

French professor says Beijing stuck in wartime values

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The loss of El Salvador as a diplomatic ally to China has confirmed that Chinese decisionmakers are far from adopting modern values of cooperation, tolerance and mutually beneficial gains, a French specialist in cross-strait relations said on Tuesday.

The way the Chinese decisionmakers deal with Taiwan and the Taiwan issue worldwide “remains entrenched in pre-Second World War [WW2] values of sheer force, brutal diplomacy, territorial conquest and crude national interests,” said Stephane Corcuff, a professor of political science at France’s Lyon University.

In the latest move to squeeze Taiwan, El Salvador on Tuesday switched its recognition from the Republic of China (ROC), a relationship established in 1933, to China, forcing Taiwan to announce the termination of the relationship.

Corcuff said that when China was represented by the ROC at the UN, it helped with the construction of a positive international society by contributing to the drafting of the UN charter and to the International Declaration of Human Rights.

“Today’s China is embodying the return of authoritarianism, the radical dismissal of humanism and the negation of progressive values in international society worldwide,” Corcuff said in an e-mailed reply. “It is inciting a growing number of countries to do so by showing a terrible example.”

The ROC lost its seat at the UN after the body’s General Assembly passed Resolution No. 2758 in 1971 that recognizes the People’s Republic of China (PRC) as the only lawful representative of China to the UN.

Since President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) of the Democratic Progressive Party took office in May 2016, Taiwan has lost five allies — Sao Tome and Principe, Panama, the Dominican Republic, Burkina Faso and El Salvador — which have been lured away by financial incentives offered by China.

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Corcuff said that by taking away Taiwan's diplomatic allies, "China will only further alienate Taiwan's population."

"China understands only force. It is not only in great opposition to the values that founded the world system after WW2, but also to its own traditional philosophical and cultural system of wisdom, from which the whole world could benefit," he said.

"Alas, China is the No. 1 country to reject them and, in place, sends terrible signs in terms of its political values and international views," he said. "We still hope that China one day will be free from tyranny, terminate these policies and come to terms with Taiwan on a mutually beneficial basis."

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