

MAC: Mainstream Public Opinion in Taiwan Supports Policy Commitment to Maintaining Cross-Strait Peace and Stability and Continued Handling of Cross-Strait Affairs through communication and dialogue

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The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) today (August 9, 2016) announced the results of its second routine public opinion survey this year (2016). The survey showed that more than 80% of the public support the government's cross-Strait policy stance of commitment to maintaining peaceful and stable cross-Strait relations since May 20 (83.8%). Over 70% of the public support handling cross-Strait relations by democratic mechanisms and in line with public opinion (77.5%), and nearly 90% of public support the continued handling of cross-Strait affairs through communication, contact and negotiation mechanisms (89.1%).

The MAC further pointed out that the survey indicated that more than 60% of the public agree with the statement that "Recent cross-Strait incidents highlight the importance of communication and liaison mechanisms between the two sides and help to reduce misunderstanding and misjudgment" (65.9%). Over 70% of the public support the ongoing implementation of the agreements already signed and implemented by the two sides to solve issues related to cross-Strait exchanges and safeguard the welfare, life and property of the people (77.1%). Moreover, 80% of the public believe that existing cross-Strait economic, trade, travel and culture and education exchanges should not be affected by changes in the cross-Strait situation (80.2%), as well as agree that ongoing contact and exchanges between the people on both sides is conducive to promoting positive interaction between the two sides (83.5%).

On issues related to South China Sea arbitration, the MAC stated that the survey showed that the great majority of the public support the government's stance that Taiwan should be included in multilateral dialogue mechanisms and that differences among stakeholders should be resolved through peaceful dialogue (75.3%). Additionally, more than half of the public agree that, under the principle of "shelving disputes and joint development," the involved parties should jointly develop cooperation unrelated to sovereignty concerns and develop resources in the South China Sea (56.6%).

Regarding other cross-Strait issues observed over the long term by the MAC, the survey indicated that people in favor of "maintaining the status quo defined in a broad sense" still account for the great majority of the public (88.9%), maintaining a long-term stable trend. As for views on the current pace of

cross-Strait exchanges, 39.6% of the public believe it to be "just right," followed by the percentages believing the pace to be "too fast" and "too slow" at 12.6% and 33.7%, respectively.

The MAC stressed that the government has a consistent policy position committed to maintaining peaceful and stable cross-Strait relations. This is also a shared responsibility and objective of the two sides. Since May 20, the government has continued to follow the direction of the concerns and expectations of the people in promoting benign interaction between the two sides. It is hoped that both sides will show wisdom and patience and jointly work to maintain the existing cross-Strait mechanisms, and work for the happiness and well-being of the people on both sides through cross-Strait benign communication, dialogue, exchange, and cooperation.

The MAC commissioned the Election Study Center of National Chengchi University to conduct a telephone survey of adults aged 20 and over in Taiwan from July 29 to August 3, 2016. A total of 1,075 valid samples were collected, with a sampling error of plus or minus 2.99% at a 95% level of confidence.