

The Government will Safeguard National Dignity and the People's Rights to the End

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MAC Press Release No. 25**

The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) held an international press conference today (April 11, 2017) on the closely-watched case of Lee Ming-che. The MAC stated that democracy, freedom, and human rights are universal values, as well as fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution of the Republic of China (ROC) and upheld by all the people. The government will defend national dignity and the rights of the people to the end. The MAC again called on mainland China to give due process protection to the involved parties in handling the case of Lee Ming-che, as well as to agree to family visits based on humanitarian considerations, consistent with universal human rights values.

The MAC stated that the government has long given first consideration to protecting personal safety in the handling of similar incidents. This has been the government's consistent position. President Tsai Ing-wen and Premier Lin Chuan attach great importance to this case. They immediately instructed the MAC to provide full assistance in conjunction with the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) and the relevant ministries and departments, as well as to keep fully abreast of developments. Since the case occurred, the government has communicated with the Mainland through existing cross-strait mechanisms and various channels. The MAC and the SEF have contacted and communicated with the Mainland numerous times. Moreover, the Ministry of Justice and Criminal Investigation Bureau have liaised with the Mainland through channels under the Agreement on Joint Cross-strait Crime-Fighting and Mutual Judicial Assistance.

The MAC stressed that the government is greatly concerned over the personal safety of Lee Ming-che and his family's appeals and is providing all necessary assistance to the family. Since the case occurred, family members and the MAC have repeatedly discussed affairs related to Mr. Lee's release. Medication entrusted to the MAC by family members has been delivered to and signed for by the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits. The MAC and SEF have also helped the family prepare related evidentiary documentation, provided legal advice and assistance, and assigned personnel to accompany family members on visits to the Mainland. The government is also closely heeding the Legislative Yuan's proposal today in support of Lee Ming-che and will continue to do its utmost to actively help Mr. Lee Ming-che return to Taiwan at the earliest possible date.

The MAC reiterated that both sides should give the highest priority to incidents involving people's basic rights and personal safety and should not intervene or obstruct for any political reason. The Taiwan side has solemnly protested and expressed discontent over mainland China's persistent refusal to respond to its messages and demands since the start of the incident. Taiwan has called on mainland China to stop ignoring Taiwan's demands and to promptly communicate with Taiwan on this matter.

The MAC indicated that the Mainland has not yet explained through official channels the details of Lee Ming-che's case or place of detention. It also has not made notification according to the agreement. Furthermore, the Mainland has prevented family members from visiting the Mainland, leading to family grievances and further complicating the incident. The MAC again called on mainland China to promptly publicly explain the facts and details, promptly announce the place of Lee Ming-che's detainment, make notification according to the agreement, and promptly consent to family visits.

The MAC thanked the various sectors of society and domestic and international groups for their attention and support actions in the case during this time. It is also grateful to all parties for their continued concern and assistance. The MAC will continue to work together with the relevant units, family members, and other parties to urge the Mainland to allow Lee Ming-che to promptly return to Taiwan, and safeguard the safety, interests, and rights of the people.