

UN's 1971 resolution irrelevant

Written by Taipei Times Editorial
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UN General Assembly Resolution 2758 has nothing to do with Taiwan, and it is downright despicable of China to attempt to obscure the issue by linking the resolution to its false claim that Taiwan is a part of China.

Adopted by the UN General Assembly on Oct. 25, 1971, Resolution 2758 recognized the People's Republic of China (PRC) as the sole legal government of China, replacing the Republic of China (ROC).

The exact wording is: "[The UN decides] to expel forthwith the representatives of Chiang Kai-shek [蔣介石] from the place which they unlawfully occupy at the UN and in all the organizations related to it."

By unseating "the second China," then represented by Chiang's regime, what the resolution accomplished was resolving the question of the right of who represented China. Nowhere in the resolution is Taiwan mentioned; it did not address the issue of Taiwan's representation, let alone explicitly or implicitly recognize the PRC's territorial claim to Taiwan.

Thus the WHO's wrongful interpretation of the resolution in favor of China over Taiwan, as evidenced by its mention of the resolution and the "one China" principle in its invitation to Taiwan to attend the World Health Assembly (WHA) this month, is ultimately shameful.

The invitation to "Dr Chiang" — Minister of Health and Welfare Chiang Been-huang (蔣經國) — from WHO Director-General Margaret Chan (陳Margaret Chan), includes the phrase "recalling the UN General Assembly Resolution 2758 (XXVI) and WHA Resolution 25.1 [which expelled the ROC from the WHO in 1972] and in line with the 'one China' principle as reflected therein."

The incident comes across as yet another brazenly sneaky attempt by Beijing to distort the resolution as it tries to justify its territorial claims over Taiwan.

This is not the first time China, via the hands of others, has employed such a dirty trick in its

attempts to tie Taiwan's hands and deny Taiwan an international presence.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in July 2007 rejected Taiwan's UN membership application by repeating Beijing's claim that "Taiwan is an inalienable part of China's territory." He cited UN Resolution 2758 and added: "In accordance with that resolution, the United Nations considers Taiwan for all purposes to be an integral part of the People's Republic of China."

The US objected to Ban's distorted reasoning and Washington "urged the UN Secretariat to review its policy on the status of Taiwan and to avoid taking sides in a sensitive matter on which UN members have agreed to disagree for over 35 years."

"If the UN Secretariat insists on describing Taiwan as a part of the PRC, or on using nomenclature for Taiwan that implies such status, the United States will be obliged to disassociate itself on a national basis from such a position. It is crystal clear of US policy on Taiwan," it added.

In 2011, then-US secretary of health and human services Kathleen Sebelius spoke up for Taiwan, saying that no UN agency had the right to unilaterally determine Taiwan's status.

Indeed, no single international organization, the UN included, can unilaterally decide Taiwan's standing, nor should China be given the ultimate say on the international stage to unilaterally decide Taiwan's participation in global organizations.

However, it can be expected that China will continue trying to trick the international community into believing that Resolution 2758 binds Taiwan to it.

The incoming Democratic Progressive Party administration must heed the impact of Beijing's distorted reasoning and take care not to give the international community any idea that it is acceptable to have Resolution 2758 made applicable to contemporary Taiwan.

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