

**Committee: Security Council**

**Issue: The situation in Taiwan**

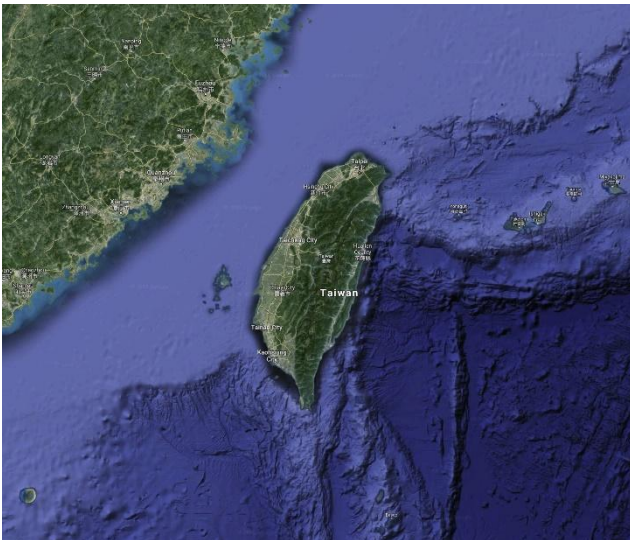
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**Position: President**

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## INTRODUCTION

My name is George Stouraitis, and I am honoured to serve as the president of this year's ATSMUN conference's Security Council. This study guide on the situation in Taiwan was made in collaboration with Alexandros Rodopoulos, who will be serving as one of the two deputy presidents. As such, both of us should be considered expert student officers on the topic, and we will both be available for any questions and/or clarifications, should our assistance be required throughout or before the conference.



The situation in Taiwan is quite complicated. The island itself, is located to the east of China, at approximately the same latitude as Hong Kong, and north of the Philippines, at approximately the same longitude. The capital is Taipei. There has been controversy regarding the region's government and sovereignty. Effectively its government has full control over

Taiwan and nearby islands, and functions as many other legitimate democracies. However, said government is technically a democratized restored version of the government of the Republic of China (ROC), which, under Chiang Kai-shek, fled mainland China after the ROC, having been defeated by the communist People's Republic of China (PRC), led by Mao Zedong and displaced to the island. Through, authoritarian rule and suppression of opposition, the region didn't start moving towards democracy until the end of the past millennium.

Regarding, ROC's control and influence, it doesn't control just Taiwan, but some of the surrounding islands as well. It is currently one of the most powerful forces that has yet

to become a member of the United Nations, since it is not officially recognized by the clear majority of countries (with an exception of 16 member-states and the Catholic Church). However, it does have diplomatic bonds with many states being represented in the region by consulates of sorts. The PRC (the government of China) still claims control over the islands.

## **DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS**

### **Chinese Civil War**

This civil war in China took place intermittently and for a rough total of 13 years, between 1927 and 1950. The two main sides involved were the KMT and the CPC. After combat ended, the CPC controlled mainland China and founded the PRC. The KMT retreated to Taiwan maintaining the name ROC and taking control of the island and the region around it.

### **Communism**

Communism is the social and economic system in which everything belongs to the community, which is classless. Everyone is given a fair share of land and capital and has the obligation to contribute in the operation of the government's system.

### **Cross-Strait Relations**

This has come to be the name used for the tension which exists between the PRC and ROC regarding which should control the region of Taiwan. Both in one way or another support the One China policy but from different perspectives.

### **Dynasty**

As a form of government, dynasties are oligarchies, or monarchies, in which the rulers of a country inherit power through blood ties.

### **Independent state**

Independent states are those states that are unrestricted in exercising their rights in full power; for a state to be considered independent it must be free of any legal authorities of other nations.

### **Kuomintang (KMT)**

The Kuomintang is a political party that had been active since before the Chinese Civil War in China, in charge of ROC. They are still active today in Taiwan after the ROC was forced off mainland China, under the same name.

### **Mainland China**

The region that is controlled by the PRC today, apart from islands, is roughly what mainland China has been throughout the years. Any border changes that have happened within mainland China are largely irrelevant to the topic at hand and relatively insignificant considering the area of land that has remained unaltered.

### **People's Republic of China (PRC)**

China's official title, the People's Republic of China dates to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was founded in 1949 by the Chairman of the Communist Party of China (CPC), Mao Zedong, after the Chinese Civil War ended. It became officially recognized after 1972, taking the place that formerly belonged to the ROC.

### **Republic of China (ROC)**

The Republic of China is the government (nation) that was in control of mainland China between 1912 and 1949. Before said government, the region was governed by dynasties, the last one being the Qing Dynasty, which the ROC succeeded. In 1949, under Chiang Kai-shek, the government was displaced to the island of Taiwan.

### **Uti Possidetis**

This is a legal principle according to which, unless otherwise specified by a treaty or other legally binding document, the former possessor of a region will continue to control it after the end of conflict.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **History up to the Chinese Civil War**

China as it is known today has gone through many changes before its government and borders came to be as they are. Initially the region was controlled by dynasties. However, the last dynasty to have ruled China, the Qing dynasty, fell, under the rule of Pu Yi, after his official abdication in February 1912. His abdication followed the Xinhai revolution of 1911. After this form of government fell, China was ruled by warlords. During this period, known as warlordism, various generals of army factions ruled different parts of China. For all

intents and purposes these earlier periods in the country's history will not be discussed in detail (although there is a lot to be said, make no mistake) since they are not directly related to the topic at hand. However, I will reference the second Sino-Japanese War, and should explain what the Sino-Japanese War is. The First War was between the Qing, the last dynasty in China, and Imperial Japan. The war was mostly focused around Korea and took place during the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

After this period of warlordism, seeing as China was fragmented as it was, Chiang Kai-shek, as leader of the KMT attempted the reunification of China via the so-called "Northern Expedition". The "expedition" consisted of both political and military actions. With the help of the Soviet Union and the Third International (a.k.a. Communist International, an international organization that advocated in favour of world communism), the KMT allied with the CPC in the attempt to unify China. The political and military actions connected to the Northern Expedition were performed by the National Revolutionary Army, of the KMT.



1. Suspected communists are rounded up by police during the 1927 purges.

The KMT, worrying (and rightfully so) that the Soviets would lead to its downfall, since they were funding and supporting the CPC, became wary and so began censorship and propaganda against the Communist movement; essentially, the KMT attempted the suppression of any sort of

opposition. In 1926 Chiang Kai-shek led a "cleansing" of sorts of all communist elements from the nationalist army (Canton Coup). Nonetheless, in 1927, during a political meeting, the Northern Expedition was significantly undermined by Soviet influence.

Ultimately, this led to a definitive split within the KMT. There had already been rising tension between the communists and the nationalists within the ranks of the party, which reached its breaking point after the 1927 meeting. This split was essentially into a left and a right-wing, with the left eventually being integrated into the CPC. During that era, Mao Zedong, who would later become the leader and founder of the PRC, was becoming a lead figure within the CPC ranks.

The expedition, however, did take place, and, at first, quite successfully. Alas, the Soviets and the CCP along with members of the KMT, decided to relocate the government's seat to another region of China, while he was leading the army. The new seat was in a region more heavily influenced by the communists, demonstrating what was essentially a power struggle against Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang allegedly also discovered that the government planned to arrest him. This was likely part of the reason why he proceeded to attempt a complete "decontamination" of any CPC elements from the KMT, which was what set the Civil War afoot.

### The Chinese Civil War

Chiang Kai-shek, on April 12th of 1927 coordinated what was later called a "massacre" by the CPC. Communists in Shanghai were captured and executed. This the first event that is categorized under a period of anti-communist propaganda and campaigning, often referred to as the "White Terror". The figures for the casualties during this period of time are estimated to be anywhere between 5,000 or 50,000. At any rate, it was a great number of communists and generally dissidents, who were persecuted during those times.

After the incident in 1927, communists sought refuge in the countryside of the orient. Slowly but surely the KMT proceeded to occupy the majority of mainland China. The communists were greatly restricted. Eventually, Chiang Kai-shek started launching campaigns (1930-1933) against the communists, to consolidate the victory. However, his first attempts were unsuccessful. His final attempt was to encircle, in 1934, and essentially lay siege, on a region (Jianxi) controlled by communists. The army was patient in encircling the communists. However, it consisted of warlords and their armies, and not KMT armies. This led to a decreased motivation on their part. As such, the communists were able to find gaps in the "borders" that the KMT had constructed, and leave, without any significant resistance by the warlords.

And so began the communists' retreat from the region. This event was named the Long March and lasted approximately a year. Although it is estimated that



2. Communist leader addressing survivors of the Long March.

hundreds of thousands started off as part of the march, only about 10,000 made it to Shaanxi (Shaanxi was their destination because the region was under communist control). Throughout the journey, some communists split up and passed through different regions engaging in military activity. The CPC arrived in Shaanxi in 1935. It was there that Mao Zedong succeeded the previous leader of the “Red Army” and essentially the CPC, Zhou Enlai.

The war between KMT and CPC consisted of both unorganized and organized military forces on the side of the KMT (although these were not unified; some belonged to warlords, and some were insurgents) and the Red Army on the side of the CPC. The CPC fought regional warlords to advance and gain land. Some of the warlords, deciding that it was pointless to fight communists, conserved their forces and did not clash with the Red Army.

### Second Sino-Japanese War

Zhang Xueliang, along with Yang Hucheng were both warlords and had both become allies of Zhou Enlai. In 1936, in the face of the threat posed by the Japanese Imperial Army, Zhou Enlai convinced the aforementioned, former warlords to conspire and force Chiang to ally with the CPC against Japan. Thereafter, an



3. Mitsubishi A6M Zero Fighter Pilots.

alliance was formed between the two opposing forces. Nevertheless, in areas that were not occupied or directly threatened by the Japanese in mainland China, the KMT and CPC continued to struggle for power and land. Simultaneously even at the warfront, the two did not really combine forces. While the KMT maintained conventional defensive methods and engaged in organized warfare, the CPC decided that guerrilla warfare would be more effective and, as such, cooperation with the KMT was kept to a minimum.

The KMT at first, before its alliance with the CPC, had been reluctant to fight the Japanese, despite increasing pressure by the Chinese people. Although the CPC’s guerrilla warfare had a limited impact on the war against the Japanese, their determined stance against the Japanese, in combination with KMT’s initial reluctance, made them appear as



China's main defence. As a result, the CPC, rose greatly in popularity. Especially so in the peasant population of China.

Officially and typically, the war between Japan and China ended with a relevant agreement in 1946. However, essentially, conflicts had ceased since 1945 with the dropping of atomic bombs in Japan by the United States of America. Meanwhile, the Soviets had invaded Manchuria, a region in the north-eastern-most part of China, which was controlled at the time by Japanese forces. The Japanese were swiftly overpowered, and, as a result, the Soviets, who had invaded Manchuria, with Chinese permission, (they wanted to invade in order to avoid a two-fronted war during WWII), controlled the region. The KMT believed that the Soviets would cooperate solely with the Nationalist government after the Sino-Japanese war. Nonetheless, the Soviets cooperated with the CPC, in that after the war, Mao Zedong was able to lead communist forces into Manchuria while the Soviets hadn't left, and, establish some CPC control, although the region would later be fought for.

All in all, after the conflicts effectively ceased in 1949, the China was powerful, but in economic ruin, and, simultaneously, the Civil War continued. As far as the impact of the war on each individual side of the civil war, the Nationalists, who fought conventionally through up-front war, suffered heavier losses. Through guerrilla warfare, the CPC contributed significantly, but its losses were not as great, having avoided all-out conflict.

### **Final stage of the Civil War**

From 1946 onward, the Civil War escalated and conflicts less spread apart. The KMT, although it had the upper hand, military-wise, lacked the popular support of the Communists. For the purposes of the study guide, the details of the battles that were fought and their specific outcomes are unimportant (some notable military operations were the Liaoshen campaign, the Beiping-Tianjin campaign, the Huahai campaign and the crossing of the Yangtze River). It is however, worth mentioning, that the KMT had extensive support from the USA, and the communists received some small help by the USSR.

As it accumulated victories, the CCP was able to also gather weaponry, equip its troops and became an even greater threat to the KMT. The People's Republic of China was founded on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1949, under Mao Zedong. Beijing was made the capital and Chiang Kai-shek, along with approximately 2 million civilian nationalists, the KMT and its army, fled to the island of Taiwan. In June of the same year, Taipei was made the ROC's capital and Chiang Kai-shek continued to be the ruler. The seas were monitored by the ROC so as to prohibit and disrupt trade and fishing for the PRC. In 1950 the PRC attempted a military

assault on the ROC which was ended by USA intervention (US intervention was authorized by the president and thereafter the assault ended).

## **MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED**

### **PRC**

Some claims made by the ROC as to why China should be unified under their government are based on treaties and agreements made during the Qing dynasty. Those are simply disregarded by the PRC, as they consider them illegal, quoting the transfer of Hong Kong sovereignty to the PRC. As such the argument can be made that the PRC “inherited” Taiwan’s sovereignty.

Due to some of the Japanese agreements often quoted by the ROC, by which Taiwan was ceded to them, the PRC claims that, because of those very agreements, Taiwan should be part of PRC’s China. In detail, after 1971, according to the UN, the PRC government succeeded the ROC, thereby holding Taiwan’s sovereignty, if the ROC were to have held it at any point before 1949.

Essentially, the arguments on the PRC side are “if Taiwan belonged to the ROC, it must now belong to us, since we have succeeded them in ruling China.” However, the view that the PRC succeeded China isn’t shared by all parties involved, especially not the ROC. Therefore, it still remains controversial.

### **ROC**

The ROC has a people’s a territory and a government. By the convention of Montevideo, since those requirements are met, the ROC is independent of the PRC, and has the right to its own sovereignty. This claim is further strengthened by the fact that it was not until 1949 that its territory decreased, and even so, that in of itself is no reason to recall the recognitions of sovereignty that it had since it was established in 1911. Simultaneously, whether a state is internationally recognized, does not affect its sovereignty, thereby constituting the counter-argument that the ROC is not widely recognized as the “official China” irrelevant.

The Treaty of Taipei, with Japan, would grant the ROC control over the region as well as sovereignty. This is because of the principle of uti possidetis, since control of the region is not specified as having changed in the treaty.



## Taiwan

Some argue that Taiwan should become independent, neither part of the ROC nor of the PRC. However, to do so would imply that they would have to break from China, which they have been a part of for most of the time, apart from the vague state in which they are in since the 1950s. Definitely, proclaiming their independence would be detrimental in many ways for them, since the international repercussions, overall would likely not be in their favour. Some even argue that Taiwan is already an independent state, by some definitions. However, you should check the policy of your country, since if they do have a stance, it will most likely be either in favour of the PRC or of the ROC.

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of Event
1952	The Treaty of Peace is signed between the ROC and Japan in Taipei, ending the war between the conflicting parties. It is recognized that under Article 2 of the San Francisco Treaty, Japan has renounced all rights, titles and claims to Taiwan (Formosa) and Penghu (the Pescadores) as well as the Spratly Islands and the Paracel Islands. All treaties, conventions and agreements concluded before December 9, 1941, between China and Japan have become blank because of the war.
1954	The ROC and US sign mutual defence treaty in Washington D.C
1971	The ROC is replaced by the PRC in the United Nations
1991	Abolishment of the Temporary Provisions Effective during the phase of National Mobilization for prevention of the communist rebellion. From this year until 2005, the ROC Constitution undergoes seven rounds of revision. The ROC becomes a member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation.

1992	There is a meeting between representatives from the PRC and the ROC in Hong Kong pertaining to the Cross-Strait relations, in which their stances and their perspectives on the issue are discussed/
2002	The ROC becomes a member of the World Health Organization (WHO)
2009	The world health assembly takes place and the ROC attends as an observer marking its first participation in UN activities since 1971.
2010	President Ma Ying-Jeou signs the instruments of ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

## **UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS**

The General Assembly, through resolution 2758 (1971), decided “to restore all its rights to the People’s Republic of China and to recognize the representatives of its Government as the only legitimate representatives of China to the United Nations, and to expel forthwith the representatives of Chiang Kai-shek from the place which they unlawfully occupied at the United Nations and in all the organizations related to it.” In other words, from that date onwards, China was no longer represented by the ROC, but by the PRC in the UN and affiliated bodies.

## **PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE**

The most memorable and noteworthy attempt to solve the conflict between the KMT and CCP was made by American General George C. Marshall. He travelled to China and attempted to force the two sides to an agreement. He believed that by forcing them to cooperate, more moderate concessions would eventually be made by both parties. However, his efforts were undermined by Chiang’s belief that he would be able to have the

full support of the United States in the case of an all-out war (which he did). This was due to the fact that, without Marshall's knowledge Chiang was simultaneously communicating with the US government independently of his discussions with Marshall. The truth is that it seems to be the case that both sides of the war were eager and motivated to finish the war that had started so many years before. Thus, it is extremely debatable whether Marshall could've made a dent in the situation.

## **POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS**

One potential solution would be for the two governments, PRC and ROC, to unite and form "One China", consistent with the relevant policy. This is what seems to have been what both sides have been airing about since 1950. However, whenever discussions and meetings are made between the two parties, one of the two sides persistently and unceding requests that it be the new "official government". It would be logical, I believe, for both sides to combine under a completely new democracy that is comprised of the already existing political parties, although it is evident that such a solution would not sit well with the PRC.

Another solution would be that the decision be taken not by the two parties involved, but by an external observer, with input, of course, from both PRC and ROC. This would help solve the tension between them when discussing the issue and could bring the international community much closer to a consensus.

Although the parameters of the matter seem fairly simple, in comparison to other more complex land disputes, the solution is just as hard to achieve. This is because, both sides believe they are right, and both sides have arguments to support those beliefs. Some of the arguments that the sides have mentioned in the past have been disputed, but, nevertheless, it is hard to decide which has more of a right to be called "China".

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