FORUM: Historical Security Council
QUESTION OF: The Third Taiwan Strait Crisis
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INTRODUCTION

The 1995 Taiwan Strait Crisis, which is the third out of the Crises that had occurred up until the year 1995, was a series of missile launches and tests conducted by the People's Republic of China, that took place in waters surrounding Taiwanese territory. According to People's Republic of China (PRC) claims, the launch of said missiles acted as a warning directed to the ROC (Republic of China, also unofficially known as Taiwan), as the endeavours of the ROC to acquire sovereignty and international recognition went against the "One China Policy". The One China Policy refers to a principle which the PRC stood by, referring to the belief that only one sovereign state under the name China should be recognised. Around the time the first World War ended, China was divided into two major parties, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), founded in 1921, which later formed the People's Republic of China (PRC), and the Kuomintang (KMT), founded in 1919, also known as the Chinese Nationalist Party (CNP), which later formed the Taiwanese De Facto State, officially known as the Republic of China (ROC). Even though the Kuomintang was the party governing China from 1927 until 1949, the tension between the two parties was evident, until the start of World War II, where the two parties were forced to join forces to fight off Japanese occupation. However the conflict between the two entities had yet to be resolved, as shortly after the end of the second World War, the KMT and the CCP fought for the governing position, resulting to the start of the Chinese Civil War (1945-1949), which ended with re-establishment of the People's Republic of China, under the CCP's influence. The PRC, under the rule of Mao Zedong, managed to expand in the Chinese mainland, expanding the ROC to the island of Taiwan. Even after the relocation of Kuomintang, which was then officially named the Republic of China, the conflict between the two states was constantly rising, leading to the involvement of The United States of America (USA). The USA intervened in the conflict and prevented the PRC from invading Taiwan, as well as made a pledge in 1955 to prevent further PRC attempts to invade the ROC in the future. This intervention was strategically operated by the USA, in order to eradicate all ways which communist countries

could use to expand such ideologies in other regions and political institutions. Thanks to this pledge, the now De Facto Taiwanese regime could operate in the island of Taiwan. The ROC now has a democratic elected government, a military institution and has built significant economic relations with other countries, despite not being recognised internationally. The absence of their recognition by the United Nations as well as other international treaties and organisations lies in the fact that the People's Republic of China still believes that Taiwan is a region that belongs to the Chinese mainland.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

De Facto State

The term "de facto", is a legal concept used to describe something that is freely practised or is happening in reality, without it having significant legal approval to ensure its recognition. A De Facto State, opposed to a De Jure State, is a political authority, operating in a specific territory, which has its own legislation and policies, but is not recognized on a global and international level.

De Jure State

The term "de jure", is a legal concept referring to the opposite of the term "de facto", meaning it is something that happens according to the law. Therefore, a De Jure State, is a state recognized internationally and by the law.

Self Determination

Self Determination is a human right, commonly brought up in international law as well as global organisations such as the United Nations and it refers to a group of People's right to form their own political institutions.

Chinese Communist Party (CCP)

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is a political entity that was originally founded by Chen Duxiu in 1921, to represent the Communist ideologies of the Chinese people and was one of the two major political forces in China along with the Kuomintang, also known as the Nationalist party of China. The CCP is still governing China and it's officially known as the People's Republic of China.

People's Republic of China (PRC)

The People's Republic of China has been the political entity governing mainland China since 1949. It was originally known as the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and is one of the two major countries involved in the Taiwan Strait Crises.

Republic Of China (ROC)

The Republic of China, originally known as the Kuomintang or the Chinese Nationalist Party, and unofficially known as Taiwan, is a De Facto State that was relocated in Taiwan, from mainland China, after its loss in the Chinese civil War. It was founded in 1919 and is one of the two major political regimes involved in the Taiwan Strait Crises.

People's Liberation army (PLA)

The People's Liberation army (PLA) is characterised as the military force of the CCP. To be specific, the PLA controls the PRC's air, land and sea forces.

One China Policy

The "One China Policy" principle refers to the PRC's stance against the ROC, operating as a sovereign state under the name "China".

Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)

The Democratic Progressive Party was founded in 1986 with the purpose of promoting the self-Determination of ethnically Taiwanese people and building economic relations with the PRC.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Taiwan historical background

Even though the Chinese settlement only began in the early 17th century, the island's history dates back to 3000 BC, when the first appearance of agriculture is believed to have been made. Furthermore, before the ROC rule, many European regions had colonised the island, with primary examples, the Dutch, the Spaniards, the Italians, as well as the Portuguese, however their settlement didn't last for a long time. Long after the short-lived European colonisation, in the 17th century, the Taiwanese island became a part of the Fujian province, which was a province of the Republic of China (ROC). For many years, Taiwan acted as China's main provider for sugar and rice until the island became a separate province from Fujian in 1886, with its legal capital being T'ai-chung until 1894, when Taipei became the legal capital. However the ROC's ruling of the island ended as well, as, after the Sino-Japanese conflict had ended in 1895, the Japanese occupied Taiwan as well as some surrounding islands due to the treaty of Shimonoseki, which stated that China would lose sovereignty over several islands under their occupation, including Taiwan and the Penghu islands. However the ROC reacquired sovereignty over the islands under the Japanese rule with the help of the Cairo treaty of 1943, which stated that all islands occupied by Japan in the Pacific Ocean should be returned to the ROC after Japan's defeat in World War II. Even though the islands were reclaimed by the Republic of China, both Japan and China used its resources to their countries' benefit.

Early ROC history

After the end of the Qing Dynasty in 1912 and the end of monarchy, with the last emperor giving up his power, China was renamed the Republic of China, as new ideologies and political agendas were formed. Some of the previously said ideas included nationalist and communist beliefs, leading to the formation of two major political parties. The Kuomintang, also known as the Chinese Nationalist Party, as well as the Chinese Communist Party. Both ideologies were extremely popular in mainland China, however, in the end, the Kuomintang (KMT) had a successful election and became the governing party of the ROC in 1920. Even after the election, the tension between the two opposing political regimes was constantly growing until 1937, when Japan invaded China and all political differences came to a halt. Both major parties were forced to join the same side to prevent China's occupation. After the defeat of Japan, the conflict only seemed to grow stronger until it reached its climax at the end of World War II, specifically in 1945, when the Chinese Civil War between the two political regimes began. Even though efforts to resolve the conflict through peaceful means had been made by the KMT, such as attempting to negotiate with the opposing party, as well as proposing a ceasefire, the military operation was carried out and the Civil War eventually came to an end, with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) emerging victorious. After the CCP's victory the Republic of China was renamed as the People's Republic of China and the Chinese Nationalist Party was relocated to the Taiwan island.

First Taiwan Strait Crisis

The first Taiwan Strait Crisis occurred in 1954 when the Chinese Communist Party shelled three islands under the ROC's territory. Specifically the islands Quemoy, Dachen and Matsu were bombed since, according to PRC claims, the islands were of great strategic importance to the Republic of China and posed a threat to the CCP. An island of ROC sovereignty was also captured by the People's Liberation Army leading to the external involvement of the USA, by signing the Sino-American Mutual Defense Treaty with the ROC, in order to assist the De Facto State if an invasion was carried out, and prevent further conflict between the two opposing entities. The Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) was also formed, in order to prevent the communist agenda from spreading in other Southeast Asian Countries.

Second Taiwan Strait Crisis

Not long after the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, The PRC carried out another operation, by bombing the Jimmen and Matsu islands in 1958. Despite the casualties in Taiwanese territory, the Chinese operation was once again brief, as the US intervened by providing military aid to Taiwan. Some years later, the Sino-American Mutual Defense treaty expired (1979) and the SEATO failed (1977), resulting in Taiwan losing all the previous help they had from major institutions.

Third Taiwan Strait Crisis

The 1995 Taiwan Strait Crisis was the third bombing operation conducted by China, this time almost 40 years after the previous one, and it regards the testing of missiles in Taiwanese waters, conducted by the People's Republic of China. The President of the ROC, Lee Teng-hui, had previously visited the US and was granted a tourist visa from the US government. For this reason, the PRC conducted a series of missile tests close to Taiwanese territory. The PRC is of the opinion that only one sovereign state should operate under the name China, and was against the ROC's attempt to build international relations and strive towards their international recognition, as a De Facto State.

On the 22nd of May 1995, President Bill Clinton of the United States, being pressured by the Congress, as figured by conventional assumptions, publicly announced that the Clinton administration was granting the ROC's President, Lee Tenghui, a tourist visa in order to be able to visit Cornell University for a reunion; despite the USA's previous assurances of the opposite, as well as the USA's agreement with the One China Policy. Before that, however, there had been some instances where the ROC president had visited the USA, such as when the United States approved a brief visit of ROC's president in the United States and for that reason Lee Tenghui was able to briefly stop in Hawaii in May of 1994 for a refuelling when he was on his way to Nicaragua. That resulted in The Chinese government's extreme disapproval of the US's actions, as well as the hostility shown towards the Taiwanese president and government, constantly making threats about Taiwan disregarding the One China Policy and acting as a sovereign state. However, despite the PRC's protests, in October the Taiwanese president, along with other high-level Taiwanese officials, was able to enter and visit the USA, without having obtained a visa yet. Later, in May 1995, the ROC's government was officially granted a tourist visa so as to be able to legally visit the USA.

newly established policy increased the tension between the two parties, with China firing missiles close to Taiwanese territory.

On the 18th of July, shortly after Lee Tenghui's visit to Cornell University in June 1995, the Chinese government announced that in three days from then and for another seven days, the PRC would conduct a series of missile tests close to Taiwanese waters, approximately 85 miles north from Taiwan. The PLA and PRC had strategically attacked that area in order to disrupt some immensely important trade routes for Taiwan and flight paths, leading to the temporary discontinuation of Taiwan's monetising normality, because of the high risk of danger. These tests served as a warning directed to the ROC's president, as, according to the PRC, the Taiwanese government acted as a sovereign state, in contrast to the lack of independence seen in previous years, and as a threat to the ROC for compliance with the One China Policy.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

People's Republic of China (PRC)

The People's Republic of China is one of the two major countries directly involved in the Third Taiwan Strait Crisis. According to the PRC's beliefs, the ROC is only a province of mainland China and should not be recognised as a sovereign state. This indicates that the Chinese government might want to reclaim what was previously their territory by planning and executing an invasion. Such intentions have been indirectly confirmed by the constant threats that have been made by the PRC and the three Crises that took place in the Taiwan strait in the span of 41 years (1954-1995). The People's Republic of China will greatly benefit from having control over the Islands under ROC jurisdiction as it will open new trade routes for China, meaning the PRC would be able to control international commerce and immensely enhance China's economy. The People's Republic of China has made efforts to reunite the two entities in order to go through with the one China Policy and achieve economic growth, through conducting diplomatic talks towards such goals, however a positive response has yet to be shown by the ROC, as in the 1980s the Kuomintang rejected the PRC's approach to restore peace.

Republic of China (ROC)

The Republic of China, also unofficially known as Taiwan, is one of the two major countries directly involved in the third Taiwan strait crisis. The De Facto Nationalist State has

been fighting for its independence from Communist China since the Kuomintang's relocation to the island of Taiwan, from mainland China. According to the Taiwanese government's claims, the ROC is the legitimate government of China. The Republic of China stands by a no-unification ideology, insisting on the international recognition of the Nationalist government and immensely supporting the idea of the ROC being a different governmental institution from the PRC. The Republic of China has also proposed a "one country, two systems" policy, similar to the one used in Hong Kong, meaning that Taiwan and mainland China would be merged into one country, however Taiwan would be an independent political entity, with a capitalist regime and different legislation, contrary to the Communist China system. This system however was declined by the PRC.

United States of America (USA)

Even though the US recognizes the People's Republic of China as the official governing entity of China, they have maintained their diplomatic relations with the de facto Taiwanese regime, supporting their independence. The US is also the main provider of arms for Taiwan and has been the ROC's most important ally. However such relations are still unofficial and indirect.

Russia

Even though Russo-Taiwanese relations can be described as hostile, Russia's beliefs regarding China's stance against Taiwan, are positive towards the PRC. The Chinese Communist Party was originally inspired by the Russian Revolution and formed because of it. For that reason the Communist beliefs of the two countries align and the legislation as well as government structure between the two countries is similar.

Japan

Japan had had involvement with politics regarding the Chinese government for many years prior to the Taiwan Strait crises, being one of the major countries to cause political dispute in the area with the Sino-Japanese wars and later with the attempt to occupy mainland China during World War II. Japan had always been a great threat to China's sovereignty and independence, as many operations prior to the formation of the ROC as an independent entity from China, were executed successfully by the Japanese government, granting them rule over several Chinese islands, including the previously under Chinese occupation island, Taiwan. Throughout the years, the tension between China and Japan has only grown stronger. That is highlighted during the second World War, where Japan attempted to occupy China, but was in the end proven unsuccessful. Regarding the Taiwan Strait crises, Japan never really had a firm stance on the topic and showed indifference, until the third Taiwan Strait Crisis, when Japan's Prime Minister, Hashimoto Ryutaro voiced his concern towards Taiwan and the possible war that could occur from China's attacks.

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Indonesia

Indonesia's stance on the third Taiwan Strait Crisis and generally on the situation in Taiwan remains indifferent, as the country doesn't yet recognise the Republic of China as a sovereign state. In fact, Indonesia was 1 out of the 17 UN member States that abstained from voting in favour or against the UNGA resolution 2758, that issued the question of recognising the People's Republic of China as the only sovereign entity going by the name "China". Regardless of the country's lack of presence and involvement in the conflict between China and Taiwan, Indonesia has been building economic relations with the ROC since its establishment as a different entity than China, as agricultural relations and cooperation between the two institutions were strengthening. Specifically, the two parties signed an agreement issued by Taiwan's International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF), in order for Taiwan to assist Indonesia's growth in the agriculture and economy sector. The two parties also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the agricultural aspects of the economic relations built between them.

Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations was originally founded by five nations, as the predecessor of the unsuccessful organisation, Association of Southeast Asia (ASA). Specifically, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam and the Philippines signed the ASEAN Declaration in 1967. Much like the previously formed Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO), ASEAN was formed to minimise the risks of communism spreading in more southeast asian nations. Circa 1995, two more countries had joined the ASEAN, Thailand and Brunei. However, despite the group's purpose, most of the member States of ASEAN didn't prevent the recognition of the People's Republic of China, which carries out communist agenda, from becoming a sovereign and independent State in the UNGA 2758 resolution, in fact, only the Philippines voted against that happening, with Thailand and Indonesia abstaining and Malaysia and Singapore even supporting the idea. Brunei and Vietnam were not yet recognised by the UN to be able to vote. Seeing as the votings differed between the countries, with the actual minority of the votes being against China's recognition and therefore against communism spreading in Southeast Asia, it begs the question of whether the organisation was actually effective regarding its original goal and if the ASEAN stands firm on its beliefs regarding communism or not. Even though three military operations were carried out by China, a communist entity, attacking the Republic of China, there has been no recorded effort made by the ASEAN on resolving the conflict or intervening to alleviate the tension, except for occasional concerns over the situation in Southeast Asian seas shown by some Member States.

Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO)

The Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) was formed in 1955, specifically during the first Taiwan Strait Crisis and was established by the Southeast Asian collective defence treaty in order to further prevent Southeast Asian regions from adopting communist agenda. Similar to the ASEAN organisation, which was formed more than a decade later, this treaty consisted of non communist entities, however despite its name most member states weren't geographically Southeast Asian countries. The member states were Australia, France,

New Zealand, Pakistan, Bangladesh (former east Pakistan), the Philippines, Thailand, the UK and the USA. However the treaty's success didn't last due to internal conflict, and ceased to exist in 1977.

United Nations

The United Nations had previously recognised The Republic of China as a sovereign country and as a Member-State of the United Nations, however after passing the resolution 2758, Taiwan became a de facto entity and the UN recognised the PRC as the only legitimate government of China.

Date Description of Event	
Description of Event	
The Kuomintang, also known as the Chinese Nationalist Party, was formed.	
After the Kuomintang ceased to exist, it was reestablished under the name Chinese Kuomintang.	
The Chinese Communist Party was established	
Cairo treaty was signed	
Chinese civil War between the KMT and CCP	
First Taiwan Strait Crisis	
Implementation of the Sino-American Mutual Defence treaty	
Formosa resolution was passed by the US Congress	
Second Taiwan strait Crisis	
Resolution 2758 is passed in the UNGA	
Shanghai communiqué between the US and China	
Joint communiqué on the establishment of diplomatic relations between the US and China	
Sino-American Mutual Defence treaty expired	
1992 Consensus agreement	
Start of Third Taiwan Strait Crisis	

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

United Nations General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXIV), passed on 25/10/1971 by a vote of 76 in favour, 35 against and 17 abstentions.

This resolution recognized the People's Republic of China as the only legitimate governing entity going by the name "China" in the United Nations, thus officially naming Taiwan a de facto regime.

The full text can be found here:

http://www.taiwandocuments.org/un2758-XXVI.htm

Other significant resolutions and treaties

The Cairo agreement (1/12/1943) which stated that Japan must return the islands they occupied in the Pacific Ocean. One of said islands was Taiwan.

The full text can be found in the following link:

https://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/shiryo/01/002_46/002_46tx.html

Joint Communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations, 1/01/1979

The US recognizes the PRC as the legitimate government of China and diplomatic talks and relations between the two parties are formed.

The Full text can be found with the following link:

http://www.taiwandocuments.org/communique02.htm

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

The Sino-American Mutual defence treaty

The Sino-American Mutual defence treaty was signed by the ROC and USA, and allowed the USA to position military assets in Taiwanese regions in order to assist with mutual defence. This treaty was effective from 1954 until 1979 and had the purpose of defending the Republic of China if an invasion was carried out by the People's Republic of China. The Sino-American Mutual defence system was successful in preventing further bombings during the second Taiwan STrait crisis, however the successful outcome didn't last for long as a third crisis was initiated in 1995.

Attempted ceasefire

During the early stages of the conflict of the two parties, specifically during the Chinese Civil War, a call for a ceasefire had been made by the Chinese Nationalist Party, however it was proven unsuccessful, as, shortly after the ROC's request, the CCP rejected the idea and carried out the military intervention, which led to many casualties within the Chinese mainland

SEATO formation

During the first Taiwan strait crisis the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) was formed which was an organisation which operated from 1955-1977 and was established by the Southeast Asian collective defence treaty, with the purpose of protecting Asian regions from further communist agenda. However, even though the treaty was successful in its early stages, due to internal conflict within the treaty, its success was short-lived and the treaty soon became a failure.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Code of Conduct

The establishment of a code of conduct which would have been negotiated between the two respective parties in order to enhance security measures and guarantee economic and trade benefits for both regions, as well as de-escalate tension by promoting collaboration, cooperation and providing them with incentives regarding aligned interests. The terms of the code of conduct would have been decided on a mutual agreement and would have been reevaluated and enhanced if and when needed. Both respective parties would set their terms and issue a proposal to add them in the code of conduct. The parties have the chance to discuss them and strike out any suggestions that don't accommodate the current political priorities of both countries, however all changes or additions would be carefully examined and voted upon by all 8 members of the ASEAN organisation to make sure the safety of the Southeast Asian area is guaranteed and the economic and cultural independence of both countries is safeguarded. All Parties of the ASEAN organisation would act and examine in an unbiased manner and not based on their individual entity's interest. If any bias is detected by another party, including the PRC and the ROC, that party would be able to file a complaint regarding their displeasure towards a previous decision in order for the parties to retake a vote to either reevaluate the situation or remain with the previously passed terms. This scenario would be the only part when the ROC and the PRC would be allowed to vote, whereas in the standard procedure of voting, the PRC and ROC would only act as observer states. If however a party is deemed guilty of acting in a biassed manner, that party would have their voting rights annulled for a minimum of 3 months or more depending on what the rest of the ASEAN member states would decide upon. If one of the two main parties of the crisis violates the code of conduct, sanctions, which would have been decided before said party violates it, along with the terms of the code of conduct, will be imposed on that entity by the ASEAN, which would last for as long as the organisation deems it necessary. Further sanctions are encouraged by the opposing party as well if needed.

Introducing a Binding treaty

The creation of a binding treaty consisted of the bordering Nations of the two Parties involved in the conflict, including the PRC and the ROC to negotiate upon possible changes regarding the nine-dash line set by China, set clear borders for both countries and decide upon new legislation regarding those areas in order to prevent armed conflict. The treaty would have also aided both Nations with enhanced security measures by means such as but not limited to assisting them with military aid (arms, technological equipment etc.), in order to prevent further conflict in such areas. As this decision influences a plethora of countries on an international level, because of the new economic and trade routes that could possibly be formed by the border changes, a larger group of countries should be involved. Therefore, the supervision and examination of such changes could be made by the UNGA, with the PRC and ROC gaining a permanent observer status without voting rights. This would ensure that the majority would agree with the reevaluations issued by the two countries after peace talks and negotiations and set clear borders, separating the two entities. If one of the parties violates the new regulations, the UNGA would set punishments accordingly. Some acceptable would be a temporary assets freeze on the leader of the political party disrupting peace and an arms embargo of the party's military.

Launching a UN Peacekeeping operation

The implementation of a monitoring system from a third party or treaty in order to document and report any threat or illegal detention insinuated by any of the two parties so as to restore peace within the region and assist any of the two nations if needed. This could have been achieved by launching a UN peacekeeping operation in the De Facto regime of Taiwan, in order to report any future threat. Other ways of monitoring the situation is by acquiring technological and military equipment to evaluate possible threats in Taiwanese waters, as well as by external political forces such as the US, helping by providing Taiwan with military aid.

Economic growth

The encouragement of building economic relations between the two represented parties in order to enhance bilateral economic cooperation mechanisms between the ROC and PRC and safeguard both countries' sustainable growth as well as align their economic interests to prevent further military conflict, since one of the major reasons mainland China wants to reclaim the Taiwanese territory, is to open new routes for China regarding international trade. This could be achieved by having a joint communique between the two parties in order to assess the possibility of merging the two countries' economies while maintaining the two governing parties or having a small amount of assets shared, as, before the separation China's two major parties into two different political entities, the island of Taiwan was the biggest rout of agricultural products for mainland China, while the mainland's biggest export is technological equipment. Both countries would grow economically and the conflict between the two entities would be minimised, as this solution would be closer to the PRC's One China Policy, without taking away Taiwan's independence.

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