

MAC: Majority of the Public Supports the Government's Priority on the Three Focal Tasks of Expanding and Deepening Cross-Strait Exchanges, Promoting the Establishment of Reciprocal Institutions by the SEF and ARATS, and Comprehensively Reviewing and Amending the Act Governing Relations between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area

January 3, 2013

No. 001

The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) today (January 3, 2013) announced the results of its latest special survey of public opinion. The survey indicated that a majority of the public affirms and supports the three major focal tasks prioritized by the government, including "expanding and deepening cross-strait exchanges on various levels," "promoting the establishment of reciprocal institutions by the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) and the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS)," and "comprehensively reviewing and amending the Act Governing Relations between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area."

The survey showed that, facing the trend of increasingly close cross-strait exchanges over the past four years, more than 76% (76.4%) of the public support the government's efforts to further strengthen cross-strait exchanges on human rights, the rule of law, economic and trade

relations, culture and education, and civil society so as to enhance mutual understanding between the people on both sides of the Strait. Furthermore, about 42% (42.8%) of the public feel that continuous promotion of cross-strait dialogue and in-depth exchanges on democracy, human rights, and the rule of law will have a positive influence on the Mainland.

The government is sequentially promoting a policy to open up Taiwan to investments from the Mainland. The Executive Yuan is now reviewing items for the fourth round of easing restrictions on such investments based on the three prior rounds of opening. On this matter, about 67% (67.1%) of the public believe that the government should moderately open up Taiwan to investments from the Mainland, and about 60% (60.3%) of the public believe that allowing Mainland investments in Taiwan is conducive to balancing the development of cross-strait investment, and also beneficial to cross-strait economic and trade exchanges.

The survey further showed that 64.2% of the public approve of the establishment of reciprocal institutions between the SEF and the ARATS to serve and assist the people on both sides. As to the functions and responsibilities of the institutions, 70.2% of the public agree that the SEF's representation in the Mainland should be allowed to perform official functions and tasks. Overall, a great majority of the public (71%) believes that the establishment of reciprocal institutions by the SEF and the ARATS will be conducive to the development of cross-strait relations.

During the Eighth round of Chiang-Chen Talks, the SEF and the ARATS agreed to begin communication concerning the issue of

reciprocal institutions establishment, both sides also agreed to begin respective planning, assessment, and research on the issue, and to begin exchange of opinions when time is appropriate. Views of the domestic public on the establishment of reciprocal institutions will be included as an important reference in government deliberations.

The survey also indicated that the majority of the public (72.4%) believes that the government's comprehensive review and phased amendment of the Act Governing Relations between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area meets the actual demands of the people and realizes the human rights and equality rights of Mainlanders residing in Taiwan (67.5%). The majority of the public also affirms the government's policy of phased amendment to the Act.

The results of the public opinion survey indicated that the majority of the public (63%) finds the current cross-strait situation to be peaceful and that the three focal tasks prioritized by the government correspond to the people's expectations. In the future, the MAC will continue to promote sound and positive cross-strait interactions based on public opinion. It will also adhere to the principle of "handling easy issues before difficult ones, urgent matters before non-urgent ones, and economic matters before political ones" when dealing with prioritized issues concerning economic and trade relations, exchanges, and the rights and interests of the people so as to create conditions for peace and stability across the Strait and for sustainable development in Taiwan.

The MAC commissioned Taiwan Real Survey Co., Ltd. to conduct a telephone survey on adults aged 20 and over in the Taiwan Area from

December 22 to 25 of 2012. A total of 1,104 effective samples were collected, with a sampling error of plus or minus 2.95% based on a 95% level of confidence.