

A Study on the Attitudes of Mauritian Political Parties Towards China and Their Responses

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ABSTRACT

Mauritius is a major power in the Indian Ocean, with a combined power and international influence that is second to none among the island nations or regions of the Indian Ocean. Mauritius is strategically located in the Southern Indian Ocean region and is an important pivot point of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. With the promotion of the "One Belt, One Road" in Mauritius, the participation of Chinese people in politics is on the agenda, but the core competitiveness of Chinese political parties in Mauritius is lacking.

Keywords: Mauritian Political Parties, China; Attitudes, Responses, The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the cooperation between China and Mauritius in the fields of politics, economy, trade, humanities, health care and so on has become increasingly close, has become a key area in China's Indian Ocean regional diplomacy and economic foreign investment. But increasingly close Sino-Mauritian relations still faces challenges from some unfavorable factors, such as trade imbalance, challenging the status quo of regional order, debt trap, environmental pollution, capital expansion and so on. In the face of the above unfavorable situation, China should increase its economic investment and strategic support to Mauritius, create a good international environment for the deep cooperation between the two countries by building a coordination mechanism among major powers, and remove the obstacles in the exchanges and cooperation between the two countries through the exchanges and mutual learning between the two countries' civilizations and people's hearts. China should continue to promote the flagship project of "Belt and Road Initiative", enrich the connotation of Sino-Mauritian relations and help build a community of regional destiny.

2. OVERVIEW OF PARTY POLITICS IN MAURITIUS

The main political parties in Mauritius include the Labour Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Combatant Party and the Socialist Combatant Party. These four parties have their own symbolic colours, with the Labour Party being represented by the colour red, the Social Democratic Party by the colour blue, the Combat Party by the colour purple and the Socialist Combat Party by the colour orange. Whenever parliamentary elections are held in Mauritius, Mauritians wear one of these four colours to express their political attitudes.

Founded on 23 February 1936, the Labour Party is the oldest political party in Mauritius and has made a significant contribution to the national liberation movement in Mauritius. After the independence of Mauritius, the Labour Party remained the dominant party in parliamentary politics for a long time, until the parliamentary elections in 2000, and is known as the "Indian National Congress" of Mauritius. The Social Democratic Party, which originated from the Mauritian Party in 1953, represents the interests of the upper bourgeoisie in the country and has a strong influence in the political and economic life of Mauritius. The Combat Party was founded in 1969 to oppose British colonial rule in the Chagos

Archipelago and is one of the nationalist parties in Mauritius. In the mid-20th century, the world communist movement was growing rapidly, the Soviet Union was exporting socialist models to Africa, and other socialist countries were sponsoring the ruling party in Mauritius. The Socialist War Party entered a period of rapid growth and gradually replaced the Labour Party as the mainstream party in Mauritius.

Politically, Mauritius has a multi-party parliamentary system, with the leader of the party with the highest majority of votes as the head of government. The main political parties include the Labour Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Combatant Party and the Socialist Combatant Party. The current ruling party is the Union of Mauritians, which is dominated by the Socialist Combat Party. The Socialist Combat Party and its allies won 38 seats in the parliamentary elections held on 7 November 2019, more than half of the seats in parliament, and the incumbent Prime Minister, Pravind Jugnauth, won and will be re-elected until 2024. The Socialist War Party (MSM) was formed in 1983 by a merger of members of the Combat Party and the former Socialist Party. In August of that year, the ruling coalition of the Socialist War Party, the Labour Party and the Social Democrats won the general election and formed a new government dominated by the Socialist War Party, which won another parliamentary election in August 1987, winning 44 of the 70 seats in parliament, including 29 seats for the Socialist War Party. In the following parliamentary elections, the SWP was elected to power in 1999, 2000, 2014 and 2019.

3. ATTITUDES OF THE RULING PARTY TOWARDS CHINA

The Social War Party, whose mass base is mainly left-wing supporters of the former Combat Party and the Social Democratic Party, is more socialist and politically advocates Western-style political democratisation, freedom of the press, association and trade unions, better prospects for individual development, social integration, free popular expression, organised citizen participation in decision-making, effective governance, transparency and accountability; social reform, the Mauritius is fully nationalised and a workers' self-government is established. Maintain a sustained and stable economic policy to enhance the predictability of the economic environment and make Mauritius the economic and commercial hub of the Indian Ocean Rim and Africa; expand productive employment and pursue an open door policy in the economy; and develop the national economy so that more Mauritians can enjoy the dividends of development in order to build a "better and fairer A "better and fairer" Mauritius.

Diplomatically, it advocates a pragmatic foreign policy and friendly relations with countries of different social systems; adheres to the principles of neutrality and peace and multiculturalism, opposes the militarisation of the Indian Ocean and racial discrimination, and advocates the establishment of diverse and unified community relations and a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. Due to similar ideologies and values, the SWP and China have closer relations, especially since the SWP was granted the right to form a cabinet in 2014, its senior officials have been invited to visit China on several occasions for visits and study tours, exchanging in-depth views on topics such as experience in governance and the ability of political parties to govern, gathering talents for innovation, attracting foreign investment, experience in grassroots governance of political parties and the country, and the maritime hub. In addition the ministries and commissions of the Liaison Ministry, the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have arranged high-level officials to visit Mauritius every year since 2014 to strengthen exchanges and cooperation with Mauritius in the areas of economy, culture, education and tourism, support Mauritius to play an active role in international and regional affairs, and promote Mauritius to gradually become a gateway for China's investment in Africa and a hub for connectivity with Africa.

In October 2015, CUP Minister Wang Jiarui met with a delegation of the SWP led by Chairman Shokuthali Sooden to exchange views on deepening contacts between the two parties. In November 2016, CUP Minister Song Tao and Vice Minister Xu Luping met with a delegation of ministerial-level cadres from the SWP led by Pravind Jagannath in Beijing to exchange views and opinions on the experience of governance and the ability of political parties to govern. After the meeting, the Liaison Department also had in-depth discussions with the SWP delegation on topics of mutual interest such as gathering talents for innovation and attracting foreign investment. In November 2017, General Secretary of the SWP Pravind Jagannath met with Xu Luping and his delegation at the Prime Minister's Office, where he hoped that China would help Mauritius build a gateway and hub for China-Africa cooperation. In July 2018, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Mauritius and met with Pravind Jugnauth, during which Xi said that China would continue to support Mauritius in playing an active role in international and regional affairs. In September 2018, Pravind Jugnauth met with the Secretary of the Shanxi Provincial Party Committee in During his meeting with the CPC delegation led by Luo Huining, Secretary of the Shanxi Provincial Party Committee, in Port Louis, Pravind Jagannath highly appreciated the contribution

made by Jin-Africa Investment Company to the Mauritian economy.

Based on the above analysis, the ruling party of Mauritius will maintain a policy of friendship and cooperation with China. In terms of party governance, the SWP will work effectively with the CPC; in terms of national and global governance, in addition to continuing to pursue the "One China" policy, the SWP will also give strong support in terms of human rights, a harmonious world, a community of human destiny, and the choice of a national path and development model; in terms of economic development In terms of economic development, the "Vision 2030" and "Belt and Road" initiative share in many respects a similar vision, which is conducive to promoting trade liberalisation and investment facilitation between Chinese and Mauritius enterprises. Healthy party diplomacy has boosted relations between China and Mauritius. With China's growing comprehensive national strength and influence in the international community, the "Beijing Consensus" and the "Community of Human Destiny" concepts are becoming familiar and accepted by different sectors of the Mauritian society. In such a context, China-Mauritius relations are facing a new era. However, the rotation of political parties and policy swings in Mauritius tend to create uncertainties in the long-term cooperation between China and Mauritius. It is therefore particularly important to understand the attitude of the ruling party towards China.

4. RESPONSES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

First, adhere to the "four principles" of inter-party relations. In 1982, the 12th National Congress of the Communist Party of China formally put forward the "Four Principles" for dealing with inter-party relations, which has since become an important guideline for the Communist Party of China (CPC)'s party diplomacy and provided an important behavioral basis for the party to deal with foreign inter-party relations. The four principles are: independence, complete equality, mutual respect and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. Among the four principles, "independence" occupies the first and core position, which is the premise and foundation of the other three principles. the Communist Party of China(CPC) should first maintain its independent position in party diplomacy, not be dominated by the will of other political parties in other countries, and not impose its own will on other countries and other political parties, which is the prerequisite for communication between political parties. The second principle, "complete equality", means that the Communist Party of China (CPC) treats all partners equally in party diplomacy, and does not discriminate according to the size of

political parties, the strength of the country and the depth of seniority. This is the code of conduct for communication between political parties. The third principle, "mutual respect", means that the Communist Party of China (CPC) fully respects party differences in party diplomacy, especially fully respects ideological differences due to different historical and cultural backgrounds and values, and prevents the forced import and export of party models, which is the value of inter-party communication. The fourth principle "non-interference in each other's internal affairs" refers to the Communist Party of China (CPC)'s opposition to interfering in the internal affairs of other countries and other parties in party diplomacy, rejecting big-party factionalism and putting an end to monopolization and interference, which is the fundamental guarantee of inter-party communication. The "Four Principles" for dealing with inter-party relations complement each other, showing the relationship of "you have me, you have me". Since it was put forward, it has become an important behavioral basis of the Communist Party of China (CPC)'s party diplomacy, a key principle that the Communist Party of China (CPC) needs to continue to adhere to in dealing with foreign inter-party relations in the new era, and a valuable historical experience on the road of the Communist Party of China (CPC)'s party diplomacy transformation.

Secondly, adhere to the dual positioning. As the ruling party, the Communist Party of China (CPC)'s party diplomacy and government diplomacy have the same orientation, and it has a dual position in the country's overall diplomacy. The dual identity determines that in the process of party diplomacy, the Communist Party of China (CPC) should not only safeguard the interests of the party, but also serve the overall diplomacy of the country, with the interests of the party and the country as the starting point and the end result. The Constitution of the Communist Party of China clearly stipulates that the party has no special interests except those of the working class and the overwhelming majority of the people. In the course of party diplomacy, the Communist Party of China (CPC) always insisted on organically combining the party's cause with the great cause of national rejuvenation, with safeguarding national interests as the core. In the new era, the Communist Party of China (CPC) takes the people's happiness, the nation's rejuvenation and the world's great harmony as its duty. In dealing with foreign inter-party relations, it keeps the development of party diplomacy and government diplomacy in the same direction, takes the establishment of new-type party relations as an important way to help the development of new-type international relations, puts foreign inter-party relations in the overall national diplomacy, and insists on rational and dual positioning, so that the party's foreign work not only serves the

development of the party and the country, but also focuses on the common well-being of all mankind. This is the development of party diplomacy in the Communist Party of China (CPC).

Finally, Innovative diplomatic working mechanism. This year marks the centenary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC). The concept and practice of the development of party diplomacy keep pace with the times, and the diplomatic working mechanism keeps innovating and developing. The diplomatic mechanism of political parties has been continuously strengthened. Various forms of field visits, seminars, special investigations and other ways of communication between political parties are on the track of institutionalization and becoming more mature and standardized. Bilateral and multilateral meetings between the Communist Party of China (CPC) and Mauritian political parties are held regularly. The diplomatic channels of political parties are widening day by day, and the diplomatic activities of political parties closely cooperate with the top-level design of the country, work in the same direction as the major foreign affairs agenda of the country, and promote all-round economic, social and cultural exchanges through political party exchanges; The flexible and pragmatic party diplomacy policy and principles are organically combined, while party diplomacy plays its role, it constantly strengthens the Communist Party of China(CPC)'s political leadership, highlights the party's attributes, talks about the party in the party, works for the party in the party, and strives for a favorable external environment for continuously promoting the great cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics and the new great project of party building. The innovative development process of party diplomacy in the past hundred years shows that keeping pace with the times, constantly innovating the working mechanism of party diplomacy and the way of party communication are a valuable innovative experience for improving the quality of party diplomacy in the Communist Party of China (CPC) in the new era.

5. CONCLUSION

The dovetailing of the Belt and Road Initiative and Mauritius' Vision 2030 will enable China and Mauritius to achieve mutual benefits, openness and inclusiveness in bilateral cooperation. China should always adhere to the principle of mutual benefit and win-win cooperation in its cooperation, encourage and drive Chinese enterprises to invest in Mauritius in infrastructure and other areas, and thus vigorously promote the smooth docking of the Belt and Road Initiative in Mauritius. The "Belt and Road" initiative, which is based on the principle of mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, has been warmly welcomed by

all sectors in Mauritius. Over the past seven years, China and Mauritius have achieved remarkable results in cooperation in the fields of politics, economic technology, education, culture and health. However, the implementation of any ambitious initiative that offers opportunities to move forward is bound to be accompanied by potential geopolitical risks and serious regional governance challenges. India's "strategic anxiety" and the unprecedented 100-year pattern of Sino-American rivalry and game-playing national relations have had a negative impact on the interface of the Belt and Road Initiative in Mauritius. In addition, the trade imbalance between China and Mauritius and the non-traditional threats in the Indian Ocean region also pose constraints to the progress of the Belt and Road Initiative. However, as long as China strengthens its strategic commitment to Mauritius and strives to eliminate the negative impact of various domestic and foreign interference forces, and deepens bilateral exchanges and mutual understanding and connectivity in the areas of culture and education, people-to-people exchanges, politics and economy, the relevant concrete cooperation agreements between the two countries can be put into practice to build a genuine regional community of destiny.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Funding: This work is supported by "the Fundamental Research Funds for the Central Universities" in South China University of Technology, project No: XYMS202008.

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