Analysis of the Establishment of Official Representative Offices by the SEF and ARATS

Chong-hai Shaw
Professor and Director, Graduate Institute of Mainland China Studies; Dean, Social Science College, Chinese Culture University

Abstract

On October 17, 2011, Ma Ying-jeou, the President of the ROC, suggested that he should “promote the establishment of official representative offices to enable the two sides to tackle cross-strait affairs smoothly” in a series of press conferences. Almost three years ago, however, Chen Yun-lin, the President of Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits, had already spoken about the need to “set up official representative offices” at the first Jiang-Chen meeting.

The aforementioned statements would lead one to believe that both authorities consider that an official representative office supervising the implementation of the 19 agreements signed between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait so far, as well as affairs derived from these agreements, would be effective in fulfilling the agreements reached in these meetings.

In addition to implementing and supervising the affairs arising from the agreements, it is found that the focus of each side inevitably involves “political issues” when discussing the practicality of the es-
Therefore, the author was inspired to analyze the following topics in this research project. What was the real thinking when Taipei or Beijing proposed “the establishment of official representative offices”? Are there any previous patterns or examples to consult? What influence would this situation bring on the future development of cross-strait relations?

**Keywords:** Ma Ying-jeou, Chen Yun-lin, the Establishment of Official Representative Office across the Taiwan Strait, SEF (Taiwan’s Straits Exchange Foundation), ARATS (Mainland China’s Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits)

### I. Statement of Background, Motive, and Purpose

In June 2008, Chen Yun-lin, the President of Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits, referred to “...set up official representative offices” at the first Jiang-Chen meeting. He said, “...to focus on the requirements of the following steps, direct transport links across the Taiwan Straits and fulfill the establishment of official representative offices.”

On October 17, 2011, Ma Ying-jeou presided over the “Golden Decade, National Vision” series of press conferences. In the seventh vision, “Cross-Strait Peace,” Ma Ying-jeou suggested “...stabilization

---

of cross-strait relations, institutionalization of interaction patterns, and gradual promotion of the establishment of official representative offices to enable the two sides to tackle cross-strait affairs smoothly. In fact, for a long period of time, after the recovery of consultations between the two sides on the basis of ‘1992 Consensus’ and ‘one China, different interpretations,’ the depth, frequency, and business of mutual consultations has increased dramatically. Therefore, the demand for establishment of official representative offices has emerged. I hope that we can keep working on this the future.”

Certainly, from June 2008 to August 2013, after nine rounds of cross-strait high-level talks and after 19 agreements and 2 consensus statements were signed, it can be imagined from the aforementioned talks that both authorities consider that an official representative office that can supervise the implementation of these agreements, as well as affairs derived from these agreements, would be effective in fulfilling the agreements reached in these meetings. This should be the most important and main motivation of setting “the establishment of official representative offices.”

Nevertheless, in addition to implementing and supervising the affairs arising from the agreements, it is found that the focus of each side inevitably involves “political issues” when discussing the practicality of the establishment of reciprocal institutions, but both sides have shown consensus in attempting to build some political contents on that basis. For example, on June 9, 2013, in a routine press briefing of the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council in Beijing, spokes-

woman Fan Li-qing said, “SEF and ARATS need to properly tackle some politically sensitive issues arising during their mutual consultations of establishing representative official offices.” On June 10, 2013, Ma Ying-jeou interviewed the continental mission of KMT Honorary Chairman Wu Poh-hsiung in Taipei and said this when referring to the issue of establishment of official representative offices: “Establishing official representative offices seems like an administrative measure, but actually each step contains highly political meaning. We cannot avoid this; however, we have started the consultations and hope to reach agreements as soon as possible.” The aforementioned examples indicate that both sides have such “political thinking.” This kind of thinking is probably a bit more “complex” than the mentioned motives. At least, it implies the issue of a political level. In recent developments, however, Taipei seems to be trying to reduce the political content of this issue by saying the establishment of official representative offices does not involve any political meaning. This has inspired the author to further the following topics in this research.

1. What was the real thinking when Beijing proposed “the establishment of official representative offices”?

2. What was the real thinking when Taipei proposed the same issue?

3. Are there any previous patterns or examples to consult?

4. What influence would this have on the future development of cross-strait relations?

---

II. “The Establishment of Official Representative Offices” from Beijing’s Perspective

In fact, the official opinion of Beijing is conservative and traditional. Before the policy clearly positions the function of “the establishment of official representative offices,” the offices only can be explained as a “service institution” established for the people of both sides. Also, in order to prevent the public from misunderstanding that Beijing’s consent in establishment of official representative offices implies the tacit recognition of sovereign coexistence, it repeatedly has stressed that the establishment of offices is not building “a diplomatic and consular institution,” which is also the key point in official consultation. Nevertheless, it is difficult to interpret more from the official position. The author has managed to analyze the following phenomena.

1. **Put emphasis on the office being “a service institution under the framework of the SEF and ARATS,” not “a diplomatic and consular institution”**

   Director of the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, Zhang Zhi-jun, interviewed Taiwan-funded enterprises and had forums with Taiwanese entrepreneurs in May 2013. When he was asked about the establishment of official representative offices, his reply was a typical example. Zhang Zhi-jun said that “the aim of establishing offices is to serve the people of both sides, the goal is mutual benefit and win-win, and the offices are positioned as service institutions under the framework of the SEF and ARATS. It is absolutely not a diplomatic and consular institution. Currently, communication of establishing offices between the SEF and ARATS has positively progressed. I hope that both sides make related arrangements as soon as possible to facilitate the communication, better safeguard the rights and interests of people of both sides, and forward the development of
In this conversation, there are two focal points: first, the office is under the framework of the SEF and ARATS and it remains in the civil nature requiring great care; second, it completely denies the position of the office being equivalent to a diplomatic and consular institution.

At the routine press briefing of the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council on June 9, 2013, spokeswoman Fan Li-qing’s answer was another set of templates. She said, “The aim of the SEF and ARATS in establishing the offices is to serve the people of both sides and promote peaceful development of cross-strait relations, and the position of the offices is under the framework of the SEF and ARATS. The affairs and business it deals with contain the fields of economy and trade, culture, education, communication, contact and emergency relief, and so on.” This consensus has been achieved by both sides, and it embodies the SEF and ARATS mainly establishing the offices to serve people, to promote economic and cultural exchanges between the two sides, and to protect rights and interests of people of both sides. In regards to the property of SEF and ARATS establishing the offices, Fan said, “We also noted that Taiwan expressed that cross-strait relations is not a state-to-state relationship and the office is not a diplomatic and consular institution.”

---


2. Do not deny that establishing the offices involves some politically sensitive issues

On June 9, 2013, at a routine press briefing of the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, a journalist of Fujian Straits TV asked if the Taiwan Affairs Office agreed with what Ma Ying-jeou said about “discussing the establishment of official representative offices is a broader way of political consultations.” Fan Li-qing replied: “when consulting about the establishment of offices by the SEF and ARATS, some politically sensitive issues must be tackled properly.”

3. “Sovereignty” issues will not be talked about

On June 26, 2013, a journalist of Sanlih E-Television asked if it would be possible to relax the restriction proposed by legislative bodies that the premise of establishing offices is to have the so-called “Human Rights Watch Interview” first. Fan Li-qing said: “We are glad to see the SEF and ARATS establishing Offices, but we think that both sides should keep the easier part first and keep the principle of step by step in mind. We should establish the offices first and gradually expand and refine them in the future.” The problems of “Human Rights Watch Interview” and “Tourist Visa” have not been mentioned at any press conferences and are likely to touch on sensitive sovereignty issues of Beijing, so Communist China will surely respond carefully. The best step would be what Fan Li-qing said: “to fulfill the establishment first and gradually expand and refine them in the future.”

6. 〈國台辦新聞發佈會輯錄（2013-06-09）〉.
III. “The Establishment of Official Representative Offices” from Taipei’s Perspective

In 2011, Ma Ying-jeou highlighted the establishment of official representative offices as being one of the focal points of his future mainland policy in the “Golden Decade” white paper. Thus, where he will put emphasis should be the motive of establishing offices from the Taipei perspective that we will investigate.

1. Official story: clear position that establishing the office is mainly for serving people of both sides

October 10, 2012, at the celebration ceremony of the 101st National Day of the Republic of China, Ma Ying-jeou declared that the Act Governing Relations between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland will be reviewed and corrected entirely, and we must promote the establishment of official representative offices as soon as possible to meet the needs of enterprises, pupils and people of both sides. These will be the focal points of future cross-strait affairs.”

The SEF (Straits Exchange Foundation), who is mainly responsible for promoting the establishment of official representative offices, also holds this viewpoint. On May 24, 2013, the foundation chairman, Lin Join-sane, attended a campaign held by Global Views Monthly, where he said: “Cross-strait relations are very close, so we need to strengthen timely service. Thus, to establish offices is considered an urgent and necessary issue by both sides. The SEF and ARATS have

held consultations on the issue of establishing offices four times. I hope that we will sign agreements soon.”

The real promoter behind the scenes is the MAC (Mainland Affairs Council). In the same year, on June 14, 2013, Minister of MAC, Wang Yu-chi, explained the reasons for the mutual establishment of offices in detail at a Taiwanese entrepreneurs friendship forum. He said, “The reason that the government is promoting the establishment of official representative offices is based on meeting our people’s real needs when they are in mainland China. When Taiwanese businessmen encounter difficulties in the future, other than reporting to the SEF in Taipei, they can also seek assistance from the nearest office of the SEF in mainland China. In order to improve the accessibility of service, the government’s preliminary plan is to gradually set up SEF offices in Beijing, as well as the places Taiwanese businessmen and students gather. This will greatly reduce the logistical supply line of taking care of our people.”

Also, on June 13 of the same year, when KMT Honorary Chairman Wu Poh-hsiung met with Communist Party General Secretary Xi Jinping, the fourth of the seven declared propositions of future development of cross-strait relations was “to deepen social exchanges and to actively promote the mutual establishment of offices on both sides.” Wu said: “In the past five years, both sides had made considerable progress on economy and trade, culture, education, women, religion,


sports, environmental protection, science and technology, and communications between national minority groups; we hope that such exchanges and communication can be furthered. Having more shared values of civilization is conducive to the development of cross-strait relations. Currently, we should also actively promote the establishment of official representative offices and facilitate their implementation, which will be an issue that benefits people of both sides.”

It seems that, from the policy maker, President Ma Ying-jeou, to the policy executives, Minister Wang of the MAC and Chairman Lin of the SEF, they all have made consistent claims on the aim of the office being “to provide service” and consistent claims that establishing offices on the other side surely has legitimacy to meet people’s real needs.

2. Official story: explicitly states “the office” will not be seen as “a diplomatic and consular institution”

On June 10, 2013, Ma Ying-jeou interviewed the continental mission of KMT Honorary Chairman Wu Poh-hsiung. When talking about the establishment of official representative offices, he emphasized “There is not a state-to-state relationship between the two sides of Taiwan Straits. The offices, established in mainland China and Taiwan, will not be seen as diplomatic and consular institutions. At the same time, the identity and protection of persons, applications for licenses, prisoner visits, etc. will be regulated; but not in a way of a state-to-state relationship. ‘Most of all, under our constitutional framework, we cannot see the side across the Taiwan Strait as a State’.”

12. 〈總統接見中國國民黨吳伯雄榮譽主席大陸訪問團〉, 《中華民國總統府》 (Office of the President, Republic of China (Taiwan)), June 10, 2013, <http://
3. Official story: We look forward to consulting on “political issues” with Beijing

In fact, Taipei has not completely ruled out the future possibility of political consultations after the SEF and ARATS establish offices, with “negotiations for a peace agreement between the two sides” even being included. For example, on March 5, 2013, when replying to a legislator’s inquiry, “Is it possible, Premier Jiang, to promote consultations to contribute to a cross-strait peace agreement,” Premier Jiang Yi-huah referred to the importance of the establishment of official representative offices. He said: “Cross-strait relations, diplomacy, and national defense, according to the Constitution, are clearly under the authority of the president. Of course, there are many issues we will discuss together, whether in the presidential cross-strait panel or in the international team, and the premier is involved. Therefore, we have a lot of opportunities to discuss how the further cross-strait relations will develop. At present, I think that the idea of establishing offices and agencies proposed by the MAC is a crucial step. If we receive a positive response from the other side, we will move toward a better interactive mode in the future based on this.”

When Ma Ying-jeou interviewed the continental mission and KMT Honorary Chairman Wu Poh-hsiung and talked about the issue of establishing offices, Ma also held this position. He said, “Establishing official representative offices seems like an administrative measure, but actually each step contains highly political meaning. We cannot avoid this; however, we have started the consultations and hope to

---

reach agreements as soon as possible.” Besides, Ma also notes “there is not a state-to-state relationship between the two sides. The offices established in mainland China and Taiwan will not be seen as diplomatic and consular institutions. At the same time, the identity and protection of persons, applications for licenses, prisoner visits, etc. will be regulated; but not in a way of a state-to-state relationship. ‘Most of all, under our constitutional framework, we cannot see the side across the Taiwan Strait as a state’.”

4. Do the issue of “Tourist Visa” and the demand for “Human Rights Watch Interview” touch on the “Sovereignty Issue” of the other side?

If such a request is seen as touching the bottom line by Beijing, it will have laid a controversial barrier for whether the SEF and ARATS could finally establish offices or not. MAC Minister Wang Yu-chi once proposed the following opinion, “In regard to the ‘Tourist Visa’ issues we care about, we will keep the public convenience and necessity of the two sides in mind and actively seek to assign stationed units for document collection by both sides. As to the reporting requirements of Taiwanese nationals detained in China, the Mainland has agreed to inform our offices in mainland China on the basis of two agreements: joint crime combat and investment protection. Since ‘Human Rights Watch Interview’ involves related legal responsibilities and authorities of mainland China, further communication is needed and we are committed to win it over.” This disclosed that Taipei will keep striving for the demands of “Tourist Visa” and “Human Rights Watch Interview,” but the MAC remains cautious in how it speaks on these issues. The MAC does not want to cause disputes.

14 〈總統接見中國國民黨吳伯雄榮譽主席大陸訪問團〉.
15 〈「2013大陸臺商端午節座談聯誼活動」主委致詞稿〉.
that result in contention about sovereignty.

Nevertheless, the opposition party still emphasizes the functions of setting up offices and paying attention to the issue of “Tourist Visa” and the demand of “Human Rights Watch Interview” only. It seems that the real reason the opposition party fights for these is to challenge the “sovereignty” of the Mainland. On June 19, 2013, DPP Chairman Su Tseng-chang said, “DPP advocated that the establishment of official representative offices must have real capabilities, including signing travel-related documents and consular access” when he was asked of mutual establishment of offices at Central Standing Committee.16 Back in July 2007, Chairman of the SEF, Hung Chi-chang, stated that he looked forward to fulfilling consular functions via the SEF and ARATS in the future and promoting the establishment of the office.17 In the two talks, the “consular functions” proposed by Hung and “consular access” proposed by Su to replace the term “Human Rights Watch Interview” reveal that the main purpose of the DPP is trying to build a “state-to-state relationship” on both sides. It is clear that Beijing would not agree with this.

5. Is the mutual establishment of offices mode in East and West Germany after 1975 a practical reference for the SEF and ARATS?

Although Beijing has repeatedly stressed in official documents that the German model will not be used in tackling cross-strait

relations, the model of mutually establishing offices in West and East Germany after 1975 might be a practical reference for the SEF and ARATS. This is especially true as West and East Germany were not united at that time. Beijing has not revealed their thoughts toward this so far. Completely copying the model may not be acceptable, but we can view and emulate the German model.

President Ma Ying-jeou said in an interview that he has visited Germany 15 times since 1985. He has had a chance to get to know West and East Germany deeply as well as how they mutually established offices. He learned from the German model. The experience of West and East Germany facilitated him in promoting cross-strait relations and setting up the SEF and ARATS. He implied that the establishment of official representative offices was learned from the model of West and East Germany. Nevertheless, the situation of Germany and the situation of cross-strait relations have similarities and differences. The similarities are “mutual non-recognition of sovereignty, mutual non-denial of the right to rule” and “not a state to state relationship”. The difference is that East and West Germany signed the Basic Treaty first and set up the offices according to the treaty signed. In the current situation, however, there is no such treaty signed by both sides across the strait, and the model of West and East Germany is different from the scheme of the SEF and ARATS, which intends to

---


be implemented very carefully.\footnote{Lin Ting-yao,〈兩岸互設辦事處 參考兩德定位〉, 《世界新聞網》 (worldjournal.com), June 19, 2013, <http://www.worldjournal.com/pages/full_news/push?article-%E5%85%A9%E5%B2%B8%E4%BA%92%E8%A8%AD%E8%BE%A6%E4%BA%8B%E8%99%95+%E5%8F%83%E8%80%83%E5%85%A9%E5%BE%B7%E5%AE%9A%E4%BD%8D%20&id=22927278&instance=menu_news>.


The two German states mutually establishing representative offices can be traced back to 1969. The left-wing Die PARTEI of West Germany intended to normalize the relations of Two German states after it came to power. Leaders of the two sides signed the Basic Treaty in December 1972 and mutually respected each other as subjects of international law as well as the legality of each other’s sovereignty. West Germany recognized East Germany as a “country,” but not “foreign.” Their bilateral relations were a “special relationship” before they unified. In March 1974, according to the Basic Treaty, Article 8, “Protocol of establishing a Permanent Representative Office,” they stationed institutions in each other’s territory. The offices were known as “Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) permanent missions” and “the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) permanent missions.” The key point is that the institutions stationed on the other side were not called “Embassy.” This accorded with the relation between the two German states not being a “state-to-state” relationship. It was a “special relationship” before they united.

For the SEF and ARATS, to mutually establish offices still
requires great civil care in implementation. The establishment of re-
representative offices of the two German states may not necessarily
have any reference value. Nevertheless, as the authorities of both
sides intend to establish offices in the future, the experience of the
two German states can serve as a good example. This is because of
a very important context: the cross-strait relation is not a “state-to-
state” relationship and the representative offices will not be foreign
embassies and consulates. These are the consensus of authorities on
both sides currently. If this consensus does not change in the future,
the model of mutual establishment of representative offices in the
two German states will be a possible solution for the authorities
across the Taiwan Strait to use as a reference.

IV. Possible Impact on Relations of Both Sides across
the Taiwan Straits

Everything has its advantages and disadvantages. The authors
will present the positive influence of establishing offices on cross-
strait relations and propose a number of possible negative factors.

1. Supportive opinion of Taiwanese polls toward the estab-
lishment of offices can be viewed as positive expectation
for future development of relations between both sides

On June 18, 2013, the MAC of the Executive Yuan announced
the result of the latest public opinion survey, with over 70% (71.1%)
of the people approving of the government’s policy of promoting
the establishment of reciprocal institutions by the SEF and ARATS
to serve and assist people directly, along with helping mutual un-
derstanding and reducing hostility between the two sides (75.4%).
Nearly 80% (78.7%) of respondents claimed that institutions stationed
by SEF should be allowed to process travel permits and authorized
to report and visit Taiwanese nationals detained in China. In regard
to the draft of “Branches originally from mainland China that are stationed in Taiwan in order to deal with affairs related to traveling between both sides” submitted to the Legislative Yuan for review, nearly 70% (67.9%) of the public approve of this bill as a basis for admission and management of representative offices set by ARATS in the future. 72% of the public support first submitting the draft statute to the Legislative Yuan for review. The public intend to have the legislative oversight, to be the foundation and supervise consultations between the Executive institution and mainland China. 22

2. The Establishment of official representative offices symbolizes a more direct communication model in the future

Consultation and communication between the two sides in the past, while smooth, were limited by the institutionalized consultation procedure with only one high-level talk every six months. Nowadays, cross-strait exchanges and urgent situations occur frequently, which restricts the ability of both sides to tackle affairs immediately and quickly. After the mutual establishment of official representative offices, Taiwan compatriots can receive immediate services and supervise the fulfillment of the agreement. The efficiency will be greatly increased. Nevertheless, the communication and consultation between officials and staff on both sides need to be improved. This “breakthrough” could be a milestone for the future development of cross-strait relations. As the US-China Press indicated, the new progress of the establishment of offices by the SEF and ARATS will be a new starting point after the “1992 consensus.” This will promote cross-strait trade and economic reciprocity, promote cultural exchange, and

increase civil mutually understanding and political trust. This is a starting point for cross-strait political dialogue and is of great political significance.  

3. **Once the SEF and ARATS establish official representative offices, peaceful development across the Taiwan Strait will be fulfilled**

It is very simple to explain this. If there is an office stationed in each other’s jurisdiction to deal with affairs people rely on, it proves that the “opposing” no longer exists because the minor conflicts that may result in major collision can be solved by timely “communication” and “consultations.” Then, the slogan “development in peace” finally will be fulfilled. Director of Across the Taiwan Strait Tourism Association Beijing Office, Yang Rui-zong, once said the establishment of offices across the Taiwan Strait is not only for the actual functional needs in tourism but also is an actual symbol that represents the reconciliation between the two sides and moving toward the path of peace. 

4. **The establishment of official representative offices expresses that authority in Beijing respects the “equal consultation” positioning between both sides**

In fact, the most substantive gain for Taipei is that the establishment of official representative offices in each other’s jurisdiction not only shows Beijing respects “equal consultation” of both sides,
but also implies a deeper meaning — Beijing acknowledges tacitly the “jurisdiction” of Taipei. This is a breakthrough of “political definition for both sides of the Straits” that has been a difficult problem for years. Of course, it will be an indirect response of President Ma Ying-jeou’s “do not deny the ‘right to rule’ of each other.”

5. **If it is difficult to achieve a consensus toward the matter of the establishment of offices among the parties in Taiwan, it may lead to the postponement of the establishment of representation offices**

The ruling party and the opposition party, from the above analysis, have achieved a rare consensus referring to the mutual establishment of offices. Even during the time the DPP was in power, Chairman of SEF Hung Chi-chang proposed that the SEF and ARATS should set up offices mutually. His opinion was proposed even prior to the time the KMT suggested the same concept.

Nevertheless, from Hung Chi-chang’s opinion to DPP Chairman Su Tseng-chang’s viewpoint, they focused on “Tourist Visa” and “Human Rights Watch Interview” topics to highlight the “sovereignty” of Taiwan. In addition, they both proposed the terms of “consular features” and “consular visits rights” to make the offices move toward a “state-to-state” relationship. Such practices are difficult to be tolerated by Beijing and to be accepted by the ruling party KMT when they face the Constitution. The result predictably will lead to a controversy like the the *Cross-Strait Agreement on Trade in Services* issue, and this will cause a standstill in the Legislative Yuan for review and postpone.

---

25. "About the dispute of GATS agreement, Ma Ying-jeou pointed out that the GATS agreement is controversial because of insufficient advocacy and the continual spread of incorrect messages and that there is nothing about opening to mainland labor, nothing about opening to mainland goods, and nothing about
the establishment of the offices.

With strongly different views of Taiwanese people, this may lead to conflict of public opinion and impact the review of the act. The DPP spokesman Lin Jun-xian said the DPP conducted a public opinion poll referring to the establishment of representative offices recently. 83.1% of the respondents said the offices must be authorized with Human Rights Watch interview. 78% of the respondents favored the offices being allowed to process travel permits. 65.2% of those polled said the representative offices would be unnecessary if the offices are not authorized the aforementioned functions. The result revealed that Taiwanese people think that the offices should be autho-

mainland investment immigration, but there is a public university economics department saying four to five million laborers are coming. In reality, mainland enterprises have invested in Taiwan for 3-4 years, but the mainland industry investing in Taiwan only has 398 possessions and has only brought, including managers and technical personnel, 216 people to Taiwan. Nevertheless, this has created more than 6,000 jobs. So, the yellow taxis will never be the red taxis.” Please refer to Yan Ming-ciang, 〈服貿協議爭議 馬英九指是造謠及闢謠的對抗〉, 《蘋果日報》(Apple Daily), July 30, 2013, <http://www.appledaily.com.tw/realtimenews/article/new/20130730/233279/>.

DPD consider that the government should not only emphasized the good parts but deliberately ignoring bad influence, signing the agreement on Trade in Services calling the pact’s signing “a black box.” Please refer to 〈兩岸服務貿易協議對台利弊得失引發爭議〉, 《美國之音》(Voice of America), August 27, 2013, <http://www.voicantones.com/content/reactions-on-cross-strait-service-trade-pact-20130722/1706665.html>. DPP caucus secretary-general Gao Jyh-peng pointed out that the GATS agreement has been signed for two months and many industries do not know how they are influenced by GATS. Some government officials are still uncertain. This is why we should debate the GATS agreement and help the public understand the content. We do not rule out any measure to stop the proceedings. Please refer to Su Sheng-yi, 〈服貿議題 民進黨團：與蘇貞昌分進合擊〉, 《蘋果日報》(Apple Daily), August 26, 2013, <http://www.appledaily.com.tw/realtimenews/article/new/20130826/248653/>.
rized for Human Rights Watch interview and allowed to process travel permits. This is only set up with the purpose of serving people of the two countries, rather than for the sake of politics.\textsuperscript{26}

In fact, this poll does not feature a high proportion of respondents, as it was previously mentioned that another surge of public opinion highly supports the establishment of representative offices. To review this issue from another point of view, whether the DPP mentioned that mutually establishing representative offices should be able to be measured by “serving people” or not, the real purpose that they stressed “Tourist Visa” and “Human Rights Watch Interview” is probably to highlight the “sovereignty” of Taiwan. If public opinion highly supports the establishment of representative offices but some keep highlighting the issues of “sovereignty,” it may result in a strong confrontation.

6. Variables appearing during the consultation are more difficult to control

What is most concerning is that, during the consultation, if Beijing proposes any words or actions to highlight its traditional policy or position, such as repeatedly presenting the “one China principle” or resetting the agreement text into the “one China framework” or unintentionally displaying Central and local posture, Taipei is bound to recall the SEF representative. Thus, Taipei may consider withdrawal from the negotiations, which will lead the relationship of both sides back to the original starting point or even worse.

The policy-making circles in Beijing certainly would not make such hasty instructions, but we are afraid that the executives believe in the “Political Correctness” credo and may release unnecessary messages under the thinking of such a credo. This may lead to significant events even if it is simply an inadvertent mistake.
References

Chinese Online Resources


2013/6/9.〈國台辦新聞發佈會輯錄（2013-06-09）〉，《國務院臺


2013/7/15. 〈楊瑞宗：若旅遊部門互設辦事處象徵兩岸和平邁進〉，《中國新聞網》(Ecns.cn), <http://www.chinanews.com/tw/2013/


Lin, Ting-yao, 2013/6/19.〈兩岸互設辦事處 參考兩德定位〉，《世界新聞網》(worldjournal.com), <http://www.worldjournal.com/pages/full_news/push?article-%E5%85%A9%E5%B2%B8%E4%BA%92%E8%A8%AD%E8%BE%A6%E4%BA%8E%E9%99%95+%E5%8F%83%E8%80%83%E5%85%A9%E5%BE%A7%E5%AE%9A%E4%BD%8D%20&id=22927278&instance=menu_news>.


