

MAC Appeals to Mainland: Respect Freedom and Democracy, Protect Human Rights, and Practice the Rule of Law and Other Universal Values

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The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) issued a statement today (December 10, 2012) on the 64th anniversary of International Human Rights Day, emphasizing that mainland China's governance policy should be set based on the people's demands, and it should respect and face the important revelation of universal values such as freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, consider seriously the promotion of political adjustments and reforms through democratic and peaceful measures, and further heed the people's pursuit for values and beliefs such as social equity, justice, human rights and freedom. The MAC believes these are elements greatly beneficial to maintaining stable developments and long-term peace in cross-strait relations.

The MAC stated that the Republic of China (ROC) is the first democratic republic state in Asia. Its constitutional system has been refined, practiced, and developed in Taiwan, and concretely protects the people's right to supervise the government. The MAC indicated that cross-strait relations have made sound and cadenced progress over the past four-plus years; specifically, the diverse exchanges in the economic, cultural, and social spheres, the contents of the 18 agreements and two consensuses signed between the two sides, and the proactive amendment project of the Act Governing Relations between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area have all fully reflected Taiwan's respect for human rights values and have realized the goal of two international covenants (the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) to protect human rights. It is believed that these efforts will function as a learning model and provide substantive benefits for the Mainland to

observe and emulate.

The MAC emphasized that, after more than 30 years of reform and opening-up, mainland China is now the world's second largest economy. Due to close historical, geographical, cultural, and social ties with the Mainland, Taiwan has been especially concerned about internal changes in the Mainland over the past few years, particularly in areas of political reform, income disparity and civil society development, which have all faced severe economic and social challenges. The MAC hopes that the mainland Chinese authorities, at this critical juncture of power transition and with a new leadership appointed at the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China planning major internal government reforms, should more pragmatically face up to actual demands of the people, respond concretely to heartfelt expectations on all sides for protection of human rights and establishment of a true civil society, while at the same time treat rights activists and dissidents with a peaceful and rational attitude, thus demonstrate the wisdom and disposition of one in authority, so as to further enhance trust and harmony between the Mainland government and people.

The MAC stated that President Ma Ying-jeou called for deepening cross-strait discussions and exchanges in democracy and human rights related fields in the "Golden Decade, Cross-Strait Peace" National Vision. He also indicated in his inaugural address on May 20, 2012, that Taiwan's experience in implementing democracy is evidence that it is possible for foreign democratic systems to take root in an ethnically Chinese society. He also fervently looks forward to the gradual opening up for public political participation, steady improvement in human rights and the rule of law, and autonomous development of civil society in the Mainland, which can help further shorten the psychological distance between the Strait. The MAC emphasized that, on this day marking the 64th anniversary of International Human Rights Day, mainland China should value the important revelation brought by the universal values of freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, dedicate efforts to protect

the people in their pursuit and demand for personal safety protection and right to make rational and legitimate appeals, facilitate civil society development in the Mainland, and thereby lay a strong and lasting foundation beneficial to sustainable peace, stability, and prosperity in the Strait.