

MAC Deeply Regrets the Resumption of Diplomatic Ties between the Mainland and Gambia and Expresses Strong Dissatisfaction

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The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) issued a statement today (March 17, 2016) regarding the Mainland's announcement of resuming diplomatic relations with Gambia. The MAC stated that the Mainland's action runs counter to cross-strait efforts over the past eight years of aiming for peaceful and stable development and of treating each other with respect and good will; it also damages mutual trust across the Strait and will inevitably affect future development in cross-strait relations.

The MAC said that the TAO informed the Taiwan side at 1:00 p.m. today that it would announce the resumption of diplomatic relations with Gambia later in the same day. It also claimed that Gambia and Taiwan had severed diplomatic ties two plus years ago and that Mainland-Gambia diplomatic ties were resumed in consideration of Gambia's repeated requests and from practical demands of their relationship. The MAC immediately voiced strong dissatisfaction and questioned the Mainland's repeated statements over the past two years claiming that it had no contact or diplomatic relations with Gambia. Taiwan believes that, although Taiwan no longer has diplomatic ties with Gambia, the timing of the Mainland-Gambia resumed diplomatic relations will lead the international community to misinterpret the direction of cross-strait relations; the Mainland has not carefully considered the negative impact of its actions on cross-strait relations.

The MAC emphasized in previous contact with the Mainland side cross-strait relation is currently facing a sensitive period due to the change of administrations in Taiwan. The ruling and opposition parties in Taiwan are dedicated to maintaining the benign cross-strait relation achieved over the past eight years. However, such actions demonstrated by the Mainland are detrimental to peace dividends achieved from past efforts between the two sides and seriously damage the Taiwanese people's feelings.

The MAC stressed that President Ma Ying-jeou has repeatedly called for the two sides to reduce infighting and treat each other amicably in international affairs so as to

reduce cross-strait confrontation and conflict. Taiwan calls on the Mainland to face up to the reality that the ROC is a sovereign country and to not take unilateral negative actions, or it would have to take full responsibility for possible consequences.