international support or aid for Taiwan and erode the determination of the people of Taiwan to resist its invasion. At the same time, the CCP will also introduce diversified policy measures to foster integration and provide benefits to Taiwan; these moves could sabotage our constitutional order, change the status quo of cross-Strait relations, and threaten our national security. The MAC will continue to monitor mainland China's future actions on its promotion of the "two systems for Taiwan," conduct legal research, and make pre-emptive responses against the evolving cross-Strait dynamics.