



# JejuMUN X

## Background Guide

### United Nations Security Council

#### 1 | Resolving Tension Between China and Taiwan

SDG: 16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, 17. Partnerships to achieve the Goal

Authored by Lahee Hong, Wendy Lee, Benjamin Jun

November 24th–25th, 2023

Last updated July 25th, 2023

---

# Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Committee Introduction	3
Agenda Introduction	4
Letter from the Chairs	5
Key Terms	6
Historical Background	7
Current State of Affairs	8
Stances of Parties	10
Possible Solutions	12
Questions to Consider	13
Bibliography	14

## Committee Introduction

The United Nations Security Council (hereafter UNSC) is the primary force for the maintenance of international peace and security. It is the UNSC's duty to protect the basic rights of every UN member state. It comprises a total of 15 member states, 5 of which are permanent (China, France, Russia, United States, United Kingdom) and 10 of which are temporary and elected for terms of 2 years. Each member of the UNSC has 1 vote. All resolutions require the vote of at least 9 member states in support of a motion to pass, which must also include all permanent members that have not abstained.

All permanent members have the right to exercise veto power as the founding members of the UNSC decided that these countries have, and will continue to, play a significant role in the maintenance of international peace. If any of the five nations casts a negative substantive vote, the resolution automatically fails. Permanent members have the right to abstain, which means that a resolution may pass without the vote of a P5 nation.

By the UN charter, the UNSC has the right to place restrictions such as economic sanctions, arms embargoes, financial penalties and travel bans, as well as severing diplomatic relations with a country altogether. It even has the right to execute collective military action of the United States, and has a designated military observance force named the Blue Helmet. However, the UNSC usually strongly recommends reaching an agreement by peaceful, diplomatic means. The UNSC can issue ceasefires and hold peaceful conferences between disputing parties.

The UNSC's chief concern during military conflict is to end it as quickly as possible, minimise casualties and create an environment where the conflicting parties have the opportunity to settle their conflict through diplomacy. When the threat of military conflict is significant, the UNSC must try to prevent it. However, it is also tasked with securing the human rights of people affected by the conflict, which may force the SC to use its powers to restrain either side of the conflict, if it considers the danger is too great. It is the job of each of the member states of the UN to decide which conflicting values to prioritise.

## Agenda Introduction

The UNSC is concerned with heightened tensions over Taiwan and China. Some analysts fear war in this politically bipolar age, especially with China's recent growing military capabilities and assertiveness, as well as the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This agenda aligns with the sixteenth Sustainable Development Goal, 'Peace and Justice Strong Institutions'.

The ongoing diplomatic complexity between China and Taiwan significantly influences the stability of the Asia-Pacific region and global peace. The agenda for this year's Security Council committee is to explore this situation, which has been molded by a confluence of historical events, political ideologies, and socio-economic circumstances.

With the conclusion of the Chinese Civil War in 1949, the perspectives of China and Taiwan have diverged. China maintains the 'One China Principle', viewing Taiwan as part of its territory, while Taiwan asserts itself as a sovereign state. This difference in standpoints has given rise to intricate political dynamics that extend beyond the immediate region, impacting global diplomacy, trade, and security. The goal of the MUN committee is to delve deeply into the China-Taiwan relationship, striving to understand its many layers and proposing ways to bridge the divide. Delegates will engage in extensive discussions encompassing historical contexts, political ideologies, economic considerations, and human rights aspects. These conversations will respect the principles of national sovereignty, self-determination, and peaceful resolution of disputes as stipulated by the United Nations Charter. This issue is not confined to China and Taiwan alone; it involves other major stakeholders, including the United States and countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

The focus should not only be on managing conflict but also on fostering dialogue, understanding, and cooperation. Proposed resolution strategies should strive for comprehensive, constructive, and realistic outcomes that balance national sovereignty with the pursuit of regional stability and international peace. Indeed, the amelioration of the China-Taiwan tension is a high-stakes endeavor that requires comprehensive understanding, mutual respect, and innovative problem-solving.

# Letter from the Chairs

Greetings Delegates,

We are Lahee Hong, Wendy Lee, and Benjamin Jun from North London Collegiate School Jeju. It is our honour to welcome you all to the United Nations Security Council at Jeju MUN X.

In this committee, you will be discussing an issue that is a major concern to all of the member states: the China-Taiwan relationship. It is an issue of interest as it concerns the safety and the rights of many countries, not just that of Taiwan and China. It gives you a chance to think about the social, economic, political and geographical implications of such a conflict. We, as your chairs, will do our best to support you on your quest for peace in Northeast Asia.

You may have varied levels of experience in MUN, and some of you may be bracing yourselves for your first Security Council committee. All of us chairs have experienced being at each level of experience as a delegate, and we will put that knowledge to use in helping you have the best time possible in this committee.

We are all looking forward to seeing you in the committee room, and watching you figure out how to solve this global issue in a collaborative way. We wish you luck in your preparation for the conference, as well as in the committee. If you have any questions, please feel free to email us at any time; we will reply as soon as we possibly can.

Sincerely,

Lahee Hong | Head Chair | [rhong24@pupils.nlcsjeju.kr](mailto:rhong24@pupils.nlcsjeju.kr)

Wendy Lee | Deputy Chair | [hy2lee24@pupils.nlcsjeju.kr](mailto:hy2lee24@pupils.nlcsjeju.kr)

Benjamin Jun | Associate Chair | [shjun27@pupils.nlcsjeju.kr](mailto:shjun27@pupils.nlcsjeju.kr)

# Key Terms

## Taiwan

The unofficial name of the Republic of China, an independently governed island located to the East of mainland China. The political and governmental independence of Taiwan is being debated, especially as Beijing claims it to be Chinese territory, while Taiwan maintains that it is an independent government. Taiwan is currently not considered a member of the United Nations.

## The 1st Island Chain

The 1st island chain is a 'chain' of islands that are in between China and the North Pacific ocean, consisting of the Kuril islands, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and the Philippines. The concept was first conceived as part of a maritime strategy, where a country is surrounded by hostile islands. To China, Taiwan plays a very important role in the island chain as it is both in the middle of the chain and is relatively close to China.

## The Joint Sword Operation

A military operation hosted by Beijing, where the encirclement and general attack of Taiwan was rehearsed, including missile launch simulations and jet aircrafts entering Taiwanese airspace. It was hosted for three days, from 8 to 11th April 2023. It is considered one of the largest military exercises hosted by the current Beijing government.

## Sovereignty

Sovereignty is the right of a state to govern itself or another state. A sovereign state is defined as having a defined territory and population, an established government that is independent and not dominated by another, and has the ability to interact with other sovereign states. A state that has been denied sovereignty is usually denied their right to elect leaders and interact with other sovereign states.

## Taiwanese Strait

A thin strip of ocean that separates the Taiwanese island from mainland China. This region is of much geopolitical importance as this is, in effect, the border between China and Taiwan. Tensions have risen due to fishing boats, as well as armed warships, crossing the middle line of the strait. Should the situation escalate to the point where China or Taiwan decides to use force, the strait will become the primary battlefield. It is also used to allude to the relationship between China and Taiwan, as in the phrase "cross-strait relations."

## Historical Background

1949	Mao Zhedong and the Communist party succeed in taking over China, after defeating the nationalist Kuomintang (KMT). The remaining members of the Kuomintang fled to Taiwan and took over governing it, separating it from Beijing's control.
1950	Taiwan sides with the US during the Korean war, and the US sends naval fleets to protect Taiwan from potential attacks from China.
1979	The United States cut all formal bonds with Taiwan in order to reestablish peaceful relationships with China, but does not fully accept China's claim that Taiwan should be under Beijing's control, claiming that they 'acknowledged' the claim.
1991	Taiwan withdraws its 'emergency rule' status, implying that it is no longer in war with China.
2000	Taiwan holds an election, and the KMT loses governance over Taiwan. This gradually improves relationships between China and Taiwan. Taiwan partially concedes to the 'One China' policy by defining it 'Both mainland China and Taiwan belong to One China', implying that One China is not mainland China and that China and Taiwan were on equal standings.
2016	Tsai Ing Wen, a pro-independence democrat, is elected as president of Taiwan. China suspended all communication with Taiwan when Tsai did not acknowledge the One China policy.
2021	Chinese war aircraft made several hundred incursions into Taiwanese defence territory.
2021	President Joe Biden claims that America will defend Taiwan should China attack it. The White House partially withdrew this statement afterwards.
2022	Nancy Pelosi, the highest profile US representative to visit Taiwan since 1907, expressed her "unwavering commitment to supporting Taiwan's vibrant democracy", severely offending Beijing's officials.
2022	China launches large scale military exercises near Taiwan, including missiles, claiming that it was 'punishment'. They directly stated that this was in retaliation to Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, saying that they "hoped the United States would draw a lesson from such a situation".

# Current State of Affairs

## Current State of Affairs

The relationship between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (Taiwan) is an enduring, multifaceted issue, deeply rooted in differing interpretations of national sovereignty and legitimacy. As we move into the second half of 2023, these tensions have significantly heightened. Both entities are active participants in a potent geopolitical game that not only affects their relations but also significantly impacts regional and global stability.

## Recent Developments

In recent times, China has demonstrated an increased military presence around Taiwan, notably through recurrent air force missions in Taiwan's air defense identification zone (ADIZ) and conducting naval exercises in the Taiwan Strait. While China maintains these actions are legitimate expressions of its sovereignty, Taiwan perceives them as an act of intimidation. As a result, Taiwan has amplified its defense capabilities and continues to seek broader international support.

Under President Tsai Ing-wen's administration, Taiwan persists in opposing mainland China's narrative of reunification. Efforts have been strengthened to nurture relationships with democratic nations globally, notably with the United States, the European Union, and countries within the Indo-Pacific region. Although these ties remain largely unofficial due to diplomatic pressures from China, there is an increasingly apparent international acknowledgment and support for Taiwan's democratic values and its right to self-determination.

## The International Standpoint and the Role of the United States

The international community maintains a delicate balance concerning this issue. To evade diplomatic repercussions with China, most countries refrain from officially recognizing Taiwan as a sovereign state. However, the growing concerns about China's military assertiveness towards Taiwan have prompted more countries to express their apprehensions publicly. The United States has played a pivotal role in supporting Taiwan through arms sales, underpinning the Taiwan Relations Act and maintaining the more recent policy of "strategic ambiguity."

## China's Foreign Policy and Its Implications

China's more assertive stance on its foreign policy under President Xi Jinping, particularly its aggressive approach towards Taiwan, has raised alarm about potential military conflict. These fears are exacerbated by the ongoing crisis in Ukraine and the territorial disputes in the South China Sea, demonstrating China's readiness to enforce its territorial claims.

## Implications for Regional and Global Stability



The intensifying tensions between Taiwan and China bear significant implications for regional security, global economic stability, and the broader international order. As members of the United Nations Security Council, our mandate is to prevent potential conflict, uphold international law, and maintain regional and global peace and stability.

This evolving situation calls for an in-depth, balanced, and thoughtful discussion among the Security Council's members. We must consider the broader geopolitical implications and understand the nuanced perspectives and interests of all involved parties as we navigate this complex issue and explore potential solutions.

# Stances of Parties

## Afghanistan

Afghanistan, being a landlocked nation in Central Asia, has minimal direct involvement in the Taiwan-China issue. However, its relationship with China has grown in recent years, particularly in economic terms, due to China's interest in investing in the country as part of its Belt and Road Initiative. Afghanistan formally recognises the "One China" policy, and while it does not have direct ties with Taiwan, it does maintain indirect interactions for practical purposes.

## Belarus

As a long-standing ally of China, Belarus supports the "One China" policy and does not have official diplomatic relations with Taiwan. However, some economic interactions exist. Belarus' stance on this issue reflects its own domestic political climate, including its approach to sovereignty and territorial integrity.

## China

The People's Republic of China sees Taiwan as a part of its territory, often referred to as the "One China" principle. The PRC has been persistent in its diplomatic, economic, and military pressure on Taiwan. China's stance on this issue is unequivocal: it claims the right to bring Taiwan under its control by force if necessary, a stance reiterated in President Xi Jinping's speeches.

## Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)

North Korea recognises the "One China" policy and has no official diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Its stance is partly shaped by its reliance on China for economic and political support.

## France

France, despite recognising the PRC in 1964 and supporting the "One China" policy, has maintained unofficial relations with Taiwan and supported its participation in international organisations. France's relationship with Taiwan includes meaningful economic, cultural, and academic exchanges. This is evidenced by its arms sales to Taiwan, which drew criticism from China.

## Germany

Germany adheres to the "One China" policy but maintains vibrant economic relations with Taiwan. It supports Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organisations and is one of Taiwan's largest trading partners in Europe. However, Germany remains cautious in its diplomatic dealings to avoid antagonizing China.

## Latvia

While Latvia recognises the "One China" policy, it also supports Taiwan's participation in international organisations. The relationship between Latvia and Taiwan is mostly economic and cultural. However, Latvia, as a member of the European Union, has to balance its own interests with the common EU policy towards China and Taiwan.

## **Poland**

Poland recognises the "One China" policy. However, it maintains unofficial relations with Taiwan and supports Taiwan's participation in international organisations. Poland's perspective is largely shaped by its economic and political interests in maintaining good relations with both China and Taiwan.

## **Republic of Korea (South Korea)**

South Korea officially recognises the "One China" policy but has significant economic relations with Taiwan. The diplomatic position of South Korea is often a balancing act between its geopolitical interests involving China, the US, and its democratic values.

## **Russia**

Russia acknowledges the "One China" policy and has a close political and economic relationship with China. It has no official diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Russia's perspective on this issue is significantly influenced by its strategic partnerships and geopolitical interests.

## **Switzerland**

While Switzerland recognises the "One China" policy, it also maintains substantial economic relations with Taiwan. As a neutral country, Switzerland's stance is typically non-confrontational, prioritizing peace, and stability in the region.

## **Turkey**

Turkey recognises the "One China" policy and does not maintain official diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Its stance is guided by its strategic and economic interests, including its relationship with China.

## **United Kingdom (UK)**

The UK recognises the "One China" policy but maintains unofficial relations with Taiwan. The UK supports Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organisations. However, the UK-China relationship is multifaceted and complex, with the UK often having to navigate carefully to maintain its economic interests.

## **Ukraine**

Ukraine acknowledges the "One China" policy but has maintained economic and cultural relations with Taiwan. It is committed to international law and norms, and

supports the peaceful resolution of disputes. However, Ukraine's stance is influenced by its own complex relationship with Russia and its focus on its territorial integrity.

### **United States (US)**

The US shifted official recognition from Taiwan to the PRC in 1979, adopting the "One China" policy. However, the US has a complex unofficial relationship with Taiwan, governed by the Taiwan Relations Act. The US supports Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organisations and provides significant arms sales for Taiwan's defense. The US has followed a "strategic ambiguity" policy, neither encouraging Taiwan's independence nor explicitly stating it would defend Taiwan from a Chinese attack. This stance has been a crucial element in maintaining regional stability. The US approach is a delicate balancing act reflecting its economic and strategic interests with China, its commitment to democracy and human rights, and its strategic and economic relationships with Taiwan.

## Possible Solutions

The first approach to solving the Taiwan-China impasse could involve promoting increased cross-Strait dialogue and confidence-building measures. Encouraging the governments of both sides to communicate directly can aid in addressing misconceptions and fostering understanding. This could include establishing hotlines to prevent accidental escalations, encouraging trade and tourism, and promoting joint academic, scientific, and cultural exchanges. The international community could play a role by providing a neutral platform for these dialogues and by encouraging trust-building activities, such as joint disaster management and humanitarian cooperation.

The most straightforward methods of resolving the conflict would involve deciding either to unify the two countries or to declare them independent states. This would alienate one of the two states' interests, so this will only be executed if the committee decides to side with one of the parties.

A Taiwan-China separation would involve allowing Taiwan to continue operating as a separate state, while militarily and politically restraining China from threatening or attacking Taiwan.

Secondly, we can explore the potential for legal and political innovation. One way could be to create a 'One Country, Two Systems' model where Taiwan is given significant autonomy while recognizing China's sovereignty, akin to the Hong Kong model before the imposition of the National Security Law in 2020. Alternatively, a 'Two China' policy could be considered where the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China coexist as separate nations. This would require intense negotiation and compromise, especially concerning international recognition and participation in international organizations. However, it should be noted that the feasibility of both these options would heavily rely on the willingness of the parties involved and the prevailing geopolitical climate.

The third solution could focus on a gradual unification process that respects the principles of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. This unification should not be forced or hasty but should occur over a substantial period, ensuring the Taiwanese people have a significant say in their future. This process would require China to make credible commitments to preserving Taiwan's democratic system and civil liberties. It might also require constitutional changes in China towards greater pluralism, rule of law, and respect for human rights to win the trust of the Taiwanese people. It's worth mentioning that this approach calls for a significant change in the current political systems of both China and Taiwan, which may be challenging to achieve, but it could potentially lead to a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

## Questions to Consider

- What are the stakes at risk on each direct stakeholder in this agenda?
  - Taiwan
  - China
- What are the stakes at risk on each of the related states? Are there states (other than China and Taiwan) that are also strongly impacted by this situation?
- What benefits are Taiwan and China pursuing in the status quo? Which of these values are mutually exclusive?
- Of these values, which ones does *your* state prioritise? Are there other values involved that do not directly affect Taiwan and China but do affect you?
- What is the worst possible or plausible scenario? How would you avoid that?
- What are the implications of this situation? How would the outcome of this affect future disputes regarding sovereignty?
- Should historical evidence or current moral standards be prioritised?
- What achievable goals should you set in the short term? What should be the ultimate goal of the committee?
- How far should the UN be willing to go to protect the freedom of a state?

## Bibliography

- "A China-Taiwan DMZ? Kinmen's islanders want a bridge, not a war." 1 Jun. 2023,  
<https://www.cnn.com/2023/06/01/asia/taiwan-china-tensions-kinmen-island-dmz-intl-hnk/index.html>.
- "Biography | Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi." <https://pelosi.house.gov/biography-0>.
- "China and Taiwan: A really simple guide - BBC News." 6 Apr. 2023,  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-59900139>.
- "How serious is the risk of war over Taiwan? - Brookings Institution." 17 Apr. 2023,  
<https://www.brookings.edu/podcast-episode/how-serious-is-the-risk-of-war-over-taiwan/>.
- "China and Taiwan Relations Explained: What's Behind the Divide." 30 Mar. 2023,  
<https://www.wsj.com/articles/china-taiwan-relations-tensions-explained-11653322751>.
- "Why China-Taiwan Relations Are So Tense." 18 Apr. 2023,  
<https://www.cfr.org/background/china-taiwan-relations-tension-us-policy-biden>.