

UGAMUNC XXIV

GA 4

Dear Delegates,

It’s my pleasure to welcome you all the to the twenty-fourth annual UGA Model United Nations Conference, UGAMUNC XXIV. Whether you discover a topic that could lead to your future career path, or whether you simply learn more about how a committee of the UN runs, I’m excited to see you in action! As delegates of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, the UN General Assembly Fourth Committee, you’ll be debating a broad range of topics, representing your delegation with the goal of finding diplomatic solutions to global issues that serve both your interests as a nation and the greater interests of the world as a whole.

But before we get into the thick of things, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Meredith Van De Velde ([meredithvandevelde@uga.edu](mailto:meredithvandevelde@uga.edu)), and I am a first-year International Affairs and Computer Science double major here at UGA. I’ve been involved in Model UN for four years, including several conferences at the college level, including representing Israel at the National Model UN Conference in New York, among other conferences and delegations. After graduation, I hope to use my majors to work in Intelligence for the U.S. government, namely in the field of cybersecurity. Although I do have a pretty busy schedule, in my free time, I enjoy hiking, volunteering at the local humane society, and baking (and eating) desserts.

I would also like to introduce my co-chair for the conference, Daisy Gonzalez ([dg51648@uga.edu](mailto:dg51648@uga.edu)). Daisy is a third year International Affairs and Political Science major. This is her first year competing in Model UN, but she already feels at home. After graduation, Daisy plans to attend law school with a concentration in environmental law to ultimately work at a think tank or the Environmental Protection Agency (if it survives the current administration). Although Daisy is new to Model UN, she is no stranger to the world of debate. She has represented the United States in Spain at the World Universities Debating Championship in Spanish (CMUDE) as well as competitions in Jamaica, Guatemala, and New York in British Parliamentary style debate. When she is not drowning in homework or at practice, you can find Daisy destroying clothes in a failed attempt to DIY or making terribly shaped flower pots at Good Clay in Athens.

We know that you’ll all do a fantastic job representing your delegation and working to bring solutions to some of our world’s greatest problems. If you have any questions please don’t hesitate to contact us. From now until the conference, start researching! The more you know about your delegation, your committee, and these topics, the more prepared you will be, and the more likely you are to win an award for your school. We can’t wait to see you all in action. Once again, welcome to UGAMUNC XXIV!

Sincerely,

Meredith Van De Velde

Chair, GA 4

History of the General Assembly, Fourth Committee:

Special Political and Decolonization

Following World War II, the world felt a need to bring about peace as before, but with a stronger means of enforcement and accountability than before. On October 24, 1945, the United Nations was created. The General Assembly of the United Nations is the main body. All 192 member nations have a seat and a vote in the General Assembly of the UN, making it the largest UN body.[[1]](#footnote-1) This allows its purpose to expand as states need, creating a more general assembly than a council specified with a task. It also allows for equal voice by every state, large or small, on a multilateral discussion of a full spectrum of global issues.[[2]](#footnote-2) Some duties of the UN General Assembly include reviewing reports from the Security Council and Economic and Social Council, making recommendations on international policy cooperation, and approving the Secretary General in conjunction with the Security Council.

Furthermore, the UN General Assembly is broken down into six committees, each with a different area of emphasis. The General Assembly Fourth Committee focuses on Special Political and Decolonization matters. Until 1993, the committee focused solely on decolonization, but after the 48th session, it adopted the Special Political Committee as a part of itself.[[3]](#footnote-3) For each session, the Fourth Committee submits all discussed agenda items, in addition to a comprehensive review of peacekeeping operations. This report is then edited into a final draft, and voted on in the plenary session.

Some issues that fall under the scope of the General Assembly Fourth Committee include the effects of atomic radiation, the Report of the Special Committee on Israeli Practices, international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, a comprehensive review of Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions, and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).[[4]](#footnote-4) While some of these topics are related to decolonization, others are incredibly different, due to the change in the nature of decolonization today from the founding of the UN. As a result, the General Assembly Fourth Committee is one of the broadest committees in the UN, focused not only on settling, once and for all, the issue of colonization, but looking to the future and our increasingly technology-based world.

Delegates should have an understanding of the variety of issues debated in the General Assembly Fourth Committee, as well as the topics that are out of the committee’s scope. The Fourth Committee has come to represent the adaptive nature of the UN as a body, and it demonstrates how issues are connected. The topics up for debate at this year’s conference are unique, but there are always common threads between them. Delegates must debate the topics at hand to attempt to solve these issues before they create greater problems.

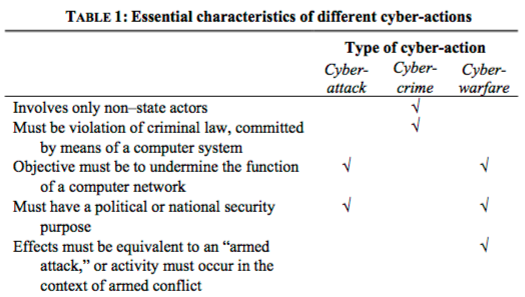
**I. Methods for Handling Cyber Warfare**

**Introduction**

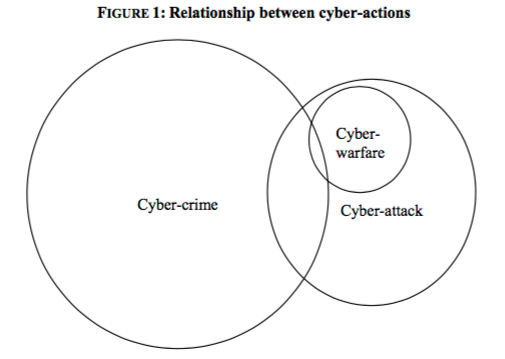
Our increasingly developing world has become incredibly reliant on technology through the rise of a “digital age.” This can be seen both on an individual basis, with the rise of the personal computer and smartphones, as well as on a nationwide basis, with systems of power grids and internet dependence for most almost all companies, both major and minor. And while this newfound connectivity has its perks, it also has its downfalls. The system of an internet-based world is relatively new, and as a result, incredibly fragile.

Linked digital information networks give hackers ample room to play, whether those hackers be small-scale individuals or world governments. The main questions posed at an international level deal with interstate conflict in cyberspace. Should tampering with another state’s Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) be seen as an act of war? Is a cyberattack viewed as a type of military attack in the view of the Security Council? Is “hacking back” a means of self-defense, or is self-defense limited to firewalls and preventative measures?

In an example that’s still taking place within the international community, Russia has been accused of hacking the 2016 United States presidential election, tampering with the results and causing President Donald Trump to be elected.[[5]](#footnote-5) On December 9, 2016, U.S. intelligence officials confirmed that Russia had “hacked” the U.S. election.[[6]](#footnote-6) The issue with this was the means of “hacking.” There were no false votes in ballot boxes, and no electors were bribed. The Russian hacking was an information campaign[[7]](#footnote-7), not something that’s generally considered an act of war, but is still considered hacking American ICTs. This calls into question what can be done to prevent and respond to cyber-attacks and cyber warfare as a whole.

**Background [[8]](#footnote-8)**

Cyber-attacks are becoming more prominent, from every level imaginable. Hackers can attack individuals, companies, and even countries, bringing them to their knees with a single line of code. First, we must define a cyber-attack, and compare it with cyber-crime and cyber warfare, similar terminology that can expand our understanding of cyber-attacks in context.

[[9]](#footnote-9) While states may define cyber-attacks differently, for our purposes, we should understand the general idea of a cyber-attack: “A cyber-attack consists of any action taken to undermine the functions of a computer network for a political or national security purpose.”[[10]](#footnote-10) Comparatively, cyber-crime is recognized as “any crime that is facilitated or committed using a computer, network, or hardware device.”[[11]](#footnote-11) Cyber-crime need not undermine a computer network, and it encompasses a wide variety of illegal activities dealing with the use of the internet. Lastly, cyber-warfare

It may also be helpful to have a general knowledge of several types of cyber-attacks. Even simple, small-scale hacking methods can be expanded to the international arena. Personal computer hacking is a simple place to start for many hackers, sending an email with a suspicious link and using ransomware to hold the files on the device hostage unless the owner pays the hacker a specified amount. These days, hacker groups have risen to impressive levels of power.

Transitioning from individual attacks to hacking on a larger scale, one particular type of cyber-attack that has grown popular for taking down larger corporations and state-based servers is a Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attack. This type of cyber-attack uses what is generically referred to as the “botnet,” or a cluster of internet-connected devices, to overwhelm a website or a server with fake traffic, causing it to crash.[[12]](#footnote-12) One major example of this type of attack took place on October 21, 2016. On this day, a DDoS attack targeted Dyn—a domain registration company for many major websites, including Spotify, Reddit, Twitter, and Netflix.[[13]](#footnote-13) The attacks made global headlines, in part because they did not affect relatively isolated corporations or uranium enriching centrifuges, but millions of civilians. A critical feature of these attacks reveals the pervasive nature of the threat; the attacks utilized open-source code. This means that anyone — from the most experienced hacker to any teenager with internet access — could possess adequate resources to take down some of the internet's biggest names.[[14]](#footnote-14)

Although global conflicts are more frequently taking place in the cyber domain, cyberattacks still lack both public recognition and legal remedies. No one actor holds all the sufficient tools to address the issue. Political leaders do not possess the technical expertise to deeply understand the threats posed by cyberattacks Computer science experts do not have the legal authority to launch counterattacks, or access to policy leaders to discuss longer term strategies for developing global governance of cybersecurity.

The Dyn attack targeted major businesses, but it’s an example of an applicable and understandable cyber-attack, and it demonstrates the variety of methods that can be used in cyber-attacks. The same DDoS-type attack can be conducted on almost any server, including those that hold pertinent government information. Hacking doesn’t have to be about breaking firewalls and corrupting files, and it can be accomplished even by individuals. For example, the Russian hacking of the US election was an information campaign: a series of Facebook advertisements intended to rile up the public.[[15]](#footnote-15) Compounding on all this, one of the most complex facets of cybersecurity is that whenever someone makes something new, someone else wants to try to break it, whether that’s just for fun or for personal gain.

**UN Involvement**

The UN International Telecommunications Union, or the ITU, was brought in as a formal body of the UN in 1947 to organize increasing technology.[[16]](#footnote-16) The goals of the ITU are to “allocate global radio spectrum and satellite orbits, develop the technical standards that ensure networks and technologies seamlessly interconnect, and strive to improve access to ICTs to underserved communities worldwide.”[[17]](#footnote-17) Information and Communication Technologies are critical in global society, and this branch of the UN has a great role to fill, increasing in importance each day. In terms of cybersecurity, the ITU’s goals for each UN member state are to set up a means of “prevention, preparation, response, and recovery.”[[18]](#footnote-18) However, this is broad and varies between states. In addition, many states lack concrete cybersecurity policy. The ITU website provides a National Strategies Repository on Cybersecurity, but only 76 out of 193 Member States have an available National Strategy Document at this time.

The next goal of the ITU is known as the “reference guide.” The reference guide will be a resource for a state to understand the purpose and content of a national cybersecurity strategy and how to develop one. Currently, this is set to become available in 2017.[[19]](#footnote-19)

In 2014, the ITU established a Global Cybersecurity Index. Its purpose was “to close security gaps, particularly in developing countries, while in the long it was to drive the efforts in the adoption of cybersecurity on a global scale.”[[20]](#footnote-20) “A comparison of national cybersecurity strategies will reveal those countries with high rankings in specific area, and consequently highlight lesser know – yet successful – cybersecurity strategies”[[21]](#footnote-21) the ITU statement [said](https://www.itu.int/net/pressoffice/press_releases/2014/16.aspx#.Uzxm-VyqxG4).

However, at a macro level, UN work on cybersecurity has been fragmented at best, allowing each state to create individual policy custom tailored to the individual state’s needs, based on its level of dependence on ICTs in the first place. Problems are being solved after they happen, rather than the UN taking preventative measures. This is understandable, as the technology is complicated and there are few experts who can understand both international policy and communications technology. However, as cybersecurity becomes a more pressing issue, The UN as a body must strive to create at the very least basic policy and build off of it as problems arise, in addition to taking tangible preventative action.

**Future Strategies**

The first concern is to define what a cyberattack means in terms of international policy. Such a fragile issue needs to be addressed formally by the United Nation. Legal limits for UN member states must be addressed and defined by the body. Additionally the punishments member states may face for violating these rules need to be codified. International policy, as it currently stands, is far too spotty to determine whether a cyber-attack qualifies as an act of war.

The UN Charter, Article 2(4) states that “[a]ll Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.”[[22]](#footnote-22) This is regarded in international law to mean that any use of force is illegal. There are only two exceptions to this statement in the UN Charter. The first is any action permitted by the UN Security Council, as stated in Chapter VII of the charter, and the second is any means of self-defense, as stated in Article 51 of the Charter.[[23]](#footnote-23) The question at hand is whether a cyber-attack is considered a “use of force” as used in the Charter. If so, states would be allowed to use self-defense, prosecute, and even go to war over matter of cybersecurity. If not, the gravity of cyber-attacks must still be defined, along with legal state responses.

Another strategy that falls to a more state-by-state basis is to strengthen national firewalls and protections against cyber-attacks. States should be encouraged to invest in better technology, both for blocking cyber-attacks and for their own hacking abilities. However, depending on the aforementioned distinction of cyber-attacks under international law, this so-called “hacking back” may be considered illegal. Additionally, strengthening cyber resources may not be a priority for developing states compared to well-developed ones. Budgetary issues may come into play. And even if states are willing to invest in a state-of-the-art firewall, there will always be someone else who has the to hack it. If one state is able to build a stronger wall, another will build a stronger wrecking ball.

**Questions to Consider**

1. What is a cyber-attack?
2. Is a cyber-attack considered an act of war?
   1. If so, to what extend must the attack affect the victim state? (i.e. Is an information campaign, as seen in the election hacking, just as worthy of being deemed an act of war as is a hacked shutdown of power plants?)
   2. If not, what should it be considered, and how should it be punished?
3. Should counter-attacks be deemed acceptable responses to international hacking?
4. What preventative measures should states put in place to prevent cyberattacks?
5. Which body of the UN should review and regulate cybersecurity matters such as these, and how should they go about this?

**Further Readings**

National Strategies Repository on Cybersecurity- 76 out of 193 Member States have an available National Strategy Document (not all may be available in English): <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Cybersecurity/Pages/National-Strategies-repository.aspx>

Understanding International Cyber-attacks and the legality under the UN Charter: <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1674565>

International law regarding hackings specifically in elections: <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3043828>

Understanding the definition of conflict under the UN Charter:

<http://www.prix-henry-dunant.org/wp-content/uploads/2014_IRMAKKESEN_Paper.pdf>

**II. Increasing the Number of Women involved Peacekeeping Missions**

**Introduction**

In the United Nations General Assembly Fourth Committee, one of the major responsibilities of the body is to submit a comprehensive review of the question of peacekeeping operations as well as a review of special political missions. The state of modern peacekeeping frequently involves entering into post-conflict areas and providing assistance to the state. Whether that assistance is as simple as providing aid to citizens, as complex as creating a new system of government, or anywhere in between, female peacekeepers have a unique perspective and can develop a very different rapport with the citizens than male peacekeepers. Herve Ladsous, Head of UN Peacekeeping, stated that “women can and must play a leading role in political participation, conflict resolution and the transition from conflict to peace.”[[24]](#footnote-24)

Today, almost two decades after the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (S/RES/1325) on women and peace and security, the number of women involved in peacekeeping missions, in any capacity, has only increased slightly. Out of approximately 125,000 peacekeeping staff, women made up 3% of military and 10% of police personnel, as of 2014.[[25]](#footnote-25) While this is a significant improvement from 1993, when women constituted only 1% of all peacekeeping staff, there is still room for great improvement.

Research and practical examples show that sending women in peacekeeping missions, or even simply including them in peace processes can assist in conflict mitigation and improve the status of women in the post-conflict society.[[26]](#footnote-26) Therefore, two questions remain: why aren’t more women involved in peacekeeping missions, and what can be done to increase the number of women in peacekeeping missions and more effectively implement SC resolution 1325?

**Background**

On October 31, 2000, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1325 discussing women, peace, and security. The resolution reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. Resolution 1325 urges all actors to increase the participation of women and incorporate gender perspectives in all United Nations peace and security efforts. It also calls on all parties to conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, in situations of armed conflict. The resolution provides a number of important operational mandates, with implications for Member States and the entities of the United Nations system.

A UN Women Review published in 2012 found that out of 31 major peace processes conducted since 1992, only 4% of signatories of peace agreements were women, 2.4% of chief mediators were women, and 3.7% of witnesses or observers to peace negotiations were women.[[27]](#footnote-27) However, when women are included in peace processes, there is a 20% increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least two years, and a 35% increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least fifteen years.[[28]](#footnote-28) By coming into war-torn areas and assisting those who have become disadvantaged, female peacekeepers inspire local women to take part in negotiations for peace after times of conflict. A when women are allowed to take part in peace negotiations, they are able to increase their representation in government positions, which creates much more sustainable peace.

It’s also important to understand the importance of including women in the narrative of post-conflict peace negotiations in the first place. Libereta Mukugussana, chief inspector in a UN operation in Cote d’Ivoire, has said, “Whenever there is conflict the women and children are the first victims. So women should work to bring about peace.”[[29]](#footnote-29) This is overwhelmingly true. In all stages of a disaster, there is a pattern of gender differentiation: “exposure to risk, risk perception, preparedness, response, physical impact, psychological impact, recovery, and reconstruction.”[[30]](#footnote-30) Women report forced displacement, conflict-related rape, abduction, and sexual slavery in numbers far exceeding men. And, arguably most importantly, women make up the majority of refugees and displaced persons.[[31]](#footnote-31) When these displaced women, living in or fleeing from zones of conflict, interact with a female peacekeeper, they are more likely to trust not only that specific peacekeeper, but the work of the UN as a whole to alleviate the conflict.

**UN Involvement**

As can be easily observed Security Council Resolution 1325 was a landmark in terms of women in peacekeeping, but the UN as a whole has made other strides in terms of female representation. In fact, it is mostly due to the work of organizations such as UN Women and UNIFEM that awareness of this problem is even possible. In the last fifty years, these organizations, in addition to many others, have worked to uphold human rights treaties and precedents, and they have begun to recognize that historically, half of the population was left out of peace negotiations entirely – women.[[32]](#footnote-32)

The UN is a unique organization in that it has the ability to assist in post-conflict peace building on a consistent basis. These opportunities, during which societies can revisit the mistakes of the past and rebuild for a brighter future, are rare. Therefore, actors involved in post-conflict zones have the ability to notice when human rights are being consistently violated.[[33]](#footnote-33) This is precisely what the UN has been able to do.

In the same year of Security Council Resolution 1325, the Millennium Development Goals were established, which set goals for significant gains in women’s rights. Over the next ten years, the Security Council would adopt five resolutions concerning women, peace, and security, with the overarching goal of mainstreaming women into all aspects of peacemaking, peacebuilding, and peacekeeping operations.[[34]](#footnote-34) Some of these include resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889, and 1960, which filled in the gaps left from 1325, covering topics such as rape in times of conflict and implementing Women’s Protection Advisors to oversee the implementation of resolution 1325.

**Future Strategies**

While the UN has attempted to make strides in terms of women in peacekeeping, and does seem to understand the reasons for its importance, it lacks actual implementation techniques. Oftentimes Security Council resolutions, especially those covering the topic of women, create strong precedent, but fail to take action in the field. However, when smaller UN bodies, such as UN Women, UNHCR, or UNIFEM, take action in the field, they have a greater chance of effectively protecting the rights of women. One option for the future of UN female peacekeeping and the effective protection of women’s rights in conflict and post-conflict areas is to delegate these tasks to other UN bodies. This gives these tasks a higher chance of success in comparison to simply writing another Security Council Resolution.

One issue that has not yet been discussed is the sovereignty of states on their peacekeeping troops. Peacekeeping troops are voluntarily contributed by member states, so if a member state chooses, it may select only men to become peacekeeping representatives.[[35]](#footnote-35) The other factor that is incredibly important is the choice of possible female peacekeepers themselves. Women must actively want to become UN peacekeepers, then be selected by their state government to serve. If women purposely avoid the role in the first place, nothing can be done to increase the number of female peacekeeping staff. One solution is increased advertising of these positions in the UN, or a simpler path to application and selection. By lowering barriers that may cause women to take themselves out of selection in the first place, numbers of female peacekeeping troops may rise.

**Questions to Consider**

1. What can be done to increase the number of female peacekeepers and peacekeeping staff?
2. Why are female peacekeepers important?
3. How can Security Council resolution 1325 be more effectively implemented without infringing on national sovereignty of member states to contribute their chosen number of peacekeepers?

**Further Readings**

English copy of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women and peace and security (other languages can also be found on UN website): <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement>

A complete list of all peacekeeping contributions by UN member states as of August 2017: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors.shtml>

What is the role of UN Peacekeepers? <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/13/sunday-review/what-is-the-role-of-un-peacekeepers.html?_r=0>

UN Women in Peacekeeping, stats from the UN:

<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/issues/women/womeninpk.shtml>

Why the United Nations Needs More Female Peacekeepers: <https://unu.edu/publications/articles/why-un-needs-more-female-peacekeepers.html>

**III. A means of creating communication from the international community to Taiwan**

**Introduction**

Chapter 1, Article, 2, Subsection 4 of the United Nations Charter states, “All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.”[[36]](#footnote-36)The Charter clearly states that the use of force or threat of force on any state violates UN principles, yet member states continue to engage in oppression of native populations through occupation. Colonization and imperialism in theory ended in the nineteenth century, but the issue of Taiwanese sovereignty remains unanswered.

Most recently a phone call from Taiwan sparked issues for Taiwanese communication and legitimacy. President Donald Trump took Twitter by storm when he tweeted “The President of Taiwan CALLED ME today to wish me congratulations on winning the Presidency. Thank you!”[[37]](#footnote-37) Trump went where no U.S. commander –in-chief had gone since the restoration of diplomatic relations- by speaking directly to the President of Taiwan. The island of 23 million is essentially an independent country but Beijing still claims as a province to be reclaimed by force if necessary.

President Trump makes salient the decades long debate over Taiwan’s bid for UN membership and whether it should have a means for communication in the international community. Communication defined as the "two-way process of reaching mutual understanding, in which participants not only exchange information, news, ideas and feelings but also create and share meaning." Should the people of Taiwan be able to express their ideas and grievances to the international community as a sovereign nation or remain a part of a larger China? This could occur through UN membership, involvement in other international organizations, or recognition by large member states with no formal UN acknowledgment. Whatever the means are, Taiwanese citizens must find a way to communicate with other international leaders and nations.

**Taiwan- A Brief History**

Taiwan’s history is characterized by waves of colonization that have led to hot contestation about Taiwanese sovereignty. Originally, the Dutch colonized Taiwan in the seventeenth century, followed by the China’s Qing Dynasty in 1683. After the first Sino- Japanese War, China ceded Taiwan to Japan. During the Japanese colonization period, the Taiwanese resisted rule. Following the end of World War II, the Republic of China (ROC), led by the Kuomintang (KMT) once again control of Taiwan as it governed mainland China.[[38]](#footnote-38) On February 28, 1947, island-wide riots broke out, ignited by and the killing of protesters by government agents. Taiwanese intellectuals, in the 228 Massacres, tried in vain to negotiate with the ROC regime for greater self-rule. In response, armed forces targeted and murdered the masses of offending intellectuals. [[39]](#footnote-39)

After losing control of mainland China to the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) in the Chinese Civil War, the ROC government led by Chiang Kai-shek sought shelter in Taiwan.[[40]](#footnote-40) The KMT used Taiwan as a base to regain power in the mainland and consolidate KMT rule. Chiang claimed wartime privileges and declared martial law to establish a ruthless dictatorship, and cracking down on pro-democracy advocates and anyone supporting Taiwanese self- determination.[[41]](#footnote-41) According to Chiang Kai-shek, the ROC government was the legal representation of the whole China. [[42]](#footnote-42)From 1949 to 1971 Taiwan represented mainland China in international relations. [[43]](#footnote-43)

In December 1992, Taiwan’s people elected a new Legislative Yuan, without the KMT successfully returning the same individuals to power who had historically held office. Those that had consolidated power since the 1940s and came from mainland China suddenly lost a great deal of political clout.[[44]](#footnote-44) However, Taiwan did not enjoy democratic self government until the first democratic presidential election in 1996.[[45]](#footnote-45) Since the first democratic election, Taiwan has experienced two democratic transfers of power, in 2000 and 2008.

The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP, a branch of the KMT) candidate, Chen Shui-bian, won the presidential election in Taiwan with 39% of the votes. Independent James Soong won 37%. The ruling KMT’s Lien Chan won 23%.[[46]](#footnote-46) Chen’s administration brought Taiwan’s first democratic transfer of power from one party to another, after 55 years of KMT rule. The strength of Taiwan’s democracy was demonstrated after the next presidential election on March 20, 2004, when Chen Shui-bian won re-election with 50.1% of the votes, while Lien Chan lost again with 49.9%. [[47]](#footnote-47)

On March 18, 2000, the DPP’s Chen Shui-bian won the presidential election in Taiwan with 39% of the votes. Independent James Soong won 37%. The DPP founding charter explicitly lists a formally independent Taiwan as a core goal. The ruling KMT’s Lien Chan won 23%. Chen’s administration brought Taiwan’s first democratic transfer of power from one party to another, after 55 years of KMT rule. The strength of Taiwan’s democracy was demonstrated after the next presidential election on March 20, 2004, when Chen Shui-bian won re-election with 50.1% of the votes, while Lien Chan lost again with 49.9%. Thus, Taiwan votes for executives independently from mainland China and operates government independently.

**United Nations and Taiwan**

In the beginning of the 1970s, the United States saw the geopolitical opportunity to move closer to China and have a strategic position next to the Soviet Union. A combination of Taipei and Beijing’s longstanding opposition to the proposals for both PRC and ROC dual representation in the UN led to the end of the ROC representation in the UN. Resolution 2758 “[expels] forthwith the representatives of Chiang Kai-shek from the place which they unlawfully occupy at the United Nations and in all the organizations related to it,” was adopted by 76 against 35. Notably, the United States voted against the resolution, but found itself in the minority vote. Taiwan found itself excluded and isolated from many international organizations, especially those with UN affiliations.[[48]](#footnote-48)

Since its expulsion from the UN, Taiwan has unsuccessfully petitioned membership multiple times. Taiwan started its renewal UN campaign in 1993 which focused on establishing itself as a sovereign state next to China, similarly to a model of divided states like East and West Germany or North and South Korea. [[49]](#footnote-49) Chinas opposition prevented the Taiwanese bid from being considered. The next attempt in 1996 presented a new, vaguer approach. Asking for the “consideration of the exceptional situation of the inability, resulting from General Assembly Resolution 2758 (XXVI), of the 21.3 million people on Taiwan, Republic of China, to participate in the activities of the United Nations.” [[50]](#footnote-50) This approach did not aim for full membership but rather participation. Conflicts of sovereignty, arguably unfairly exclude Taiwan from policy- making on Taiwan’s territory. The 1996 attempt also failed. No significant developments with the UN occurred between the end of the 1990s and early 2000s.

In 2007, Taiwan radically changed its stance and applied for full UN membership to have its sovereignty legitimized by becoming a new member. UN Secretary- General Ban Ki-moon refused to accept the application because “in accordance with [General Assembly Resolution 2758], the United Nations considers Taiwan for all purposes to be an integral part of the People’s Republic of China.” [[51]](#footnote-51) Taiwan’s UN bid has never even entered the UN General Assembly agenda, as it has never managed to get past the UN General Committee.

Due to the constant failure for UN membership, in 2008 Taiwan pursued “meaningful participation” in UN specialized agency, notably the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO).[[52]](#footnote-52) Taiwan sought official WHO membership in 2008, and bottom line result is that any commination between the WHO and Taiwan is subject to approval by the WHO Secretariat and the Chinese Ministry of Health and Beijing. Since then, in 2008 Taiwanese Centers for Disease Control (CDC) were invited to join the new WHO International Health Regulations, giving Taiwan access to updates about infectious diseases, yet they are belittled by terminology like “Taiwan province of China.”[[53]](#footnote-53) Taiwan is working to overcome the constraints it faces even in the WHO because of Chinese involvement. Taiwan has not given up the hope to for full WHO membership in the long term. In the short-term, Taiwan focuses on having “meaningful and dignified participation.”[[54]](#footnote-54) The safety and human security of Taiwanese citizens depends upon recognition from the WHO.

**Future Implications**

Since the 1970s, the United States has held the minority position and supported Taiwan in its quest for membership. However, due to political strategies the government of the U.S. has sided with China and agreed to avoid communication with Taiwan. However, exclusion from the international community poses a real life threat to its population. This claim induced a number of countries, including the U.S. to support Taiwan’s participation of the WHO. Today, the Taiwanese medical community is still being excluded for much of the International health network. Without legitimate membership of the WHO, Taiwan health and access to critical health information poses a real threat to the future health of the country.

In the face of China’s ever present opposition, Taiwan is unable to make any significant progressions. China’s status in the United nations and large global economy discourage international pressure to accommodate Taiwan’s right to participation. The United States is most likely to instigate and back Taiwanese inclusion in the UN, but would mean straining ties with China and isolating a strategic and valuable economic partner. Can the United States support Taiwan without sparking a war among nations?

**Questions to Consider**

1. Does Taiwan currently have a means to communicate to world leaders?
2. What role does the United Nations play in the debate between Taiwan and China?
3. How would the independence of Taiwan impact the relationship between the United States and China?
4. How likely is it that other members of the UN will support Taiwan, if China opposes Taiwan’s participation?
5. Should Taiwan be granted full membership or partial membership?
6. What would Taiwan’s economy be like without China’s greater economic interaction?
7. Does Exclusion from the international community pose a life threating risk to the people of Taiwan?

**Further Readings**

Taiwan History:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJjH9AF52R8>

UN General Assembly, “Resolution 2758 (XXIV):

<http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/2758(XXVI)>

Taiwan and the United States:

<https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/35855.htm>

Taiwan and Preisdent Trump:

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Taiwan and China

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