

A GLOBAL CONCERN: HOW NATIONS ARE RESPONDING TO THE U.S.-CHINA TENSIONS SURROUNDING TAIWAN

Alecu Roxana – Andreea, Phd. Student,
West University of Timișoara,
roxana.alecu97@e-uvt.ro

Abstract:

Today, we are increasingly confronted with various geopolitical issues that mark the international scene. One such issue is the US-China conflict over Taiwan. China's growing demands to reunite with Taiwan, and the US close engagement with Taiwan, is progressively leading to a complex interplay of interests between various nations.

This article will examine the reactions that the international community has had or is having to this conflict and the possibility of the conflict escalating at any time. So far, it is reacting with a mixture of concern and strategic recalibration. The situation has triggered a widespread dialog about the implications for regional stability and global security, drawing the attention of several nations, both in the immediate vicinity and further afield.

The Asia-Pacific nations are the primary parties involved, and they have increased their level of vigilance. For instance, in response to China's increasing threat, Japan has started to publicly discuss its defence posture. Given Taiwan's proximity to Japan's southwestern islands, any military confrontation may have direct repercussions for Japan right away. In order to prevent future aggression, this article explains how this realisation has spurred talks about enhancing military cooperation with the US and other allies.

Australia is adjusting its strategy as well. By supporting a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific area and taking part in joint military exercises, it has strongly allied itself with US policy.

The article also looks at the reaction of several European leaders, in particular how they are becoming increasingly vocal about their support for Taiwan, recognizing its importance as a crucial player in global supply chains, especially in technology and semiconductors.

At such times, solidarity between democracies is becoming increasingly vital. The situation in Taiwan serves as a test for the international community. How countries respond to these tensions will not only shape regional dynamics, but will also influence the broader landscape of international relations in an era of rising geopolitical challenges.

Keywords: Conflict, Global Reaction, Geopolitics, Asia-Pacific

Introduction

The ongoing discord between the United States of America and the People's Republic of China concerning Taiwan constitutes a protracted geopolitical quandary, tracing its origins to the Chinese Civil War and persisting into the contemporary era. This intricate matter is regarded as a multifaceted issue, wherein beyond the three primary actors involved, namely the USA, China and Taiwan, the dispute has also drawn in various international actors in and from the region, creating a sort of "two camps", one supporting the position of the USA and, implicitly, Taiwan, and the other supporting that of China.

The relationship between the two states has been characterised by fluctuations in the intensity of their interactions, with periods of apparent détente interspersed with those of heightened tension. However, the recent escalation of the conflict has been attributed to the increasing military presence of China on the island, which has led to the imposition of a state of alert. This development is a response to China's growing aspiration to reunite with Taiwan, a stance that, from China's perspective, may necessitate the use of force to achieve.

The global reactions to the conflict are diverse and complex, and are largely dependent on alliances and interests. The most vocal international actors involved

in the conflict are the Asia Pacific states, such as Japan and Australia. However, various international organisations that have expressed their opinions and taken certain measures or positions, such as the European Union or the United Nations Organization, can also be brought into the discussion.

A discussion and analysis of global reactions to this conflict is an essential component in comprehending its severity and anticipating its potential evolution, given the escalating tension of the situation. The present article therefore seeks to shed light on these aspects that can be considered vital in the case of such a conflict, offering a complex, in-depth picture of it.

A concise overview of the historical progression of the conflict, commencing from its genesis and continuing until the present moment

In order to comprehend the overall implications of this conflict, it is necessary to establish a foundation of understanding and to construct a coherent narrative that follows a logical progression of events.

The initial focus will be an overview of the conflict, commencing from its genesis and the subsequent broad unfolding of the events up to the present. This will be followed by an analysis of the positions of the key actors involved, and the underlying factors that motivate them to perpetuate the conflict, as well as an examination of their current positions, including Taiwan's perspective.

The ongoing territorial and political dispute between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (Taiwan) can be traced back to the Chinese Civil War of 1949. The aftermath of the war saw the defeated Nationalist (Kuomintang) government evacuate the mainland and relocate its administration to Taiwan. Since then, Taiwan has never been under the direct authority of China, yet China continues to assert its claim to Taiwan and the two sides remain in a state of contested status. The PRC asserts that Taiwan is an integral part of China and that reunification is imperative (*Global Conflict Tracker*, 2024).

The United States' involvement in the conflict between China and Taiwan followed the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950. At that time, American leaders regarded China as a threat to East Asian peace and stability, and to Taiwan, which they viewed as an ally in the fight against Asian communism in general

POLITICAL STUDIES FORUM

and China in particular. In turn, Chinese leaders viewed the United States as a threat to their regime, especially due to its support for Taiwan. This dynamic marked the beginning of a more pronounced future conflict between the two states concerning Taiwan (*Global Conflict Tracker*, 2024).

Following this occurrence, a sequence of events took place in the Taiwan Strait, with the United States playing a pivotal role. This sequence of events is commonly referred to as the Taiwan Strait Crisis, and it is widely acknowledged that it resulted in significant influence on the future relations between China and the United States, as well as the overall security in the region.

In an effort to assert its territorial claim over Taiwan, the People's Republic of China initiated military action by bombing the islands of Kinmen and Matsu, which were under the control of the Republic of China, in 1954. This event subsequently led to the escalation of tensions, culminating in the First Taiwan Strait Crisis. In response, the United States committed to defending the island by passing the Formosa Resolution and signing a Mutual Defense Treaty with Taiwan. The Formosa Resolution, enacted by the US Congress in January 1955 as tensions escalated, authorised President Dwight D. Eisenhower to undertake the requisite measures to protect Taiwan and its territory. This resolution led to a de-escalation of hostilities, as evidenced by the cessation of bombings on Kinmen and Matsu by the People's Liberation Army by May 1955. Despite sporadic military confrontations persisting, this crisis laid the foundation for future hostilities and unresolved issues between China and Taiwan (Office of the Historian, n.d.).

The People's Republic of China resumed hostilities in 1958 by launching a major offensive against Kinmen and Matsu using heavy artillery. In response, the United States provided crucial military support to Taiwan, demonstrating a resolute commitment to safeguarding the islands. Following weeks of intense combat, China declared a unilateral ceasefire in September 1958. While this action strengthened America's determination to defend Taiwan, tensions across the Taiwan Strait remained unresolved (Office of the Historian, n.d.).

Following the occurrence of the previously mentioned event, a subsequent event became pivotal in establishing a more robust relationship between the United States and Taiwan, without compromising the interests of China.

POLITICAL STUDIES FORUM

In 1979, the United States established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, yet this did not result in a reconciliation of the Taiwan issue.

Nevertheless the formal recognition, the United States was keen to maintain its relationship with Taiwan, and therefore passed the resolution entitled the Taiwan Relations Act in 1979. The Act asserted that any alteration in the status of Taiwan by any means other than peaceful means would be regarded as "a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and [a] grave concern to the United States." This signified the United States' commitment to safeguarding Taiwan. Subsequently, the Taiwan Relations Act established the legal framework for the "informal" relations between Taiwan and the United States (Cal, 2010).

It is also significant to note that this was the moment of implementation of the "One China" policy, whereby the United States formally recognised the government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legitimate authority in China.

Following the series of events described above, the relationship between China and Taiwan has deteriorated significantly. This is primarily due to China's opposition to the notion of Taiwanese independence, with the country viewing any form of support for Taiwanese independence as a direct challenge to its sovereignty. This has resulted in a series of military posturing and threats directed towards Taiwan. Conversely, the relationship between Taiwan and the US has been characterised by a progressive strengthening of economic cooperation between the two nations.

In order to proceed, it is vital to also consider the perspectives of the key players involved, namely the United States, China and Taiwan.

The first major player to take the stage is the United States of America. Up to this point, the US has had a major interest in Taiwan, and some might ask why? Why is the US willing to risk a conflict with China over Taiwan? What is so special about Taiwan? To this day, the main argument is not known precisely, but over the years there have been a number of reasons that have been extracted.

As soon as the Taiwan Relations Act was enacted, US-Taiwan relations experienced a major development and support, which, although considered unofficial, was significant over time. Throughout the subsequent US administrations and up to the present day, the nature of US support for Taiwan has become increasingly clear.

POLITICAL STUDIES FORUM

Since the inauguration of President George W. Bush in 2001, there has been an evident strengthening of US support for Taiwan. The initial phase of this relationship was characterised by the recognition of Taiwan's significance to the US, particularly in terms of its role as an economic partner and a pivotal technological supply chain. Subsequent administrations have further consolidated this relationship, notably during the periods of the Obama and Trump administrations, which saw the approval of arms and weapons sales to Taiwan, thereby enhancing Taiwan's defence capabilities. Furthermore, President Biden asserted that the United States' relations with Taiwan remain strong (Blackwill and Zelikow, 2021).

In addition to these aspects, the US also has a strategic interest in supporting Taiwan, as it is located in an important, albeit somewhat vulnerable, area for the United States. The US needs Taiwan in order to maintain its influence in the Indo-Pacific region, along with other allies.

A close examination of US allies in the Indo-Pacific region reveals the formation of two island chains, which, to some extent, could serve as protective barriers in the event of China seeking to extend its influence. In this context, the strategic significance of Taiwan as an island state becomes evident, situated as it is at the centre of the first island chain, connecting South Korea, Japan and the Philippines, all of which are states with which the US enjoys a positive and friendly relationship. Therefore, it can be deduced that as long as Taiwan successfully resists China, it will further bolster US interests. A second island chain, extending from Japan to the US territories in Guam and finally to the islands of Micronesia, is also of significance. In the event of Taiwan being overtaken by China, the second island chain would become more accessible, thereby enabling China to exert a more substantial influence over the US (Hille and Sevastopulo, 2024).

It can therefore be stated that the commitment of the United States with regard to Taiwan is a combination of three factors. Firstly, there is the geopolitical interest, secondly there is the economic significance and finally, there is the deterrence of possible aggression.

The subsequent pivotal player is China, which seeks to assert its dominance over Taiwan and perceives all American involvement as a potential threat to its interests.

The relationship between China and Taiwan could be described as complex and delicate, given the uncertainties that have prevailed over the years. The primary motivations behind China's aspirations regarding Taiwan can be attributed to its perception of Taiwan as an integral component of its national identity and its assertion of sovereignty over the island. From China's perspective, the process of reunification with Taiwan is regarded as a pivotal element in the restoration of China's historical grandeur and territorial integrity.

The "1992 Consensus" is widely considered to have played a pivotal role in the development of the relationship between China and Taiwan. This consensus, an agreement between the two parties, stipulated the adherence of both states to the "One China" policy, whilst also allowing for independent interpretation of this policy. The Consensus subsequently served as the foundation for cross-strait exchanges (Wei, 2015).

However, this consensus has generated diverse opinions over the years among past administrations, especially in Taiwan. The "1992 Consensus" functioned as a quite ambiguous yet pragmatic basis for cross-strait relations between China and Taiwan, particularly during periods when the Kuomintang held power in Taiwan.

Following Tsai Ing-wen's electoral victory as President of Taiwan in 2016, the "1992 Consensus,, was subjected to substantial reevaluation, thereby giving rise to a marked escalation in the level of contention surrounding its role in cross-strait relations. Tsai Ing-wen and the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) have called into question the legitimacy of the "1992 Consensus" as the basis for cross-strait relations, by refusing to formally endorse it. The DPP contests the notion that both sides of the Taiwan Strait are part of "One China" and has never acknowledged the "1992 Consensus,,. The notion that it was associated with "one country, two systems" was something they found unacceptable (Rigger, 2016).

The failure of Tsai Ing-wen to support the "1992 Consensus,, resulted in China severing official ties with Taiwan. This was followed by an escalation in the form of political, military, and economic pressure after her election in 2016 . Beijing maintains that the "1992 Consensus", which embodies the "One China Principle,, is the sole basis for acceptable ties . The rejection by China of Tsai's alternative proposals, and the subsequent association by China of the

"1992 Consensus" with the "one country, two systems" framework, resulted in increased tensions and a frozen cross-strait relationship (Grossman, 2016).

Moreover, throughout the years and up to the present day, the People's Republic of China has persistently exerted pressure on Taiwan, employing a range of diplomatic, economic and military strategies. This has served to intensify the prospect of armed conflict in the region, particularly in light of the ongoing military activities in the vicinity of the island.

In order to provide a comprehensive overview of the situation, it is essential to consider the Taiwanese perspective on the matter, encompassing the ongoing Chinese presence and the support provided by the United States.

The geopolitical dynamics of Taiwan are interconnected with both China and the United States, thereby establishing a complex triangular relationship.

The issue of Taiwan's relations with China is of particular relevance in the context of contemporary geopolitics. The government of Taiwan is committed to preserving the status quo and has adopted a policy of engaging in dialogue with China without preconditions. However, this approach does not align with the "one country, two systems" framework proposed by Beijing, which seeks to establish a unified system in both Taiwan and mainland China. The recently elected President of Taiwan, Lai Ching-te, has expressed a desire to initiate equal and dignified negotiations, but has also identified Beijing's reluctance to resume formal interactions as a significant impediment to progress (Yang, 2025).

In the context of the United States, there are certain particularities that must be taken into consideration. Taiwan's commitment to the alliance with the United States is underpinned by a shared commitment to prevent Chinese aggression. This commitment has resulted in increased defence expenditures and initiatives to strengthen economic relations with the United States. However, there is also recognition of the possibility of a shift in U.S. policies, particularly during the transition to a second Trump administration, which necessitates adaptability and careful preparation. Concerns have been raised regarding the validity of U.S. security pledges and the possibility of Taiwan being held financially responsible for its own defence. Notwithstanding these concerns, Taiwan remains committed to its long-term alliance with the United States, founded on shared ideals and objectives (Chausovsky, 2025).

From concern to action: an insight into the strategies employed by Asia-Pacific countries in dealing with the ongoing situation concerning Taiwan

The ongoing escalation of tensions in the Taiwan Strait has led to a state of heightened tension in Asia-Pacific countries. This geopolitical climate has placed these nations in a challenging position, characterised by diplomatic sensitivities, security implications, and economic prospects. While there is a general consensus on the necessity of peace and stability in the region, there is considerable divergence of opinion regarding the causes of the conflict's escalation and the optimal course of action to pursue.

Taking these aspects into account, certain nations in the region play a particularly important role in balancing the dynamics of the conflict between the two superpowers: the US and China. Among these, three countries stand out in particular due to their strategic positioning in the Asia-Pacific area, which is vital to maintain stability and security in the region, namely Japan, Australia and India. Their geographical proximity, together with their military capabilities, can counter China's growing influence. In addition, these countries are also part of various alliances that enhance their capabilities to respond to potential threats, which brings back into focus the importance of international cooperation in order to maintain peace and stability, especially in areas with a huge potential for escalating tensions.

Japan has assumed a more vocal role in the ongoing discussion surrounding the geopolitical tensions between China, the USA and Taiwan in recent years, emerging as a prominent regional actor in this regard.

The political relationship between Tokyo and Taipei has historically been characterised by a reluctance to support Taiwan openly, due to the potential repercussions on diplomatic relations with Beijing, a major trading partner. However, there have been growing concerns about China's increasingly assertive behaviour and its implications for regional stability, as well as Japan's own security. This has led to a notable shift in both tone and policy. Japan now increasingly perceives Taiwan as a pivotal strategic partner and a shared value of democracy. In light of this evolving stance, China has expressed strong reactions. The People's Republic of China regards any increase in Japanese involvement in Taiwan as a cause of significant discomfort on account of the fact that it is viewed as a disturbing reminder of its imperialist past (Bowes, 2024).

POLITICAL STUDIES FORUM

In the context of the recent developments in the area that have given rise to the potential for conflict, Japan has taken several actions.

The primary action that has been taken is the implementation of an enhanced security posture, which has resulted in a reconfiguration of the defence strategy. Japan's approach to the Taiwan issue, viewed from a security perspective, is characterised by a commitment to bolster its defence spending. This substantial increase in expenditure is indicative of Japan's strategic intent to enhance its territorial defence capabilities and to ensure its capacity to fulfil its defence obligations as an ally of the United States in the event of a major crisis over Taiwan. A notable example of this commitment is Japan's decision to exceed its self-imposed limit of 1% of GDP for defence spending in 2021. Furthermore, Japan possesses advanced capabilities in the areas of missile defence, surveillance and anti-submarine warfare (Sacks, 2022).

In a secondary capacity, Japan is engaged in collaborative effort with the United States to enhance the efficacy of strategic deterrence and to engage in preparatory measures for potential crisis. This collaborative effort encompasses the advancement of joint strategic planning at the operational level, with an objective to fortify the United States-Japan alliance as a foundational element of regional security.

The U.S.-Japan alliance continues to serve as the fundamental basis for maintaining peace, security, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region. Both nations have expressed a mutual aspiration for enhanced bilateral security and defense collaboration, as outlined in the provisions of the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, with the objective of strengthening these partnerships to an unprecedented degree. Furthermore, during the 2025 meeting between President Trump and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the United States positioned itself as a defender of Japan in the event of conflict, pledging to utilise all available capabilities, including the nuclear option (The White House, 2025).

It is also important to note here the presence of the Quad, which is an organisation comprising Japan, Australia, India and the United States. The primary concern of this organisation is to maintain stability in the Asia-Pacific region. In January 2025, the foreign ministers of the preceding countries participated in a meeting in Washington, during which they addressed concerns

regarding China's escalating influence. The subjects discussed at the meeting highlighted the importance of security in all domains, indicating a shift towards explicit security cooperation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2025).

Furthermore, Australia is a key player in the region, with a growing vocal presence in the context of the conflict. The nation faces a multifaceted challenge in navigating its economic relations with China and its security alliance with the United States, while also maintaining a neutral stance on China's position regarding Taiwan. In light of the current geopolitical climate, characterised by rising uncertainties and heightened tensions, Australia seeks to de-escalate the situation, while concurrently enhancing its defence capabilities and collaborating with regional allies to deter potential aggression in the Indo-Pacific region.

Whilst Australia is less geographically vulnerable than Taiwan or Japan in relation to China, this does not imply that it should be less prepared. In the wake of China's actions in the Asia-Pacific region, Australia's newly published National Defence Strategy, released in April 2024, has undergone a reorganisation of its defence priorities, with the objective of deterrence being elevated to the highest priority. This strategic shift indicates a move towards a more proactive approach to conflict prevention, with the aim of deterring China from any attempts at coercion or incursion (Caloca, 2024).

A notable development in Australia's foreign policy has been the strengthening of its alliance with the United States. The United States of America and Australia have been collaborating to enhance their strategic integration, progressing from general cooperation to the establishment of a coordinated response to potential Chinese aggression. This aim entails the delineation of specific roles and missions for American and Australian forces, the enhancement of interoperability, and the prioritisation of deterrence. This evolution in their strategic approach signifies a shift towards a more proactive and coordinated approach to regional security, as evidenced by the signing of various agreements, including the 2014 U.S.-Australia Force Posture Agreement and the 2021 AUKUS partnership (U.S. Department of State, 2024).

The AUKUS partnership, comprising Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom, is a potential exemplar of an alliance that is likely to be among the most effective in deterring China and defending the Asia-Pacific region. The

strategy is composed of two pillars. The first pillar focuses on the acquisition and development of conventionally armed nuclear-powered submarines for the Royal Australian Navy, while the second pillar emphasises collaboration on advanced capabilities involving technology and information sharing. The success of AUKUS would serve to bolster stability in the Asia-Pacific region by deterring China's expanding military influence. Moreover, it could potentially consolidate a security-oriented paradigm (Kahn, 2023).

A pivotal issue for Australia is the emergence of China's assertive presence in the Coral Sea, which could be perceived as a potential catalyst for conflict, thereby necessitating the reinforcement of its alliance network and the articulation of a robust opposition to China.

The situation in the Coral Sea exerts a substantial influence on Australia's overall security posture, predominantly due to its strategic location and the potential for Chinese grey zone tactics. The Coral Sea constitutes a pivotal maritime region situated to the north of Australia, and the maintenance of its security is imperative for the protection of Australia's northern approaches and overall sovereignty. In order to maintain a sufficient degree of security, Australia is obliged to enhance the military capabilities of the country as a whole, and in particular in the Coral Sea region. The purpose of this enhancement would be to provide a sufficient deterrent against the increasing influence of China. Additionally, the enhancement would be undertaken to strengthen the alliance with the United States and with other such alliances (Pettyjohn, 2024).

In considering the geopolitical dynamics of the region, it is important to acknowledge the pivotal role of India in the context of the ongoing conflict and its ramifications on regional states. The country's strategic positioning, coupled with its thriving economy and escalating military capabilities, signifies a multifaceted influence that can be interpreted as both a benefit and a potential challenge for both China and the United States.

The relationship between China and India has been characterised by periods of both cooperation and conflict, reflecting a complex dynamic. In recent years, there has been an observed enhancement in economic collaboration between the two nations, yet the primary source of discord remains the ongoing territorial dispute, which contributes to the fragility of their relationship. Since Xi Jinping's

ascension to the presidency in 2013, the India-China relationship has undergone a significant transformation, characterised by a complex interplay of economic engagement and escalating tensions. A notable turning point in the relationship was the 2020 confrontation in the Galwan Valley of Ladakh, where both countries had massed tens of thousands of troops along their respective sections of the Line of Actual Control, leading to a notable deterioration in diplomatic relations and trust (Gokhale, 2022).

Over the years, the relationship between India and US has transformed, becoming a strong partnership, with defence and security cooperation playing a pivotal role in this development.

The United States considers India to be a significant defence collaborator in the region, with the primary objective of ensuring stability in the Asia-Pacific region and countering the growing influence of China. India's strategic importance in this region is indisputable. It is also worthy of note that India has strengthened its ties with a number of diverse US allies, including Japan and Australia. Furthermore, India is a participant in key alliances such as the Quad and the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity, which serve to further consolidate its position as a significant partner (Madan, 2024) .

In the context of India and Taiwan's bilateral relations, the nature of these interactions is characterised by a multifaceted and intricate web of economic, cultural, trade and strategic interdependencies. Despite India's adherence to the "One China,, policy, this has not been a impediment to the enhancement of their partnership over time. The geopolitical dynamics of the region have given rise to a shared concern among India and Taiwan regarding the limitation of China's influence in the region. This common concern has resulted in a strengthening of the relations between the two countries, but given India's adherence to the "One China,, policy, which stipulates that it can only establish official diplomatic relations with China, the scope for further collaboration has some limits (Pratnashree and Bhowmick, 2025).

International Organisations Response to the Taiwan Dilemma

The geopolitical situation surrounding Taiwan is of concern not only to the involved actors in the immediate vicinity, but is also exerting a global influence.

In addition to the responses of the Asia-Pacific states to the China-US conflict over Taiwan, it is of interest to analyse the reactions of the major international organisations to ascertain the implications at their level.

However, in this particular instance, the situation is more delicate due to China's involvement from the beginning of this ongoing dispute. This involvement has ensured that Taiwan's recognition on the international stage, particularly within major international organisations, is constrained or not possible.

Firstly, there is the United Nations. At the time of its formation, China was among the founding members of the organisation, meaning that both China and Taiwan were part of the United Nations. However, following the separation of Taiwan from the mainland, China asserted that Taiwan's membership of the organisation should be terminated.

On 25 October 1971, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 2758, which resulted in the People's Republic of China being reinstated as the legitimate representative of China within the UN, while the Republic of China (Taiwan) was expelled. This development consequently led to Taiwan's exclusion from a significant number of prominent international organisations, including UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank, the Red Cross, and numerous others (deLisle and Glaser, 2024).

Since that time, Taiwan has made repeated attempts to re-establish its position within the United Nations framework. However, the People's Republic of China has consistently opposed these efforts. A notable turning point in this ongoing diplomatic saga occurred in 2007, when Taiwan adopted a more assertive stance towards its aspirations of membership within the UN. This shift in Taiwan's diplomatic approach resulted in a strong reaction from both China and the UN. Therefore, the UN rejected these efforts and, ultimately, the representatives of the People's Republic of China are recognised as the sole legitimate representatives of China to the United Nations (deLisle and Glaser, 2024).

An important moment in Taiwan's history related to its admission to the UN was at the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly in 2024. The primary objective of Taiwan's involvement was to promote enhanced international comprehension of UNGA Resolution 2758, underscoring the fact that the resolution makes no reference to Taiwan or any assertion that Taiwan is

part of China (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024). However, a concrete answer on this issue, despite support or criticism, has not been given.

In spite of all this, Taiwan's future regarding its relationship with the UN and the possibility of resuming its place within the organization remains complex. The most important factor, and the one on which its future is most decided, ultimately remains its relationship with China and the present conflict.

Secondly, even in the absence of geographical proximity to the conflict, an important international organization is represented by the European Union, for which the conflict between China and the United States over Taiwan has become over the years a topic of interest for European leaders. Because of its complex role as an economic power, the European Union wants to define its geopolitical position between these two superpowers.

The European Union officially adheres to the "One China" policy, recognising the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of China. However, this policy has not interrupted the development of partnership and cooperation between the EU and Taiwan in several areas. The EU also acknowledges Taiwan's economic strength, particularly in the technology sector, and Taiwan's World Trade Organisation membership has strengthened the relationship between the two. In addition, the EU supports human rights and democracy and stands alongside Taiwan on various related issues (European Economic and Trade Office in Taiwan, 2024).

Due to China's increasingly aggressive stance towards Taiwan through various military provocations, the European Parliament has decided that it is time to take a firmer stance on the potential conflict. As a result, the European Parliament has formally denounced China's aggressive actions, marking a pivotal moment for the European Union. It also represents a new opportunity for the two to further advance their current partnerships, which is a win-win situation for both sides (Gargiulo, 2024).

Also an important factor for this conflict is the rapprochement between the US and the EU, in particular, on the Indo-Pacific strategy, also recalling the importance of maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. In 2023, the US and the EU issued a new EU-US Summit Joint Statement reflecting the interests of both parties. In principle, this statement describes the support

of the two powers for the maintenance of peace in the Taiwan Strait and their condemnation of China's actions (European Council, 2023).

The EU's approach to the US-China conflict over Taiwan can be seen as complex, but all emphasise the importance of peace and stability in the region and seek to maintain its strategic interests without further escalation of conflict.

Thirdly, there is the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) which is a pivotal organisation in the Southeast Asian region, with the potential to play a crucial role in the ongoing tensions between the United States and China concerning Taiwan. Historically, ASEAN has positioned itself as a mediator between these major powers, aiming to preserve regional stability without aligning with any of the conflicting parties. Their main aim is to maintain good ties with both key players in order to keep the peace in the region. However, the ongoing discord has the potential to negatively impact this dynamic (Shuxian, 2021).

The ASEAN collective acknowledges the "One China" policy, yet its constituent states maintain bilateral relations with Taiwan via economic and cultural interactions, while concomitantly acknowledging the sovereignty of the People's Republic of China.

Relations between ASEAN and China can be called complex and multifaceted. Over the years, in particular, the two have continued to maintain and develop good economic relations, each becoming the largest partners, with economic exchanges becoming ever greater. In addition, China's Belt and Road Initiative aligns with ASEAN's plans on connectivity, promoting regional integration through specific projects benefiting individual member states (Mission of the People's Republic of China to ASEAN, 2024).

Over time, the US-ASEAN relationship has developed from a simple political dialog to a comprehensive strategic partnership. The main aim of these collaborations is to maintain stability in the region, while also taking into account the complexity of great power dynamics in Southeast Asia.

To further support this collaboration, over the years, the two have entered into various collaboration plans and partnerships, one of them being the ASEAN-U.S. Plan of Action 2021-2025, which further describes the main sectors in which the two will collaborate and how each aspect will be implemented. While this plan does not relate exactly to the Taiwan issue, it emphasizes principles

and commitments that are indirectly relevant to the broader context of regional stability, including Taiwan. The plan focuses on the strengthening of cooperation in several key areas, such as maritime security, economic integration and sustainable development, all of which are relevant to the geopolitical dynamics involving (Taiwan ASEAN-United States Strategic Partnership, 2021).

As mentioned above, although ASEAN adheres to the "One China" policy, various individual nations maintain economic and diplomatic relations with Taiwan, in particular the economic sector is much better developed. Taiwan's integration into ASEAN supply chains complements the region's economic structure, providing opportunities for collaboration. For example, from ranking fourth in 1990 to first in 2015 among Taiwan's top trading partners, ASEAN's status in the overall context of Taiwan's international trade activity has undergone a significant shift (Hoang, Truong and Dong, 2020).

The ASEAN position on the China-Taiwan conflict also reflects a cautious approach, emphasizing the principles of non-interference and regional stability. In addition, ASEAN expressed its concern over the rising tensions in the Taiwan Strait, particularly in light of China's increased military activities and aggressive rhetoric on reunification. This position is underscored by the joint statement issued during the retreat of ASEAN Foreign Ministers in Jakarta in 2023, which reiterated concern about the implications of developments in the Taiwan Strait for regional stability and the potential for serious confrontation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023).

All the mentioned organizations involved have as their main goal to maintain stability in the Southeast Asian area, especially in the Taiwan Strait, and also to limit China's actions, while maintaining good relations with both China and the US, as well as with Taiwan. All these partnerships and strategies can be considered both for their own benefit as well as for the benefit of all involved, with the avoidance of direct conflict being the main factor.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the conflict between the United States and China over Taiwan is a multifaceted issue, deeply rooted in historical, political and economic factors

that have a significant impact on regional and global dynamics. The potential for military conflict can become reality as China strengthens its capabilities, with serious implications for regional security and stability and the involvement of the United States.

The United States has long been pro-Taiwan for its democratic goals, but at the same time established a multifaceted relationship with China. Moreover, Taiwan is compelled to attempt to establish itself as an independent democracy, while facing extinction through China's reunification claims.

In view of this increasingly dynamic situation, key Asia-Pacific states such as Japan, Australia and India have felt the need to respond in line with their individual geopolitical interests.

On the one hand, Australia has strengthened its strategic partnership with the United States through initiatives such as AUKUS, while also emphasising regional stability. On the other hand, Japan, for its part, has adopted a more proactive stance on enhancing its defence capabilities and strengthening security ties with both the US and Taiwan. India, meanwhile, has adopted a nuanced approach, engaging with the US while also maintaining its historical ties with China.

Furthermore, international organisations such as the United Nations, the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations play pivotal roles in addressing the Taiwan dilemma, yet face significant challenges, due to the interference of China.

It is clear that we are at a crucial moment in international relations. The implications of these tensions go far beyond the Taiwan Strait, affecting global security, economic stability and diplomatic relations between nations. Global actors' responses reveal a landscape of caution and complexity as nations manage their interests amid growing uncertainty.

Prioritizing dialogue and cooperation over confrontation is essential to promote peace and stability in the region. The future of the US-China relationship - and the broader international order - depends on our collective ability to address these challenges head-on.

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