

MAC: Public Opinion Highly Affirms the Results of the Second Meeting between Heads of Cross-Strait Competent Authorities and Supports Regular Exchange Visits by Heads of Cross-Strait Competent Authorities

July 17, 2014

No. 67

The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) announced today (July 17, 2014) the results of its latest routine public opinion survey concerning Director Zhang Zhijun of the Mainland's Taiwan Affairs Office's (TAO) first visit to Taiwan and the holding of the second meeting between heads of cross-strait competent authorities by MAC Minister Wang Yu-chi and Zhang Zhijun this June. The survey found that nearly 70% of the public approve regular exchange visits by the MAC minister and TAO director (69%). The majority of the people think such visits would be conducive to the handling cross-strait affairs (63.7%) and that official contacts across the Strait are important to the healthy development of cross-strait relations (60.7%), and would also help Mainland officials better understand public opinion in Taiwan (54.6%). The MAC stated that the government would continue to promote cross-strait official interactions in an orderly manner under the principles of "reciprocity and dignity."

The MAC pointed out that survey results found that 88.6% of the public affirm Minister Wang's reiteration during the meeting that Taiwan's future should be decided by the 23 million people of Taiwan under the ROC Constitution framework. Furthermore, 65.3% of the public were satisfied by the confirmed inclusion of "humanitarian visits" as functions for future SEF institutions in the Mainland. Additionally, a majority of the public support joint studies by the two sides on cross-strait related

regional economic integration (65.1%) and believe that the government's ability to smoothly negotiate with other countries on economic and trade cooperation and participate in regional economic integration would increase the Taiwanese people's confidence in cross-strait trade liberalization (59.8%)

The MAC stressed that participation in regional economic integration is a matter pertinent to Taiwan's survival. The government will simultaneously promote participation in regional economic integration and cross-strait economic and trade cooperation, as well as conduct joint studies related to regional economic integration with relevant areas and countries such as mainland China. The government believes this to be conducive to the signing of economic cooperation agreements and would create advantageous conditions for advancing Taiwan's participation in related regional economic integration.

The survey also polled views on the Cross-Strait Agreement Supervisory Act. The majority of the people hope for the Legislative Yuan to promptly pass the Cross-Strait Agreement Supervisory Act (63%); believe that the request for previously signed agreements to acquire a second Legislative Yuan approval before implementation would affect of the people's rights and interests (58.5%); and agree that the Legislative Yuan should be required to vote on cross-strait agreements within a set timeframe (61.6%). About 70% (71%) of the public believe that requiring the executive branch to communicate and consult with congress prior cross-strait agreement signing and respect Legislative Yuan procedures of review or record post agreement signing would be conducive to improving congressional oversight. The MAC stated that cross-strait agreements concern the rights and interests of the people, and that the Executive Yuan version of the Cross-Strait Agreement Supervisory Act is "constitutional, pragmatic and feasible." The MAC urged for prompt completion of the legislative process so as to be in consistent with the

people's expectations.

The MAC also noted that the majority of the people support the government's adherence to the cross-strait status quo of "no unification, no independence, and no use of force" under the ROC Constitution framework (68.1%); they also identify with the government's position on the "1992 Consensus of one China with respective interpretations" where one China refers to the ROC (52.3%). This shows that the government's Mainland policy corresponds with mainstream public opinion in Taiwan. Regarding other cross-strait issues long observed by the MAC, the survey indicated that the great majority of the public (86.7%) still insist on "maintaining the status quo defined in the broader sense," an opinion that has remained highly stable. As for the current pace of cross-strait exchanges, the highest percentage of the public, at 36.4%, believes it to be "just right", followed by the percentages believing the pace to be "too fast" and "too slow," at 36.8% and 14.7%, respectively.

The MAC commissioned the Election Study Center of National Chengchi University to conduct a telephone survey of adults aged 20 and over in Taiwan from July 2 to 6, 2014. A total of 1,071 valid samples were collected with a sampling error of plus or minus 2.99% at a 95% level of confidence.