

MAC may replace '1992 consensus'

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Mainland Affairs Council Minister Katharine Chang, center, speaks to reporters yesterday.

Photo: Chen Chih-chu, Taipei Times

Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) Minister Katharine Chang (張善政) yesterday said that the council is working on a new cross-strait policy to replace the so-called "1992 consensus" as part of its efforts to overcome the impasse across the Taiwan Strait.

Chang made the remarks during a meeting of the legislature's Internal Administration Committee in Taipei, which was held to review the council's budget proposal for the next fiscal year.

At the meeting, People First Party Legislator Chen Yi-chieh (陳怡池) asked Chang to comment on remarks by Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Institute of Taiwan Studies head Zhou Zhihuai (周志懷) at an academic forum in China's Guangxi Province on Nov. 30 that Beijing "does not oppose the idea of the 1992 consensus being substituted by a creative alternative."

"Do you interpret such comments as a gesture extending an olive branch? What is the council's attitude about this?" Chen asked.

Chang said the council holds a positive view of Zhou's remarks, but believes that only a mindset of "seeking common ground, while maintaining differences" would be conducive to cross-strait development.

"The council will positively and discreetly study [any proposals that can] promote cross-strait

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development. We are willing to sit down with Beijing at an opportune time to work out a solution," Chang said.

She added that the council has been studying possible alternatives to the "1992 consensus."

Cross-strait communication mechanisms have been suspended due to President Tsai Ing-wen's (蔡英文) refusal to acknowledge the "1992 consensus," which refers to a tacit understanding between the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) and the Chinese Communist Party that both sides of the Taiwan Strait acknowledge that there is "one China," with each side having its own interpretation of what "China" means.

Former MAC chairman Su Chi (蘇起) said in 2006 that he had made up the term in 2000.

On the sidelines of the meeting, Chang said any forms of threat are not helpful to cross-strait ties, in response to reporters' questions about Chinese air force missions circling Taiwan's airspace on Nov. 25 and Dec. 10.

"[Beijing] has always adopted a stick-and-carrot approach to Taiwan. There is no type of threat that has a positive effect on cross-strait relations. Our stance is that we should maintain cross-strait peace and stability," Chang said.

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