

ROC Leader's Representative Vincent Siew Urges at "Siew-Xi Meeting" for Two Sides to Strengthen Mutual Trust and Create a Sustainable and People-Centered Vision for Cross-Strait Relations

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The 2013 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference (APEC) Leaders' Meeting was held in Bali, Indonesia on October 7th and 8th. On the afternoon of October 6, former Vice President Vincent Siew acting as the Leaders' Representative of the Republic of China met with Mainland leader Xi Jinping. The two sides exchanged views on issues such as the development of cross-strait relations, economic and trade ties and regional economic integration during the cordial 30-minute meeting.

Mr. Siew stated that relations across the Strait over the past five-plus years could be further described as the process of jointly writing history between the two sides. Both sides have gone from mutual understanding to mutual trust, opened constructive and institutionalized relations of mutual benefit and co-prosperity, and established a foundation for peaceful and stable development across the Taiwan Strait and also for the rejuvenation and prosperity of the overall Chinese ethnic group.

Mr. Siew further stated that the most important key to peaceful and stable development of cross-strait relations is the establishment of the "1992 Consensus" as the major foundation for institutionalized cross-strait negotiations and also core for continued promotion of cross-strait

exchanges and interaction in the future. Mr. Siew also urged the two sides to put aside historic strife and, on the basis of the "1992 Consensus," bolster cross-strait peace and prosperity and build on peace dividends for the well-being and happiness of the people on both sides. The two sides should further cherish these precious achievements and the due responsibilities they jointly recognize in order to steadily and pragmatically continue promotion of cross-strait relations.

During the meeting, Mr. Siew proposed three expectations for further advancement in cross-strait relations:

First, continue consolidation of cross-strait relations.

Mr. Siew said that in the past five years, the two sides have promoted institutionalized negotiations and signed 19 agreements that take care of the most urgent and core interests of the people on both sides, and has also established an innovative model for cross-strait interactions in the international arena. In order to continue consolidating cross-strait relations, the two sides should dedicate efforts to increasing mutual trust and benign interactions, create a virtuous cycle for cross-strait relations in the three aspects of respective internal affairs, mutual interaction and joint international participation so as to lay a solid foundation for sustainable development.

Second, continue development of cross-strait relations.

Mr. Siew stated that, at this stage, the two sides should simultaneously advance on deepening and expanding institutionalized cross-strait economic cooperation and jointly participating in regional integration so as to co-prosper and develop in the Asia-Pacific region with win-win results. During the meeting, both sides agreed to speed up

promoting negotiations on trade in goods, dispute settlement and other follow-up agreements under the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA). They also agreed that the two sides should explore strategies and concrete response measures to deepen and implement cross-strait economic and trade cooperation through the Cross-Straits Entrepreneurs' Summit jointly established by Honorary Chairman Siew of the Cross-Straits Common Market Foundation and the Mainland side.

Mr. Siew also proposed that, in the face of rapid developments in the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP), Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and other regional economic integration, Taiwan's participation in negotiating and signing bilateral economic agreements with other economies and in regional economic integration as an important member of the Asia-Pacific region would not only help link Taiwan's economy to the Asia-Pacific and even global markets, improve overall competitiveness, but would also significantly reinforce the people's confidence in cross-strait trade liberalization.

Third, create vision for cross-strait relations

Mr. Siew stressed that the vision for cross-strait relations must be "people-centered," focusing on advancing the rights, interests and happiness of the people. For the current stage, priority should be given to protecting the rights and interests of the people on the two sides, and to promptly realizing the goal of mutually establishing cross-strait institutions. The two sides should jointly confront and pragmatically handle the matter of including paying humanitarian visits to Taiwanese detainees among the functions of the reciprocal institutions, an issue of deep concern to both ruling and opposition parties and various sectors of

the Taiwanese society. By doing so, it would highlight the substantive service functions of the reciprocal institutions established between the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) and the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS), as well as deepen cross-strait mutual trust. During the meeting, Mr. Siew called on the Mainland side to actively coordinate relevant departments, give first consideration to the demands of the people, and jointly work with Taiwan and pragmatically deal with this issue on the basis of mutual trust and understanding.

During the meeting, Mainland leader Xi Jinping said that he strongly affirmed and valued the spirit of shelving disputes and building mutually beneficial cross-strait relations shown by the two sides. He also pointed out that both sides should jointly seize the opportunity to develop cross-strait relations, strengthen cross-strait economic cooperation and benefit compatriots on both sides.

Mr. Siew lastly expressed hope that further development of cross-strait relations could adopt a global perspective, look into the future, strengthen mutual trust, cooperate sincerely and thereby create a sustainable and “people-centered” vision for cross-strait relations.