

MAC Solemnly Rejects the Claim that “a Kinmen-Xiamen Bridge is a Policy Continuation of the ‘Mini Three Links’” and Calls for National Security to Be Prioritized When Promoting Cross-Strait Affairs

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The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) issued the following statement in response to a recent comment made by Taipei Mayor and Chairman of the Taiwan People's Party (TPP) Ko Wen-je. Ko promoted the idea of constructing a bridge linking Kinmen and Xiamen and falsely claimed that such a construction is a policy continuation of the "Mini Three Links," which was supported by President Tsai during her tenure at the MAC. The MAC hopes to set the record straight for the public with this statement, where we solemnly reject Ko's ignorant argument and absurd comparison.

1. In the year of 2000, the government planned for and launched the "Mini Three Links" on a trial basis. The main purposes of this policy decision were to (1) provide a legal ground for managing the petty smuggling that was going on at the time between Kinmen, Matsu, and mainland China's Fujian area and (2) conduct experiment for the subsequent launch of the Three Links, namely the direct postal, transportation, and trade linkages between the two sides across the Taiwan Strait. The "Mini Three Links" focused on regulating the cross-border flow of personnel and goods to provide conveniences for the people and businesses, and our government ensured that we prioritized national security in our then policy-making. This means that all related issues were duly considered, including national defense, security, and the order and stability of the Taiwan society and economy. Eventually, our government was able to deliver the legal frameworks, software (systems), and hardware (infrastructure) required to safeguard the order

and security at our borders. Contrarily, the so-called "Kinmen-Xiamen Bridge" is a unilateral proposal of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) driven by its united front thinking; the CCP's objective is to blur the line between Kinmen and Xiamen in hopes of integrating Kinmen with Xiamen, making Kinmen part of mainland China's Fujian area. Simply put, the CCP's political agenda makes the proposal of a Kinmen-Xiamen Bridge essentially a Trojan horse carrying tremendous national security risks and thus fundamentally different from the "Mini Three Links." Ko distorted the truth to mislead the public, suggesting that he might have some ulterior motives.

2. Between the year of 2000 and today, the regional situation and cross-Strait relations have undergone some dramatic changes. Specifically, the CCP's Taiwan policy has gone from relatively mild to one centered on maximum intimidation and suppression. This is particularly true after Xi Jinping proposed the so-called "Xi's five points" in 2019 to push for unification under the framework of the "one country, two systems model for Taiwan." This policy direction has become a prelude to a myriad of the CCP's military, diplomatic, political, and economic bullying in the form of intimidation, pressuring, and coercion. Over the past few years, the CCP has been escalating the frequency and intensity of its military harassment by making more incursions into Taiwan with its military aircraft and warships; at the same time, the CCP authorities have even been dropping arbitrary bans on the exports of agricultural and fishery products from Taiwan to mainland China. Under this backdrop, the CCP's calls for the integrated development between Kinmen and Xiamen and the construction of a Kinmen-Xiamen Bridge are clearly a tactic seeking to downgrade Taiwan and incorporate Kinmen into mainland China's Fujian Province. Given that these actions have seriously threatened Taiwan's national security, it is unthinkable that any politicians would choose to look past the current cross-Strait situation and disputes, deliberately distort the policies of the Taiwan government, and even voice support for certain policies of the other side across the Taiwan Strait.

3. National security must be of our primary concern in the promotion of cross-Strait affairs. The current situation in the Asia-Pacific region and across the Taiwan Strait is complex and sensitive. To ensure national security and Taiwan's overall interests, the government has no policies or plans in place to facilitate the construction of a bridge between Kinmen and Xiamen. We ask that individuals in all sectors of the Taiwan society not dance to the CCP's tune by entertaining its policy proposals. Instead, they should prevent themselves from being exploited or disseminating false information both at home and abroad.

4. Livelihood is the issue that the Kinmen residents place great importance on; it is also a matter that our government genuinely cares about. Going forward, our government will continue to make every effort to communicate with the local government and upgrade related infrastructure to boost Kinmen's economic development, protect the residents' livelihood, and improve their well-being.