

Forum: Security Council (SC)

Issue: Minimizing Regional Tensions in the Taiwan Strait

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Personal Introduction

Dear delegates of the Security Council,

My name is Casper Ruilan Li and I am a student from Champion School. This is my 20th Model United Nations (MUN) conference, and I have been active in MUN since 2022. It is my utmost honor to be able to serve as one of two Deputy Presidents of the Security Council (SC) in this year's ACGMUN.

To begin with, in this study guide, I will help you explore one of the four topics of SC, namely the issue of "Minimising Regional Tensions in the Taiwan Strait". This study guide is only written to help you get started on your own research, which should be done before the conference, in order for you to be prepared. You should conduct further research on your own about your country in order to fully understand its policy regarding this topic.

I hope you find this useful for your research. Once again, it is my utmost honor to chair the Security Council (SC) this year, and I look forward to seeing you all at the 9th ACGMUN. I sincerely hope you will have an enjoyable and fruitful debate with us, and please do not hesitate to contact me for any issue or questions you may have regarding your preparation or the topic as a whole.

See you soon!

Best wishes,

Casper Ruilan Li (casperli@champion.edu.gr)

Topic Introduction

In the modern history of China, a series of events has laid the foundation for the tension in the Taiwan Strait today. The Taiwan Strait, also known as the Formosa, has been a region of strategic importance, while also marking the complex history of colonization, war and past political rivalries. The origins of these tensions can be traced back to the late 19th century, when China was ruled by the Qing Dynasty. During this period in history, China faced widespread government corruption and financial instabilities, while Western countries, including Japan, had already taken a step into the process of industrialization. Hence, this development gap from the Qing Dynasty's inability to modernize left China to be more vulnerable to external threats, setting the stage for the conflicts to come.

One of the most significant early events that influenced the current tension was the First Sino-Japanese War from 1894 to 1895. During this period, Japan, having undergone the Meiji Restoration in 1869, rapidly modernized and became the first nation in East Asia to be industrialized. Which allowed their growing military power to be able to defeat China decisively during the First Sino-Japanese War, leading up to the Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895, where Taiwan and the Pescadores Islands were ceded to Japan. This event revolutionized the history of Formosa, as it marked the first loss of Chinese territory, creating deep seated resentment in China. This also introduced the first major foreign rule over this island of Formosa. Laying the foundation for future disputes over this sovereignty.

From this, Taiwan remained under Japanese control until the end of World War II. During WWII, the growing conflict between Japan and China further entrenched regional hostilities (see more information in Background Information). This was followed by the surrender of Japan in 1945, which was then that Taiwan to the Republic of China, led by the Kuomintang. However, the Chinese Civil War soon broke out between the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Kuomintang (KMT). By the end of 1949, the CPC had established the People's Republic of China on the mainland, forcing the KMT to retreat to Taiwan. This division created two different governments under one country (China), which is the fundamental source of ongoing tension in the Taiwan Strait. In this case, both sides assert legitimacy over the same territory, creating a situation of unresolved political and territorial conflict.

Tension escalated in the 1950s when military confrontations rose. In 1954-1955, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) shelled the Taiwanese islands of Kinmen and Matsu, marking the first major crisis in the Taiwan Strait after the return. This event highlighted the rising tensions and the use of military forces, while the United States signing of the Sino-American Mutual Defense Treaty with the ROC internationalized the conflict. Signaling that Taiwan was a strategic interest not only for China, but also the US. In 1958, a second shelling took place, reinforcing mutual distrust and militarizing the strait.

Lastly, in 1996, China conducted missile tests near Taiwan during presidential elections, demonstrating its ability to project military power to intimidate Taiwan politically. Followed by joint military exercises by the PLA in the Taiwan Strait and surrounding airspace have continued to signal China's readiness to assert control over the region between 2022 and 2025.

In summary, the tension in the Taiwan Strait is deeply rooted in historical events, from foreign colonization and the First Sino-Japanese War to the post-WWII division of China and repeated military crises. Each stage contributed greatly to the tension in the Taiwan Strait today. This topic is particularly relevant to the theme of the conference, "Shaping Tomorrow", as the future of the Taiwan Straits depends on how current tensions are managed today. Decisions made today determine the minimization or escalation of tension in the Taiwan Strait, tying knots with Shaping Tomorrow.

Definition of Key Terms

Taiwan strait

"Taiwan Strait, arm of the Pacific Ocean, 100 miles (160 km) wide at its narrowest point, lying between the coast of China's Fukien province and the island of Taiwan (Formosa). The strait extends from southwest to northeast between the South and East China seas¹."

Industrial revolution

"The process of change from an agrarian and handicraft economy to one dominated by industry and machine manufacturing. These technological changes introduced novel ways of working and living and fundamentally transformed society²."

Formosa

"The strait was named Formosa ("Beautiful") by Portuguese navigators in the late 16th century; although it is still known in the West by its European name, the Chinese and now most Westerners use the name Taiwan Strait".³

Pescadores

¹ "Taiwan Strait | Strait, China Sea." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, www.britannica.com/place/Taiwan-Strait.

² Britannica. "Industrial Revolution." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Britannica, 5 Oct. 2024, www.britannica.com/event/Industrial-Revolution.

³ "Taiwan Strait | Strait, China Sea." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, www.britannica.com/place/Taiwan-Strait.

“Chinese names: Penghu. P'eng-hu. a group of 64 islands in Formosa Strait, separated from Taiwan (to which it belongs) by the Pescadores Channel. Pop: 91 950 (2007 est). Area: 127 sq km (49 sq miles)”⁴.

Meiji restoration

“Meiji Restoration, in Japanese history, the political revolution in 1868 that brought about the final demise of the Tokugawa shogunate (military government)—thus ending the Edo (Tokugawa) period (1603–1867)—and, at least nominally, returned control of the country to direct imperial rule under Mutsuhito (the emperor Meiji)”⁵.

Xinhai Revolution

“Nationalist democratic revolt that overthrew the Qing (or Manchu) dynasty in 1912 and created a republic”⁶.

Communist Party of China

The ruling party of China, it was founded in 1921 and has led China through revolution, construction and reform.

People’s Republic of China

“The government of China was set up in 1949 after the victory of the communist forces of Mao Zedong. The People's Republic ruled the mainland of China, forcing the government of Nationalist China into exile on the island of Taiwan”⁷.

The Republic of China

“A government that currently governs the island of Taiwan and several smaller islands in East Asia. Founded in 1912 following the overthrow of the Qing dynasty, the Republic of China originally

⁴ “Dictionary.com.” *Dictionary.com*, 2025, www.dictionary.com/browse/pescadores. Accessed 27 Dec. 2025.

⁵ ---. “Meiji Restoration.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 27 Sept. 2018, www.britannica.com/event/Meiji-Restoration.

⁶ The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica. “Chinese Revolution | 1911-1912 | Britannica.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2019, www.britannica.com/event/Chinese-Revolution-1911-1912.

⁷ “Dictionary.com.” *Dictionary.com*, 2025, www.dictionary.com/browse/peoples-republic-of-china. Accessed 27 Dec. 2025.

governed mainland China until 1949, when it relocated to Taiwan after losing the Chinese Civil War to the Communist Party of China, which established the People's Republic of China on the mainland"⁸.

People's Liberation Army

"Unified organization of China's land, sea, and air forces. It is one of the largest military forces in the world. The People's Liberation Army traces its roots to the 1927 Nanchang Uprising of the communists against the Nationalists. Initially called the Red Army, it grew under Mao Zedong and Zhu De from 5,000 troops in 1929 to 200,000 in 1933⁹.

Background Information

The Qing Dynasty

The development of Japan

In the late 19th century, East Asia experienced a major shift in power due to the contrasting development paths of Japan at the time, in contrast to the Qing Dynasty. Japan became the first country in East Asia to successfully enter the industrial revolution, followed by the Meiji Restoration in 1868. By actively learning from Western powers such as the United Kingdom, Japan continued to develop and implement newly developed reforms across sectors such as industry, military, education and politics.

This further allowed Japan to modernize itself both economically and politically, increasing production efficiency and reducing reliance on agriculture. At the same time, military reforms introduced modern weaponry and Western training styles, transforming Japan into a formidable regional power at that time. Education was also reformed, emphasizing sciences, technology and national unity. Together, these changes enabled Japan to rapidly transition from a feudal society into a more modern nation and one of the most developed at that time in East Asia.

The development of the Qing Dynasty

In contrast, at the same time period, the Qing Dynasty followed a much more traditional approach and development path. For the vast majority of its early period, the Qing Empire was prosperous and stable, relying heavily on agriculture as the foundation of its economy. The system was effective in

⁸ "Republic of China | Government, History & Flag | Study.com." *Study.com*, 2025, [study.com/academy/lesson/republic-of-china-government-history-flag.html](https://www.study.com/academy/lesson/republic-of-china-government-history-flag.html). Accessed 27 Dec. 2025.

⁹ ---. "People's Liberation Army | Chinese Army." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 6 Oct. 2017, www.britannica.com/topic/Peoples-Liberation-Army-Chinese-army.

terms of sustaining a large population, but it limited innovation and industrialization. As global trade grew and expanded during the 19th century, the Qing government struggled to adapt.

By the middle time period of the dynasty, increasing economic pressure placed major strains on the governing system. Population growth, inefficient action, and rising military expenditure weakened state finances. By the end, widespread government corruption further undermined political authority, while social unrest became increasingly common among citizens. The Qing Dynasty's vulnerabilities were exposed through foreign interventions; the most significant event was the Opium War. Where Western powers, such as the United Kingdom, exploited China's economic weakness and forced the Qing government into unequal treaties that compromised its sovereignty.

Sino - Japanese War - Battle of the Yellow River

These struggles not only made China's military weaker but also pressed the government to protect its country. These twofold developments led to the occurrence of the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894. The First Sino-Japanese War is signified by the Battle of the Yellow River. The First Sino-Japanese War clearly indicated the difference in military capability; Japan's military had been advanced, while the military forces in the Qing Dynasty were outdated in that period. It led to a disastrous loss for the Qing Dynasty, which led to a major shift in East Asia geopolitics. The First Sino-Japanese War concluded in 1895 when the Treaty of Shimonoseki took effect.

The treaty made by the Qing Dynasty ceded Taiwan to Japan. The cession held immense importance because this was the first major event wherein China began permanently losing territory under another Asian state-of-power instead of Western imperial powers (such as the UK and Portugal). From then onwards, Taiwan emerged as the icon for China's fragmentation in terms of territory. The cession of Taiwan to Japan created roots for conflicts in the Taiwan Strait in the future.

Republic of China

The Xinhai Revolution

In the 19th century, the Qing Dynasty ruled China with an economy largely based on agriculture. While this traditional system has supported them for centuries, it has also left China quite vulnerable to foreign 'competition'. By the middle and later years of the Qing Dynasty, corruption and financial strain weakened the government. Moreover, the introduction of the Opium War further exposed China's inability to defend itself against foreign powers. At the same time, Japan was undergoing further transformation. Through the Meiji Restoration beginning in 1868, Japan became the first nation to

industrialize in East Asia. The Japanese government invested heavily in modernizing its military, education, politics and technology. Such rapid developments meant that there was a huge benefit for the Japanese and led them into a conflict with the Qing dynasty. The First Sino-Japanese War and "The Battle of the Yellow River" in 1894 were a disaster for China. It was in this background that "The Treaty of Shimonoseki" in 1895 ceded the island of Taiwan and the Pescadores to Japan.

Outbreak of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression 1937 - 1945

The Xinhai Revolution in 1911 marked the end of over 200 years of reign by the Qing Dynasty. Planned by Sun Yat-sen, the revolution led to the fall of the Qing Dynasty and the establishment of the Republic of China, also known as "ROC," with Nanjing as its capital at that time. Simultaneously, the control in Taiwan remained under the control of Japan because of the effects caused by the First Sino-Japanese War. At this point in history, the influence of Japan was also felt in mainland China. This dispute widened with the "Marco Polo Bridge Incident" in 1937. This results in "The War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression." The most sorrowful moment within this historical time was when both armies were engaged in the Battle of Nanjing because forces in China were defending their capital city Nanjing, from the invasion by the Japanese armies in December 1937. However, eventually, the Republic of China lost the war due to numerous attacks and defense by the troops. Moving on within this history in WWII, the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 drew the United States into the Second World War in the Pacific. Chinese leaders, such as Soong Mei-ling, actively sought the US's support. Shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in Japan, on August 6th, 1945, followed by the Soviet Union declaration of war on Japan on August 8th and the surrender of Japan the following day on August 9th, 1945. This event ended on the 15th of August 1945, as Japan officially released the Termination of the war. This surrender also marked the return of Taiwan, ending the Japanese colonial rule but also introducing new uncertainties, as the ROC faced internal challenges that would soon lead to its retreat to Taiwan after the civil war with the Communist Party. In 1945, the Republic of China became a member of the United Nations, giving the ROC international recognition and reinforcing its claim over Taiwan. These historical events directly shaped the political and territorial dispute that continues to influence tension in the Taiwan Strait today.

People's Republic of China

Before 1949 October 1st

Before October 1st, 1949, China experienced the beginning of a civil war between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party. However, all these negotiations turned out to fail, and the degree of fighting increased in the 1940s. The final result was the victory of the CCP. However, this victory did not last long, as shortly after this experience, on October 1st, 1949, the People's Republic of China government was formed on the mainland, establishing a communist state formation process, which became the first cause for the current tension in Taiwan today since the government of Taiwan and the government of People's Republic of China are different but belong to one state, referred to as China, and it happened that Taiwan became the focal point for this state rivalry in the East Asian continent.

After 1949 October 1st

The tensions between the two began to culminate in military events in the 1950s. The crisis in the Taiwan Strait began when the PLA began a shell attack on the Taiwanese Islands Kinmen & Matsu, showing China's willingness to engage in military activities as it asserted its claim on Taiwan. This followed a Sino-American Mutual Defense Treaty agreement between the US & ROC as a form of retaliation for the previous shell attack. This was followed by another shell attack in 1958. China began the last few decades of the 20th century by conducting various missile tests in the area surrounding the Taiwan Strait, showing it was willing to conduct military attacks.

Tension of the Taiwan Strait Today

In the 21st century, this has been even further inflamed by the PRC's legalized military intervention efforts. Furthermore, in 2005, China invoked Article 8 of the Anti-Secession Law, which stated that "in the event of a major incident in which Taiwan attempts to secede from China... the state may adopt non-peaceful means and other necessary measures." This action has further entrenched China's military capabilities, thus causing ambiguity within Taiwan and countries supporting Taiwan. Military maneuvers between 2022 and 2025 by the PLA, in large-scale joint operations across seas and skies surrounding Taiwan, became a show of military strength. These contemporary times evidence that one of the most vulnerable areas in the whole of Asia remains the Taiwan Strait, where China's need for reunification faces further support of self-governance by Taiwan, thereby building tensions between the two nations.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Japan

This led to the ruling of Japan over Taiwan for about 50 years as a consequence of the defeat experienced by the Qing Dynasty during the First Sino-Japanese War of 1895. Taiwan was then part of the territories of Japan during the colonial era and was therefore part of the Japanese Empire. Development and education were invested in during the colonial rule of the Japanese. These investments made by the Japanese during the colonial rule have contributed immensely to the present administrative and economic systems of the state of Taiwan. The state of Taiwan was actually separated from the mainland of China during the colonial rule of the Japanese due to the fact that the Taiwanese state was then a Japanese territory and part of the Japanese Empire. This separation of Taiwan from the mainland of China has become important in relation to the present crisis with respect to Taiwanese sovereignty.

The War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1937-1945) further intensified the tensions of that region, as well as thoughts regarding the status of Taiwan. The Japanese conquest of most of the land area of China, as well as its establishment of puppet regimes, caused tremendous suffering, which further intensified Chinese nationalism regarding Japanese imperialism. The Marco Polo Bridge Incident, as well as the Battle of Nanjing, represented Japanese aggression as well as Chinese vulnerability during those times. At that time, Taiwan was already under Japanese occupation, and the rift between the Taiwan mainland and the Chinese mainland was already a fact. Chinese nationalism, as well as its nationalism regarding its conviction that all lands once under Japanese occupation, including Taiwan, will inevitably be reclaimed, was intensified by this conflict.

It was after the surrender of Japan to the Allied powers in 1945 that Taiwan was returned to the Republic of China, hence putting an end to Japanese colonial rule over Taiwan. This is because Taiwan came back under the administration of the Chinese government, yet this took place at a time when the Republic of China was undergoing political transformations. With the fall of the Japanese Empire after World War II, the presence of Japan as a player in the Taiwan dispute came to a virtual end, but the country's history continues to play a significant part in the dispute. The closeness of Taiwan to the Japanese nation as a result of its alliance with the United States is crucial to the security of the latter nation.

People's Republic of China

The People's Republic of China (PRC) claims that Taiwan is an integral part of the territory over which it exercises sovereignty. They also rely upon the 'One Country Two Systems' policy regarding the reunification of Taiwan. According to the 'One Country Two Systems' policy, Taiwan can even be granted a degree of autonomy but will still be ruled in accordance with the sovereignty of the PRC. But the fact is that Taiwan already functions as an independent state under the Republic of China (ROC), which is governed in a democratic manner. The conflict between the two positions – territorially integral to the People's Republic of China or a sovereign state – forms the essence of the dispute between the two. Similarly, the people of Taiwan also consider the 'One Country Two Systems' notion as a threat to freedom.

Aside from political concerns, economic importance makes the Taiwan situation much more tense. Taiwan has one of the most developed market economies, with semiconductors being its backbone, since global leaders in high-performance semiconductors are located there, which are currently crucial for various technologies, even military. Simultaneously, the PRC is these days considered the world's second-largest economy that has a full industrial chain and robust manufacturing capabilities. Access or influence over Taiwan will mean so much more to the PRC since it will be political reunification, but it will also generate strategic benefits from an economic as well as technological standpoint

The United States of America

The central plank behind the United States policy in the Taiwan Straits has been called the policy of strategic ambiguity and entails the United States making no clear claim on whether it would come to the defense of Taiwan in the event of a conflict or any kind of challenge by the People's Republic of China. Strategic ambiguity has managed the delicate relationship between the two closely opposing sides in the Taiwan Straits and has also introduced ambiguity and confusion in heightened crises.

Taiwan is of major importance within the overall strategy of the United States, especially within the Indo-Pacific region, as it is situated within the "first island chain," which is vitally important for the restriction of the military presence of any state within the region of East Asia. The importance of Taiwan as far as the maintenance of stability is concerned, and the participation of the United States in any

conflict within the Taiwan Strait, makes it an important aspect of the foreign and defense policies of the United States.

Apart from these strategic elements, there are good economic and technological relations between the United States and Taiwan. One reason why Taiwan is important to the United States is that it is its largest trading partner when it comes to high technology products such as semiconductor chips. While this relationship is good for both nations and helps sustain U.S. interests in Taiwan, it is yet another factor that increases PRC-U.S. tensions due to PRC views regarding U.S. meddling in Taiwan's affairs because of their relationship.

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

The role played by Taiwan in different international and regional organizations under the designation 'Chinese Taipei' represents a practical approach in trying to achieve an appropriate balance between politics and cooperation. Taiwan has managed to take part in different international economic, technical, and professional activities without these organizations that take part in these activities expressing a view on the issue of Taiwan's sovereignty. Therefore, it is a common term in different international organizations, including the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

The use of the term 'Chinese Taipei' has been instrumental in assisting Taiwan in the following ways: Taiwan has managed to take part in the WTO, including negotiating trade agreements, addressing disputes, and integrating into the global trading system, along with the People's Republic of China. Taiwan has managed to avoid economic isolation and promote regional as well as global economic stability, especially considering Taiwan's critical role in the global supply chain.

From the point of view of the People's Republic of China, this naming arrangement is important because it conforms to the principle of One China. This ensures that Taiwan is not perceived as a separate state. It is in this sense that Taiwan is able to engage in some form of international participation without setting any precedents for independence. In this regard, the "Chinese Taipei" arrangement acts as a political safety net.

World Health Organization (WHO)

The WHO has had a complicated political relationship with Taiwan because it is a UN specialized agency that only permits state membership in the UN. This has meant that Taiwan has never been a member of the WHO and has therefore been unable to participate in any of the WHO events, particularly because it has one of the best health systems in the world and has expertise in controlling diseases. This is because of the bigger issue regarding Taiwan, particularly because the PRC considers that it is part of China and therefore cannot be part of any UN-affiliated organization.

During the period between 2009 and 2016, Taiwan was able to participate in the World Health Assembly, which is the governing body of the WHO, as an observer state under the name ‘Chinese Taipei.’ This was a time when the relationship between the PRC and Taiwan was smooth. Therefore, it is very clear that the use of pragmatism can result in cooperation if it is associated with non-political matters. Taiwan was able to receive information, share data, and even discuss issues related to the threats to global health security. This is all very positive news with regard to health security in the region.

Blocs Expected

Alliance 1

Supports maintaining the current situation in the Taiwan Strait, opposing the use of force, and supporting Taiwan’s security and autonomy without formally recognizing independence.

USA, Japan, Australia, UK, Canada, South Korea

Alliance 2

Supports the One China principle, recognizing Taiwan as part of China and opposing foreign interference in cross-strait affairs.

PRC, Russia, Pakistan, North Korea, Iran

Timeline of Events

| Date | Description of Event | |
|------|--|---|
| - | The United Kingdom | Qing Dynasty |
| 1760 | Industrial revolution, invention of machineries. | Agricultural empire, prosperity but cultural. |

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|-----------------------|--|---|
| 1800 ~ 1830 | Start of global trading with an improving industrial revolution. | Government corruption, tight financial state, opium was introduced. |
| 1840 | Rises to the top of the trading chain worldwide. | The II Opium War. |
| 1868 | Meiji restoration - Japan's beginning of their industrial revolution as they have learnt from the United Kingdom. | |
| 1870 ~ 1890 | Japan being the first country in eastern-asia to begin revolution towards modernization. | |
| Sep 17th, 1894 | First Sino-Japanese War — Battle of the Yellow River - The conflict between the Qing Dynasty and Japan on the Yellow river, after the loss of the Qing Dynasty. | |
| Apr 17th, 1895 | Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed, in this treaty, Formosa (Taiwan) and the Pescadores (Penghu Island) were ceded to Japan. | |
| 1911 | Xinhai Revolution - Qing Dynasty overthrown by this revolution. | |
| 1912 | The Republic of China was founded, the establishment of the capital in Nanjing. (Taiwan still was ruled by Japan.) | |
| July 7th, 1937 | Marco Polo Bridge Incident (Lugouqiao Incident) - The War of Resistance Against Japan broke out in full force for the first time. | |
| Dec 12th, 1941 | Japan unexpectedly attacks the naval base at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, USA. Signals the start of the Pacific War and the declaration of war from the USA to Japan in World War II. | |
| Feb 18th, 1943 | Soongmei Ling presented her speech at the United States Congress, strived for the support from the USA. | |
| Nov 22nd ~ 26th, 1943 | Allied power of the United Kingdom (Prime Minister Winston Churchill), the United States of America (President Franklin Delano Roosevelt) and the Republic of China (Chiang Kai-Shek). They presented their Cairo Declaration. | |
| July 1945 | Potsdam Declaration - The final ultimatum to Japan demanding unconditional surrender, which Japan refused. | |

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|---------------------|---|
| Aug 6th, 1945 | The United States dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in Japan. |
| Aug 8th, 1945 | The Soviet Union declared war on Japan. |
| Aug 9th, 1945 | Japan surrendered. |
| Aug 15th, 1945 | Japan officially released the Termination (Surrender) of the War. |
| Sep 9th, 1945 | The surrender ceremony in the China Theatre was held at the Headquarters of the Nanjing Army. Japanese general commanding officer Nobutake Okamura submitted the surrender document to Chinese army Commander-in-Chief, He Yingqin. |
| Oct 15th, 1945 | The national government of the Republic of China officially took over Taiwan from Japan. |
| Oct 24th, 1945 | The United Nations founded, Republic of China as a part of the UN. |
| 1946 ~ 1949 | A Chinese civil war broke out between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party of China. Kuomintang lost. |
| Jan - Sep 1949 | The Nationalist Government (Kuomintang) retreated. |
| Oct 1st, 1949 | The People's Republic of China was founded by the Communist Party of China. |
| Dec 1949 | The Nationalist Government of Republic of China withdrew from mainland China and relocated to Taiwan. |
| 1951 - 1954 | First crisis between the Taiwan strait and mainland China. |
| 1954 ~ 1955 | The People's Liberation Army shelled Kinmen and Matsu for the first time, both islands of Taiwan. The USA and the Republic of China signed the Sino - American Mutual Defense Treaty. |
| Aug 23rd, 1958 | The People's Liberation Army shelled Kinmen and Matsu for the second time. |
| Oct 25th, 1971 | The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 was adopted, stipulating: The People's Republic of China replaces the Republic of China as the sole representative of China. And the Republic of China withdraws from the United Nations. |
| July - August, 1996 | The People's Liberation Army of China conducted multiple missile tests in the waters surrounding the Taiwan Strait. |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 2005 | Article 8 of the 205 Anti-Secession Law was implemented, which stated that “In the event of a major incident in which Taiwan attempts to secede from China... the state may adopt non-peaceful means and other necessary measures.”. |
| 2022 ~ 2025 | The People’s Liberation Army conducted multiple joint military drills in the waters and airspace surrounding Taiwan. |

Relevant UN Resolutions, Treaties & Events

The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 (1971)¹⁰

The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 was passed on October 25th, 1971, in conjunction with the 26th General Assembly Meeting of the United Nations. The said Resolution marked the end of long-running debates regarding which government has legitimate representation in respect to "China" at United Nations meetings. The period before the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 can be termed as the "pre-resolution period regarding United Nations representation for the government of 'China'." In this period, representation in United Nations meetings is led by the Republic of China (ROC). The government fights under the political shelter of the political party Kuomintang in Taiwan. From the inception of the People's Republic of China in 1949, it claimed jurisdiction over the Taiwan Island as well as all of China proper.

By the resolution named Resolution 2758, the PRC was recognized as the “only legitimate representative of China to the United Nations,” and the representatives of the Republic of China (Taiwan) were expelled from the United Nations. By the same resolution, it was acknowledged that the PRC would assume the place of China in the United Nations Security Council, thus giving the PRC full representation and voting rights which the Republic of China previously held. Notably, although the question of representation in the United Nations was thus settled in the resolution, the sovereignty and political stature of Taiwan were not specified.

Such a resolution is of great importance within the context of tensions within the Taiwan Strait because it marked the international shift of recognition from ROC to PRC, thus ensuring that Taiwan falls under the jurisdiction of PRC diplomatically. It also marked the political isolation of Taiwan

¹⁰ “Document Viewer.” *Un.org*, 2025, [docs.un.org/en/A/RES/2758\(XXVI\)](https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/2758(XXVI)).

internationally, as the PRC continues to assert that Taiwan is part of its domain. For nations that handle cross-strait relations, specifically the US, Japan, among others, such a resolution marked an essential point of reference within the context of maintaining relations between the PRC and Taiwan.

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

The 1979 Proposal for Peaceful Cross-Strait Relations

The first significant non-military attempt to solve the Taiwan Strait problem took place when "the People's Republic of China published the 'Message to Compatriots in Taiwan' as 'a milestone in cross-Strait relations' when they established Taiwan as an 'inseparable' but highly valued 'part' belonging to 'China' when they declared on January 1st, 1979." This act indicated that even if they valued "The One China formula as enshrined in the One China Principle," they could now only settle for "peaceful reunification when they announced 'liberation by force' as 'Non-Nuclear Military Action'". This made Taiwan Strait military aggressiveness decrease since both Taipei and the international community understood that solving Taiwan Strait problems could be possible if done in a non-violent manner. Why it failed and could not progress beyond that attempt was that "it failed to address Taiwan's political realities." The continued pressure for eventual reunification within PRC sovereignty, as well as a lack of ruling out force, had created a high level of distrust within Taiwanese society. The 1979 offer resulted in a stabilization of relations without having a meaningful political dialogue or mutual trust on sovereignty.

Cross-Strait Engagement During the Ma Ying-jeou Administration (2008–2016)

The second stage of tension reduction fared better during the period of Ma Ying-jeou, who became the president of Taiwan from 2008 to 2016. This period was amongst the most positive phases of cross-strait relations due to the relaxed political environment and the implementation of beneficial policies by both parties. Ma's government encouraged engagement through the "1992 Consensus," which allowed both parties to acknowledge the presence of "One China" but had their own views on it. This helped to promote the growth of engagement in the sectors of economy, trade, and culture without necessarily tackling the most contentious political issues at the onset. During this stage, there was the inception of air links and tourism, coupled with the signing of numerous agreements which were directed

at the growth of collaborative economies, like trade and investment deals. The results were the development of economic interdependence, which prevented the emergence of immediate military conflicts since the understanding was clear that they were able to work together to ensure the reduction of tensions, since they could engage each other for the betterment of their relations. Nevertheless, there were some weaknesses in such an approach. Thus, while the civilian interactions were flourishing, basic differences regarding sovereignty, international status, and security were not only not resolved but were purposely not addressed. In addition, with an increased concern on the part of Taiwanese citizens regarding overdependence on mainland China, a certain level of skepticism towards a certain administration was experienced.

Possible Solutions

Communication

Enhanced communication between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Taiwan could be among the most important measures that can be used to alleviate the tension that the Taiwan Strait has been experiencing. Communication can be conducted through the establishment of liaison offices across the Taiwan Strait or even the usage of communication phones. Enhanced communication does not require the two to agree on the issue of sovereignty; it can be used to peacefully settle any kind of conflict.

One of the advantages brought forth by this process is that it can avoid escalation through accidents, especially when there are military exercises and political crises. Communication will provide both parties with an understanding of each other's intentions since they will be able to respond in a rational way as opposed to reacting in anticipation. The process will not be as effective when there is a lack of political trust. The process might stall if there are demands regarding sovereignty, even when symbolism is practiced in the communication process.

Mutual Restraint by the PRC and CCP

An essential aspect of de-escalation for the PRC or CCP is mutual restraint. This involves reducing the number of large military exercises conducted off the coast of Taiwan, refraining from political rhetoric that can ratchet up tensions, and avoiding one-sided actions which might have an

impact on the status quo. Agreements such as those regarding prenotification of military exercises or cooperation regarding maintaining safe distances of military forces can be very useful.

The strength of restraint is the fact that it may easily lower the chances of conflict and can be reassuring to the public as well as the international community at the same time. The weakness of restraint is the fact that it may not be quite easy, especially within the political setting of the country, if the country has elements of nationalism and politics, which may push the country to take aggressive actions when the political times are tough. The unilateral restraint, for example, may not be quite feasible because it would look like a show of weakness, and the other side also has to be committed to this process.

Collaboration Beyond Politics and History

Cooperation in other, non-political fields such as trade, education, culture, public health, and protection of the environment can provide a long-term solution to enhance tolerance and understanding. Increased exchange of students, collaborative scientific research, cultural, and economic endeavors can help instill a measure of trust within society and help decrease hostility. These should be carried out via forums which do not involve any sensitive political terminology.

The strength in the solution lies in its sustainable nature. The people-to-people engagement brings the opposing party into focus and helps diminish support for the conflict. With time, the ambit of tolerance may sway the notion in politics. This strategy acts gradually and does not promote an immediate solution to a security concern. Non-political collaboration remains one of the best strategies in securing sustainable development across the Straits.

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