

## **MAC: The Republic of China is a Sovereign, Independent State; Cross-Strait Relations Positioned in Accordance to Constitution and Does Not Parrot the Mainland's "One China Principle"**

June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013

No. 37

The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) issued the following statement today (June 12<sup>th</sup>) in response to the recent concerns and criticism of certain domestic parties and the general public regarding the position and function of reciprocal institutions to be established by the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) and the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS):

1. The government promotes peaceful development of cross-strait relations in accordance to the Constitution of the Republic of China (ROC) and the Act Governing Relations between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area, which pragmatically positions the relationship across the Strait as "one Republic of China with two areas." According to the Constitution, the ROC is a sovereign, independent country with territorial claim covering both Taiwan and the Mainland, thereby the government naturally cannot recognize the existence of another country on ROC Mainland territory, and thus, we cannot recognize the other side as a country. As such, the relationship across the Strait is certainly not a "state to state" relationship. In terms of national identity, the government governs the country in accordance to the ROC Constitution; there are no such issues such as self-belittlement or parroting of the Mainland's "one China" principle.
2. Cross-strait relations have smoothly developed over the past five years with substantive and pragmatic realization by the two sides on the "mutual non-recognition of sovereignty and mutual non-denial of authority to govern" concept. Furthermore, throughout the process of negotiations on the reciprocal establishment of the SEF and ARATS institutions, the government has stood firm to the established position and made no concessions on national sovereignty or the public's well-being. There is no possibility whatsoever of conducting political negotiations with the other side on cross-strait positioning before consensus has been formed domestically.

3. The MAC stressed that the purpose of establishing reciprocal institutions between the SEF and ARATS is to serve the people on both sides and to protect their rights and interests. Many issues of concern included into the negotiation agenda are of political sensitivity, such as that of travel document application, humanitarian visits to citizens whose personal freedom have been restricted, codes of conduct for personnel dispatched by the two sides, and other matters related to rights guarantees and constraints. The government has not merely treated the above said issues as general issues, but rather has taken a pragmatic approach in the negotiation process and actively sought out Taiwan's best interests. The government has also adhered to the consistent principle of transparency in the negotiation process and related legal procedures; it has conducted ample communications with all sectors, and has also accepted legislative oversight.
4. The MAC reiterated that the government has always abided by relevant legal procedures in authorizing the SEF to conduct cross-strait negotiations, voices raising concern over negotiations becoming "KMT-CPC negotiations" do not exist. It is the government's responsibility to defend national interests and safeguard the people's well-being, therefore the government attaches great importance to the concerns of all sides on the issue of establishing SEF-ARATS reciprocal institutions, and will continue in the future to take all suggestions under advisement and fully communicate with the public to dispel unnecessary doubts. The MAC also appealed to all sides to regard the issue of reciprocal SEF-ARATS institutions establishment in a rationalized manner, and work together to carry out this important national policy.