

Research on Management Model of Local Foreign Affairs

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Abstract Based on the analysis of a large number of local foreign affairs management, the article put forward three models of traditional local foreign affairs management: foreign affairs department-guided model, professional and functional department-guided model, parallel model. It is indicated that the three traditional models can not meet the current needs of foreign affairs management. The government must build a new and more effective management model of foreign affairs, i.e. dual platform-guided model of local foreign affairs management. The superiority of dual platform-guided model is dissertated from different perspectives.

Key words Local foreign affairs management; Traditional operation mode; Dual platform-guided model

1 Introduction

Local Government Affairs refer to all local foreign affairs at local level, which is an integral part of the state foreign affairs. With the development of economic globalization, local foreign affairs departments are undertakers of diplomatic missions and foreign exchanges, carriers of diplomatic demands, promoter and coordinator of foreign affairs. Local foreign affairs departments play an irreplaceable important role in the process of foreign relations at local level. However, with the deepening of China's reform and opening-up process, the gradual devolution of certain powers of the central government, the content and form of local governments' external relations tends to diversify. In the course of foreign exchanges, in addition to local foreign affairs departments, other professional and functional departments also received authorization to conduct their own foreign exchanges. With constantly improved ability and widened communication channels, professional and functional departments played a growing important role in conducting foreign exchanges at local level.^[1]

Local foreign affairs departments, local foreign-related departments and other local professional departments form the complete management system of local foreign affairs. However, according to the division of administrative functions, the local foreign affairs departments bear centralized management functions of the region's foreign affairs. Therefore, coordination and cooperation among all these departments becomes the inevitable trend of the local foreign exchanges.

2 Traditional Operation Mode of Local Foreign Affairs Management

Judging from the dominant force in foreign exchanges, the traditional operation mode of local foreign affairs management can be divided into three types: foreign affairs department-guided model, professional and functional department-guided model, parallel model.

2.1 Foreign affairs department-guided model

Under the foreign affairs department-guided model, the local foreign affairs departments always play a critical and coordinative role in foreign exchanges. The state administrative system gives local foreign affairs departments the function of centralized management. Therefore, the local foreign affairs departments are fully capable of carrying out foreign exchanges independently or by organizing other professional departments. Therefore, the foreign affairs management is feasible and effective.

Foreign affairs department-guided model relates to high level, important foreign exchange activities which have far-reaching political implications. In this mode, the local foreign affairs departments receive foreign exchanges tasks or projects from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, local governments or other sources. They implement the tasks independently or by organizing other related professional departments. The foreign affairs department-guided model is applied when establishing international sister cities relationship. Under this model, the foreign affairs departments are the core in co-ordination of all foreign affairs resources^[2].

2.2 Professional and functional department-guided model

With the formation of an all-round, multi-level and wide-ranging opening pattern, foreign affairs

goals, interests, resources, forms and foreign affairs power tend to diversify and multiply. Local foreign-related departments and other professional departments received more foreign affairs resources and foreign affairs capability. Therefore, in the local foreign affairs activities, professional and functional department-guided model is applied to professional and functional foreign exchanges and it will become an inevitable trend.

Through their own channels, professional departments have access to foreign exchanges or projects and implement them successfully. It should be noted that in this mode, local foreign affairs departments must review aspects of national foreign policies, participate in certain activities or provide foreign affairs guidance.

2.3 Parallel model

With the development of economic globalization and the city needs to expand foreign exchanges, the size of the local foreign affairs activities are greatly improved. Some large foreign affairs activities integrated political, economic exchange and cultural communication in one. In these comprehensive foreign affairs, foreign affairs and other professional departments are the main participants. They have played key role but no single party can complete the foreign exchanges. Therefore, the parallel model involving both foreign affairs and other professional departments has its practical necessity and feasibility of operation.

Parallel model applies to large comprehensive foreign affairs which integrate politics, economy, trade, culture, sports, etc. In this mode, the local government can complete comprehensive foreign exchange and provide synergy to improve the combined effect of foreign exchange. Other professional departments can also get guidance on foreign affairs knowledge and discipline, which solve the professional departments' issue of lack of foreign affairs experience.

3 Dual Platform-guided Model Local Foreign Affairs Management

At the age of economic globalization and informationization, with the increasingly sophisticated division of international labor, scientific and technological development and improvement of the social degree, wherever trade and economic activities, cultural exchange or international cooperation in environmental protection are involved, the degree of their specialization has been improved. The professional departments' role in government decision-making, policy implementation has been increasingly strengthened. In the actual operation of the process, foreign affairs management system can not adapt to the rapid development of foreign exchanges. The local foreign affairs department finds it more and more difficult implementing the functions of foreign affairs management. The management authority of the foreign affairs departments is facing certain challenges. Since the old foreign affairs management model can't fit the new situation and the content, so in effect, the effectiveness of the foreign affairs departments' supervision, guidance, integration, and coordination function can't be guaranteed^[3].

Throughout the foreign affairs management system, foreign affairs departments, foreign-related departments and other professional departments should establish coordination relations between different levels and joint efforts to promote foreign exchanges, thus to serve local economic and social development. To give full play to the core function of foreign affairs management system, dual platform-guided model of local foreign affairs management should be built. (See illustration)^[4]. In the three traditional models of foreign affairs management operation, the foreign affairs department-guided model stresses management function of the foreign affairs department, professional and functional department-guided model emphasizes service functions of foreign affairs department. In the parallel model, the function of the foreign affairs departments can not be effectively defined which leads to the low efficiency of foreign affairs. Dual platform-guided model of local foreign affairs management is different from the three traditional management models, which highlights the integration and co-ordination function of foreign affairs departments. It is stressed that the foreign affairs departments must build two platforms, namely, management platform and service platform.

First, the local foreign affairs departments shall build management platform. Local foreign affairs departments to take the mission and authority to implement and enforce the foreign policy of the central government ensuring local government in line with the central foreign policy. They play a key role in foreign relations. From the legislative and executive point of view, only the local foreign affairs departments have certain jurisdiction authority and capabilities, such as centralized management of the local foreign affairs, management of international sister cities, local consulates and foreign news agencies, local foreign-related cases negotiations and so on. Local foreign affairs departments must build management platform so as to effectively ensure the legitimacy and effectiveness of foreign affairs.

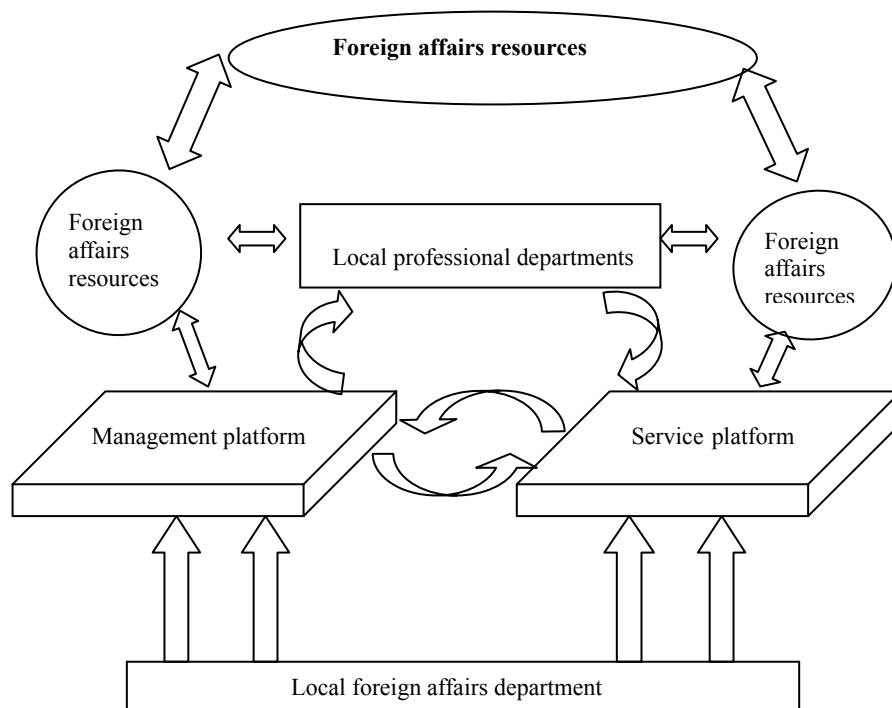


Figure 1 Local Foreign Affairs Management System

Second, the local foreign affairs departments should build service platform. Local foreign affairs departments must focus on the central task of local governments and play assistant's function. They should actively build management and service platform to serve the local economic development. Foreign exchanges carried out by the foreign affairs department are of high level and have wide exposure. They are the intersection of various information, which come from reliable sources. Foreign affairs departments should take the initiative on the service platform to disseminate information to the professional departments and give them full play in the professional field.

Local foreign affairs departments build platform and service platforms for other professional departments. The bottom line for the professional departments is professional legitimacy and feasibility of external contacts, thus ensuring the local activities of foreign exchanges in general do not deviate from the national foreign policy objectives. On the management and service platform, professional departments can carry out a variety of economic, technological, cultural, educational and other activities in the field of foreign relations. This enables the content and form of local foreign exchange with clear goals and high professional standards.

4 Conclusion

In the dual platform-guided model of local foreign affairs management, the local foreign affairs departments play an important function of co-ordination. The management and service platform set up by the foreign affairs departments play a central and coordinative role in the local foreign affairs management system. Foreign affairs resources flow orderly inside and outside the local foreign affairs management system and ultimately maximize the efficiency of foreign resources' allocation.

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