**U.S. - Taiwan Relationship**

Taiwan and the United States have an agreeable relationship. Taiwan is an incredible powerhouse and a leading democracy in the Indo-Pacific, which makes it a key U.S ally (Bolton & Zitelman, 2021). The relationship between the U.S and Taiwan has a historical context that dates back to the Second World War and the Cold War. The relationship between the two nations is unofficial since the U.S does not recognize Taiwan as an independent nation. The U.S acknowledges that Taiwan has allegiance to the People's Republic of China (Rigger, 2012). Nevertheless, both countries share economic and commercial links, values, and solid interpersonal ties. Taiwan is essential for the U.S due to trade, geostrategic importance, and democratic policies.

**Why Taiwan Is Important to the U.S.**

Taiwan has strong economic relations with the U.S. Statistics assert that Taiwan ranks number eight amongst U.S trading partners, while Taiwan holds the U.S as its second largest partner in trade (Bolton & Zitelman, 2021). Taiwan has advanced in its economy, and in 2021, economists estimated that the nation contributed $786 billion in services and goods (Witte, 2022). The U.S benefits from Taiwan's economic prosperity through the creation of economic opportunities. In 2019, U.S. exports of services and goods to Taiwan boosted about 188,000 jobs in America (Bolton & Zitelman, 2021). Direct trade between the two nations is characterized by wholesale trade, depository institutions, and manufacturing. It is interesting to note that Taiwan is the leading supplier of nonconductors to the U.S. The strong trade relationship between the two nations makes Taiwan important to the U.S.

Secondly, Taiwan has geostrategic importance to the U.S. After the Cold War, U.S. military planners acknowledged the significance of Taiwan's geographical positioning. Its proximity to China and the U.S evokes interest from both nations. The U.S can use Taiwan as a military base to attack China. PRC (People's Republic of China) can use Taiwan to attack the U.S. Hence, and if China takes control of Taiwan, it will use it as a forward base, extending its missile and aircraft range to around 150 nautical miles, enabling it to intercept and strike targets in Guam and Japan easily (Roy, 2011). The U.S forces would be under threat of attack as China would push them further afield, and their bases would be susceptible to PRC aircraft and missile attacks. It is, therefore, crucial for the U.S to protect Taiwan as a measure of checking China's military excesses.

Thirdly, Taiwan is critical to the U.S since it is a testimony that democracy can exist in nations near mainland China and among mandarin speaking populations. America values democracy and democratic morals, and the globe is competing between autocracies and democracies. Both democratic and autocratic nations are determined to spread their policies and administrative systems worldwide. The U.S is therefore keen to support Taiwan, which advocates for a democratic administration or government through multiparty. Scholars aver that China fears Taiwan's democracy, which is common knowledge for Americans (Rigger, 2012). Therefore, Americans view Taiwan's democracy as a threat to America's policies. Hence, Taiwan is vital to the U.S since it is a testimony of democracy thriving at the heart of aristocratic administrations.

**The Role of the U.S in the Taiwan and China Conflict**

The U.S. involvement or role in the Taiwan-Chinese war has a historical context. There have been numerous treaties between the U.S. and Taiwan. The U.S. vowed to protect Taiwan in case of military intrusion by the People's Republic of China (U.S Department of State, 2022). Nevertheless, the pact did not auger well with the PRC, and they pushed for the U.S recognition that Taiwan was part of China. Since the U.S. wanted a peaceful relationship with the PRC, they avowed not to have official involvement with the Taiwanese government in the 1950 treaty. However, in 1979, Congress formulated the Taiwan Relations Act, which fostered ties between the Taiwanese and the Americans (Maizland, 2022). The Act compelled the U.S. president to defend Taiwan if PRC used force against Taiwan. The Chinese have continuously heightened their military activities in Taiwan, and the U.S. feels compelled to step in and defend Taiwan through military action. Chinese also felt antagonized by the U.S. after the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Pelosi, visited and met Taiwan government officials (Witte, 2022). It is undeniable that both the U.S and China have violated their agreement regarding Taiwan, and they are likely to go to war over the Island.

The U.S. plays a significant role in the Taiwan and China conflict by arming and preparing Taiwan for defense against PRC's invasion. The U.S. government has continuously supplied Taiwan with military weapons, which would enable the state to defend itself against PRC. The U.S.'s sale of weapons to Taiwan rose ominously during President Trump's tenure in office. President Trump sold Taiwan arms worth over $18 billion, and his successor, President Joe Biden, has continued with the reliable supply of arms to the Taiwan army (Maizland, 2022). Beijing is not comfortable with the U.S. supply of arms to Taiwan, and the PRC is likely to flex its military strength by attacking Taiwan. Since the U.S is aware that Taiwan cannot match PRC's military strength, they have a strategic ambiguity to come to Taiwan's aid in case of an attack.

In brief, PRC views Taiwan as part of mainland China, whereas Taiwan proclaims it is a sovereign state. The U.S. is determined to assist Taiwan in maintaining sovereignty and democracy. PRC treats the U.S. as an impediment to retaking Taiwan, while the U.S. argue that PRC is a threat to democracy. The control of Taiwan creates hostility between PRC and the U.S.

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