

Minister Chiu Emphasizes that the Essence of Cross-Strait Relations is Peace and Equality; Sovereignty and Democracy Cannot Be Violated; and Political Differences Should Be Peacefully Resolved

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The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) issued the following press release today (September 8, 2022) on Minister Chiu Tai-san's opening speech for the international symposium that the MAC entrusted the Prospect Foundation to organize along with the latter's local co-host, Center for a New American Security (CNAS). Minister Chiu elaborated on the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) authorities' persistent disruption of regional order and creation of conflicts and tensions. He also underscored the strategic importance of a democratic Taiwan and advocated for safeguarding peace across the Taiwan Strait. The Taiwan and US scholars participating in this event were all close observers of cross-Strait developments and agreed that Taiwan and the US should strengthen their substantive exchanges and cooperation to contain the CCP's adventurist actions.

Minister Chiu stated at the symposium that Beijing has become a destabilizing factor in the Taiwan Strait amid global upheavals. In early August, the CCP authorities abruptly launched a series of targeted military exercises and implemented economic laws to pressure Taiwan, sounding an alarm bell for their attempt to change the original regional order and status quo of the Taiwan Strait. Minister Chiu emphasized that the essence of cross-Strait relations is peace and equality; sovereignty and democracy cannot be violated. The government of the Republic of China has always been committed to maintaining the cross-Strait status quo and insisted on handling cross-Strait relations pragmatically. Minister Chiu made a four-point appeal as follows: (1) the CCP's modern governance should be based on an open and reform-oriented attitude, peace, and stability; (2) the CCP should work for the benefit of the people and stop its harmful pressuring of Taiwan; (3) both sides across the Taiwan Strait should face each other, ensure

that our interactions are rooted in equality and dignity, and communicate pragmatically without preconditions to reduce misunderstanding and misjudgment; and (4) we look forward to the US and the international community strengthening exchanges and interactions with Taiwan so as to make Taiwan better-connected, better-informed, and better-positioned.

The MAC stated that the international symposium took place on September 7 Eastern Standard Time under the theme of "Taiwan, Cross-Strait Relations & an Evolving World." Sub-themes discussed by the participating scholars included the 20th CCP National Congress, its impact on US-China-Taiwan relations, and the scholars' assessment of the new Indo-Pacific political and economic order in the post-pandemic era. Experts from both Taiwan and the US shared a common concern over the CCP's intent of escalating tensions through military exercises against Taiwan; they also noted the importance of support from the US to Taiwan and called, in particular, for solid countermeasures against the CCP in not only the military but diplomatic, economic, financial, and other aspects. In addition, some researchers pointed out that following Xi Jinping's tenure extension at the 20th CCP National Congress, he will maintain a firm grip on power and is unlikely to move towards decentralized leadership; even personnel reshuffling at the senior level will not change the CCP's power structure. Xi is also expected to take actions abroad and will no doubt step up the CCP's gray-zone tactics, incursions, and harassments targeting Taiwan. Moreover, the participating scholars stated that, while Taiwan is not part of the US-led Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF), Taiwan remains a key partner of the US and thus should begin talks with the US for a free trade agreement and seek parliamentary support.

The MAC stated that the symposium was joined by many Taiwan scholars, such as Prospect Foundation President I-Chung Lai, Professor Emeritus Arthur S. Ding of the Institute of International Relations at National Chengchi University, Associate Professor Chelsea Chou at the Graduate Institute of National

Development of National Taiwan University, and Associate Research Fellow Chen Liang-chih at the Institute for National Defense and Security Research. The US scholars participating in this event included CNAS Vice President Anna Saito Carson, CNAS Fellow for the Indo-Pacific Security Program Jacob Stokes, Senior Vice President of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Matthew P. Goodman, CSIS Associate Fellow Joshua Fitt, etc. The symposium generated heated discussions contributory to advancing Taiwan-US academic exchanges, critical in enhancing international understanding of cross-Strait and regional dynamics, perfect for conveying our government's policy positions, and crucial in our quest for international support.