

Minister Wang Attends Discussion with Scholars at Shanghai Think Tanks and Visits Radio and Television Shanghai to Promote Mutual Understanding

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Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) Minister Wang Yu-chi visited the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS) in mainland China on February 13, 2014, to participate in a panel discussion concerning cross-strait relations. Minister Wang explained to participating Mainland scholars the ROC government's Mainland policy and stressed that there is still a long way ahead in the development of cross-strait relations. He pointed out that the two sides should objectively face cross-strait realities and jointly promote cross-strait development under the principle of mutual trust and understanding.

The MAC stated that during the discussion, participating scholars proposed their views and hopes regarding the results of Minister Wang's visit, the current development in cross-strait relations and regional economic participation, and the state of affairs in East Asia. Minister Wang responded to each of the suggestions and exchanged views with the participants. In response to some scholars inquiring about the new state of cross-strait relations, Minister Wang stated that his visit represented an important step in the development of benign cross-strait interactions, and that the two sides must mutually understand, tolerate and face each other in order for cross-strait relations to move forward. Minister Wang expressed confidence for future cross-strait relations to proceed upon the current peaceful and stable path.

The MAC indicated that, during the discussion, some scholars

proposed for social organizations on both sides to conduct exchanges and learn from each other's experience, whereby Minister Wang stated that the formation of civil society consciousness is crucial to the development of social organizations, and that the two sides should therefore expand exchanges in this area. Others voiced suggestions regarding Taiwan's prompt participation in regional economic integration, with which Minister Wang responded that foreign trade is the lifeblood of Taiwan and that signing free trade agreements (FTAs) with other countries, Taiwan's accession to the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) and to Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (RCEP) are the common aspiration of Taiwan. He also stressed that Taiwan places equal importance on its participation in the TPP and RCEP and hopes to jointly participate in these affairs with the Mainland. Furthermore, in response to claims by Mainland scholars that the "no unification, no independence, and no use of force" policy is not proactive enough, Minister Wang stated that public support in Taiwan for maintaining the cross-strait status quo has long exceeded 70% and represents the mainstream public opinion in Taiwan, and that future development of cross-strait relations will continue to be steadily promoted on this foundation.

Minister Wang was personally received by SASS President Wang Zhan to the panel discussion, hosted by SASS Vice President Huang Renwei and joined by 13 scholars and experts from leading think tanks in Shanghai. The participants included Director Zhou Jianming at SASS Institute of Sociology, Director Zhang Youwen at SASS Institute of World Economy, Secretary-General Wang Hailiang of Taiwan Research Center, Deputy Executive Director Sheng Jiuyuan of Taiwan Research Center, Director Yu Xintian at Shanghai Taiwan Research Institute, Director Zhang Nianchi at Shanghai Institute of East Asian Studies, President Chen

Dongxiao of the Shanghai Institute for International Studies, Director Yan Anlin of the Institute for Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao Studies, Deputy Director Ni Yongjie of the Shanghai Taiwan Research Institute, Director Lin Gang of the Center for Taiwan Studies at Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Director Wu Xinbo of the Center for American Studies at Fudan University, and Director Wang Shaopu of the Center for Pacific-Rim Studies at Shanghai Jiao Tong University.

After the panel discussion, Minister Wang visited Radio and Television Shanghai to better understand current developments in the Mainland media environment. During the visit, Minister Wang expressed hope for Taiwan's high-quality and popular film, television, and pop music programs to gain easier access into the Mainland market, so that people in the Mainland could also enjoy Taiwan's outstanding cultural and creative works. Minister Wang also welcomed cross-strait cooperation in the cultural and creative industries and suggested that such cooperation could begin with exchanges in the film, television and music sectors. Minister Wang also pointed out that there is a wealth of diverse online information on Taiwan websites, many of which denied full access to Mainland internet users. If Mainland internet users were enabled access to the broad spectrum and interesting information on Taiwan websites, their understanding of Taiwanese society and culture would definitely deepen and would further narrow the divide between people on the two sides.