

MAC Urges the CCP Authorities Not to Hinder Normal Cross-Strait Exchanges with Political Pretexts

Press Release No. 021

The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) issued a statement today (May 4, 2023) regarding the recent passage of amendments to the Counter-Espionage Law by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The Standing Committee of the CCP's National People's Congress approved the revision of the said law that expands the scope of what is considered "espionage." The MAC stated that the CCP often uses legal means to achieve its political ends. The current amendments to the Counter-Espionage Law have caused widespread concern over their ambiguous definition of "espionage" and opaque judicial procedures. The MAC emphasized that the move would significantly increase the risks facing Taiwanese citizens traveling to mainland China. Common activities, such as photographing buildings and using GPS maps during travels; searching online for local government and business information; chatting with locals; conducting interviews; engaging in religious activities; frequently changing jobs abroad; and interacting with foreign institutions, could all be used by the CCP as the basis for trumped-up charges of "espionage" and "endangering national security."

The MAC indicated that, since 2013, the CCP has successively revised a series of national security laws, including the National Security Law, Cybersecurity Law, Law on the Administration of Activities of Overseas Nongovernmental Organizations in Mainland China, Counter-Espionage Law, etc. These laws encourage the public to report national security violations as the authorities seek to strengthen control over mainland Chinese citizens, foreign nationals, and overseas institutions. In recent years, the CCP authorities have

arrested media executives, scientists and researchers, Taiwanese citizens, and individuals from countries around the world on charges of espionage and national security breaches. This shows that the targets of the CCP's spurious national security charges have gone beyond the highly sensitive political realm, such as human rights activists and dissidents.

The MAC called on the CCP to uphold the values shared by the civilized world and international community; abandon its suppressive, hostile, and antagonistic mindset; truly protect freedom and human rights; and stop restricting personal freedom with unwarranted charges in an attempt to create a chilling effect and hinder normal cross-Strait exchanges. The MAC also reminded Taiwanese citizens to be especially mindful of and fully assess the risks to their personal safety before traveling to mainland China. They can register under the "Online Registration System for Taiwanese Citizens Visiting Mainland China" to obtain timely government assistance and ensure their rights and interests.