

Summarized Results of the Public Opinion Survey on (December 19 to 21, 2008)

"The Public's View on Cross-Strait Relations and the Mainland Policy"

With regard to the government's implementation of cross-strait direct transport links, 67.9 percent of the public believe that this will enhance Taiwan's competitiveness, 54.8 percent agree that it is conducive to attracting inflows of Taiwanese capital and investments in Taiwan by foreign firms, while 61.7 percent believe that it will have a "positive impact" on Taiwan's economic development.

With the new charter flight paths activating directly linking both sides of the Taiwan Strait, 80.1 percent of the public indicate that if given the chance to travel to mainland China, they will opt to take the charter flights.

When asked to compare present cross-strait relations with that of last year, 64.8 percent of the public believe that cross-strait relations have become "more relaxed." Furthermore, 57.9 percent of the public are confident in the government's ability to maintain cross-strait peace and stability.

The vast majority of the public (91.8 percent) advocate maintaining the status quo defined in a broader sense (including "maintaining the status quo and deciding on independence or unification later," "maintaining the status quo and unification later," "maintaining the status quo and independence later," and "maintaining the status quo indefinitely"), which is a record high as compared to previous opinion surveys.

I. Survey Background and Methods

In order to gain understanding of the public's views on related issues concerning cross-strait relations and the government's Mainland policy, the MAC commissioned the China Credit Information Service Ltd. to conduct a telephone survey of adults aged 20 to 69 in the Taiwan Area from December 19 to 21, 2008. A total of 1,068 effective samples were collected, with a sampling error of about three percent based on a 95 percent confidence level.

II. Major Findings

(1) Views on the cross-strait direct transport links

New charter flight paths (direct flight paths without having to detour) directly linking both sides of the Strait are now in operation. Around 80.1 percent of the public indicate that if given the chance to travel to mainland China, they will opt to take the charter flights, while 19.9 percent say they will not. Another 67.9 percent of the public agree that the cross-strait direct transport links will greatly save time and transport costs, which are conducive to enhancing Taiwan's competitiveness, while 30.6 percent of the public disagree. Around 54.8 percent of the public agree that the cross-strait direct transport links will improve Taiwan's investment environment, which is

conducive to attracting inflows of Taiwanese capital and investments in Taiwan by foreign firms, while 43.5 percent disagree. As for the impact of the direct transport links on Taiwan's long-term economic growth, 61.7 percent of the people believe that there is a "positive impact" while 13.6 percent believe that there is "no impact" at all. Another 23.1 percent think that there is a "negative impact."

(2) Views on the pace of cross-strait exchanges

Regarding the pace of the government's opening up of cross-strait civilian exchanges, the people who believe that it is "just right" still constitutes the largest proportion at 47.5 percent. 37.2 percent of the public believe it is "too fast," while 14.5 percent believe it is "too slow."

(3) Public perception of the mainland Chinese government's attitude toward Taiwan

With regard to the mainland Chinese government's attitude toward the Taiwan government, there are roughly equal proportions of people who believe that the mainland Chinese government is friendly (48.2 percent) and hostile (49.4 percent) to the Taiwan government. As for its attitude toward the Taiwan people, 52.7 percent think that the mainland Chinese government is friendly, while 44.6 percent think that it is unfriendly.

(4) Views on the overall cross-strait relations

Generally speaking, when asked to compare the present cross-strait relations to that of the previous year, 64.8 percent of the public believe that cross-strait relations have become "more relaxed," while 22.6 percent of the public believe cross-strait relations are "unchanged," and only 12.2 percent of the public believe relations have become "more tensed." Furthermore, 57.9 percent of the public are confident in the government's ability to maintain cross-strait peace and stability, while 41 percent of the public are not confident.

(5) Views on unification vs. independence

The vast majority of the public (91.8 percent) advocate maintaining the status quo defined in a broader sense (including "maintaining the status quo and deciding on independence or unification later," "maintaining the status quo and unification later," "maintaining the status quo and independence later," and "maintaining the status quo indefinitely"), which is a record high as compared to previous opinion surveys. Of the six possible positions on this issue, the largest number of the public (40.9 percent) support "maintaining the status quo and deciding on independence or unification later," while 25.5 percent support "maintaining the status quo indefinitely."