

Tenth Round of Cross-Strait High-Level Talks Concluded, MAC: Cross-Strait Collaboration Agreement on Seismological Monitoring and Meteorology Signed to Protect Safety of People's Lives and Properties

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The Tenth Round of Cross-Strait High-Level Talks between the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) and the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS) were successfully concluded today (February 28, 2014). The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) stated that the Cross-Strait Collaboration Agreement on Seismological Monitoring and Cross-Strait Collaboration Agreement on Meteorology signed at the Talks will help the two sides to more accurately track seismic activity and weather system information, upgrade seismic and meteorological monitoring and early warning capabilities, and will also further protect the safety of people's lives and properties across the Strait.

Accompanied by SEF Chairman Lin Join-sane this afternoon, MAC Deputy Minister Chang Hsien-yao presented a report on the results of the talks to Premier Jiang Yi-huah at the Executive Yuan. He also presented the texts of the Cross-Strait Collaboration Agreement on Seismological Monitoring and Cross-Strait Collaboration Agreement on Meteorology. Premier Jiang expressed strong and positive affirmation to negotiation participants, after which the delegation attended an Executive Yuan press conference to publicly explain achievements of the Talks.

The MAC stated that according to regular public opinion surveys conducted by the MAC over the years, about 70% of the public support

the handling of cross-strait exchange issues through institutionalized negotiations. Furthermore, a recent MAC survey conducted just before the Talks showed that 72.6% and 67.9% of the public support talks on the issues of "cross-strait collaboration on seismological monitoring" and "cross-strait collaboration on meteorological cooperation," respectively. These figures indicated that the government's policy position and direction of promoting institutionalized cross-strait negotiations corresponded with mainstream public expectations in Taiwan.

The MAC stated that, in order to further enhance and safeguard national security, it has established a national security review mechanism for cross-strait agreements. The two agreements signed during the latest Talks were the first pacts to undergo the review mechanism procedures, and also the first approved; all future agreements signed between the two sides will also undergo procedures of the same standards. As such, the people of Taiwan may rest assured. Furthermore, in the following promotion of cross-strait negotiations, relevant government agencies will strengthen communication with the legislature and public at the four stages of issue formation, operational discussions, before agreement signing, and after agreement signing; they will also formulate supplementary measures. The above-said are all conducted in the hope of acquiring public support for cross-strait negotiations.

The MAC also stated that issues on the negotiation agenda for the 11th round of talks may include ECFA follow-up negotiation issues such as the Cross-Strait Trade in Goods Agreement and Dispute Settlement Agreement, other issues may include "cooperation on avoidance of double taxation and strengthening of tax cooperation", "SEF-ARATS reciprocal establishment of institutions", and "cross-strait cooperation on environmental protection", "flight safety and airworthiness standards". The MAC will coordinate with the competent authorities and carefully

deliberate and promote negotiation work. The signing of an agreement is only the first step; the key is the subsequent execution and implementation. The government will continue to review the agreement implementation status as well as urge the Mainland to make progress and improvements, in hope that the effects of the agreement may be maximized.

The MAC stated that over the past nearly six years, the SEF and the ARATS have held ten rounds of talks and signed 21 agreements, each of which has enhanced the public's well being and maintained the order of exchanges. These achievements widely demonstrated the importance of the SEF in the promotion of institutionalized cross-strait negotiations. On this basis, the regular communication and liaison mechanisms between competent authorities for cross-strait affairs on the two sides will have synergistic function and benefit in institutionalized cross-strait negotiations, while at the same time, further contribute to peaceful development across the Taiwan Strait.