

# **Trade in Services Agreement will be Handled according to Law and the Executive Branch will Fully Respect the Review Decision of the Legislative Yuan**

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The Liberty Times asserted today (December 23, 2013) in a report on the Ketagalan Boulevard demonstration against the Cross-Strait Trade in Services Agreement that negotiations on the Trade in Services Agreement should be re-started under legislative supervision. The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) issued the following clarification and explanation in response:

## **1. Negotiation for the Trade in Services Agreement was no black-box operation; relevant agencies will continue to strengthen communication work**

(1) During negotiations on the Trade in Services Agreement, the competent authorities for the service industry collected and consulted industry views on a small-scale, non-public basis. Due to the fact that there were far too many service industry categories and operating businesses, respective inquiry of views could not be conducted for each and every individual business. With respect to congressional communication, arrangements were made by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and MAC to explain to members of relevant committees in the Legislative Yuan (LY). Furthermore, progress of the negotiation and

general content of the Agreement were reported to the LY President and Internal Administration Committee prior to the signing of the Agreement. Explanation and communication conducted by related agencies perhaps need improvement, but there was definitely no "black-box operation" in the process, nor was there any violation of democratic procedures.

(2) In recent months, related government agencies have held numerous seminars and symposiums to explain the issue to various industries. They have also held 17 public hearings in conjunction with resolutions reached between the ruling and opposition parties of the Legislative Yuan, as well as proactively made explanations to the public through various channels in the endeavor to dispel public doubts and misunderstandings.

## **2. The Act Governing Relations between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area includes provisions on the supervision of cross-strait agreements, providing a basis for oversight of the Trade in Services Agreement**

(1) In the 2003 amendment of the Act Governing Relations between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area, seven new provisions were added (Articles 4, Article 4-2, Article 4-3, Article 4-4, Article 5, Article 5-1, Article 5-2) stipulating related rules and appropriate mechanisms for congressional oversight of the signing of cross-strait agreements. The 19 agreements signed between the two sides over the past five-plus years are all in accordance with the constitutional system based on legal administration and democratic principles.

(2) In accordance with relevant provisions of the Act Governing

Relations between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area, the Executive Yuan has submitted the Trade in Services Agreement to the Legislative Yuan, and shall respect the decision reached by the ruling and opposition parties in Legislative Yuan in the review process for the Trade in Services Agreement. However, restarting an FTA negotiation could easily raise doubts among trading partners over integrity and could be detrimental to Taiwan's future international economic and trade presence. The executive branch will therefore continue to extend our utmost sincerity and dedication to communicate on the issue in order for the case to successfully pass the review.