Foreign Policy Making in Taiwan

From principle to pragmatism

Dennis Van Vranken Hickey
Foreign Policy Making in Taiwan

In recent years, Taiwan’s foreign policy initiatives have put the island on a collision course with China. This book employs four basic levels of analysis—the international system, governmental structure, societal forces and individual factors—as organizing principles to systematically examine Taipei’s foreign policy behaviour. While Taiwan’s foreign policy decision-making remains an extremely complex and convoluted process involving many important variables, the importance of external factors, particularly seismic shifts in global politics and the role of China and the US, cannot be ignored as features that have long exercised an extraordinary degree of influence over the island’s foreign relations. *Foreign Policy Making in Taiwan* highlights these factors as important considerations that will continue to play a critical role in shaping Taiwan’s foreign policy in coming years.

Providing a clear analysis of the dynamics of Taiwan’s foreign policy, this book offers an important addition to the literature on Taiwan and will be essential reading for followers of Chinese politics, comparative politics and foreign policy analysis.

Dennis V. Hickey is Professor of Political Science at Missouri State University. He has published three books and approximately 40 articles and book chapters about East Asian politics.
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Dennis Van Vranken Hickey
For my parents, my wife’s parents
and all other members of the greatest generation
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In recent years, the study of Taiwan has generated numerous books, monographs and scholarly articles. Many people outside “greater China” (mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau) are now becoming aware of the profound and deep-rooted social and political forces that have led to the island’s present, precarious position in the international community. But understanding Taiwan is not easy. The island’s citizenry is now more divided over political issues than ever before, making the achievement of a consensus on any complex issue—particularly Taipei’s external relations—very difficult.

Several important influences have gone into the writing of this book. First, during the early 1980s, I enrolled in the doctoral program in government at the University of Texas at Austin. It was at this time that I became interested in Taiwan and its relationship with the US and the international community. Several of my professors—especially James R. Roach and Gordon Bennett—played an instrumental role in encouraging me to pursue this field of inquiry. However, I would be remiss if I didn’t acknowledge the fact that friends and classmates in the graduate program—especially Emerson Niou, Chengtian Kuo and Tzong-ho Bau—also energized me to study Taiwan.

After graduate school came a stint in Nanjing, China at the Johns Hopkins University–Nanjing University Center for Chinese and American Studies, probably the foremost educational institution in People’s Republic of China (PRC) devoted to enhancing understanding and cooperation between that country and foreign nations. The year in Nanjing proved to be an invaluable experience. In addition to experiencing life in East Asia, my students encouraged me to focus more of my research on an examination of Taiwan’s extraordinarily complex relationship with the PRC. To my surprise, I discovered that most students—both the Chinese and international students—had very favorable images of the island and its burgeoning democracy.

In 1991, I joined the faculty of the political science department at Missouri State University. Over the course of my years at the university I retooled as a scholar and became a specialist in comparative foreign policy as well as American foreign policy, East Asian politics and national security. In fact, Missouri State University has provided me with marvelous opportunities to improve both my research and teaching skills.
This book attempts to come to grips with the various forces that shape and influence Taiwan’s foreign policy. The original idea for this study was generated by comments on my paper, “The Making of Taiwan’s Foreign Policy in the Post-Martial Law Era,” delivered at the 2003 University of South Carolina Annual Conference on Taiwan Issues, in Charleston, South Carolina. John Fuh-sheng Hsieh, the conference organizer, encouraged me in the strongest of terms to write the paper. During the meeting, Chien-pin Li offered numerous constructive criticisms and suggested that I consider writing a book about the making of foreign policy in Taiwan.

Knowing of my work on Taiwan’s foreign policy, Suisheng Zhao, Director of the Center for China–US Cooperation at Graduate School of International Studies at the University of Denver, invited me to deliver a paper on the trajectory of Taiwan’s relations with the US at the international conference, The United States, China and Taiwan Relations in the Second Bush and Chen Administrations, in 2005. My paper, “President Chen and the three challenges: America, China and Taiwan,” was ultimately accepted for publication by the Journal of Contemporary China. Some of the ideas expressed in the article may be found in various chapters throughout this book.

Over the past several decades, I have been particularly fortunate to be associated with many of the world’s foremost experts on the PRC and/or Taiwan. A number of the ideas explored in this book were first tried out in some lively exchanges with friends, colleagues and officials during meetings or informal discussions. Among those to be singled out for special thanks are Parris Chang, John Copper, Edward Friedman, John Hsieh, Michael Y. M. Kau, Da-Chi Liao, Gang Lin, Chien-pin Li, Xuecheng Liu, Emerson Niou, Robert Ross, Ben Shao, Michael Sheng, T.Y. Wang, Bob Yang and Suisheng Zhao. I would also like to express my deepest thanks to the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange and the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy. Without their generous support, I would not have been able to travel to East Asia on several occasions or ever find the time required to complete this project. Missouri State University provided me with internal grant support and a sabbatical and I am most grateful for this assistance. A special note of thanks goes to an anonymous referee who reviewed the manuscript for Routledge and to Lilly Kelan Lu, my graduate assistant. Both of these individuals’ work went above and beyond the call of duty. As always, I would especially like to thank Byron Stewart, Lynn Cline and the entire staff of Missouri State University’s Duane Meyer Library for their help in obtaining numerous materials relevant to this study. Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Cheng-May, for her patience, endurance and suggestions. As I noted in a much earlier work, she always will be “the brains of the family.” It seems that some things never do change.

Despite the best efforts and advice of friends and colleagues, errors undoubtedly remain in the text. In expressing appreciation for their advice and support, I do not mean to suggest that any of the above individuals or institutions agree with the ideas in this book. I assume sole responsibility.

Dennis Van Vranken Hickey
Recent and far-reaching transformations in the international system present challenges to officials charged with the responsibility of making foreign policy. Consider for a moment the changes in global politics that have occurred in recent years. The end of the Cold War, the global war on terrorism, the turmoil in the Middle East, the rise of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and a conjunction of other factors, including the pressures of globalization, economic liberalization and interdependence, are combining to complicate foreign policy decision making.

The significance of recent changes in the international system cannot be overstated. But changes occurring within states—especially pressures for democratization—are also sweeping the world. Moreover, many countries, particularly those in East Asia, have transformed themselves from backward, agrarian societies into major economic powers. Due to democratization, economic development and numerous other changes occurring within many societies, new groups and organizations are demanding a greater voice in the making of foreign policy.

Taiwan’s foreign policy

Taiwan is situated between Japan and the Philippines and lies roughly 100 miles off the coast of the great land mass of Asia. The island is home to 23 million people, almost as many automobiles and the government of the Republic of China (ROC or Taiwan).

Taiwan is a state that has changed dramatically since the 1980s. On the domestic front, martial law has been lifted, opposition parties have formed, free and popular elections have been held, and the government has ended its ban on economic and cultural exchanges with the PRC. The changes associated with democratization, and their consequences, raise important questions concerning the making of Taiwan’s foreign policy. How will foreign policy be made? What will be the role of the president, the bureaucracy, the legislature and non-governmental actors? How does foreign policy making in the post-martial law period compare to policy making during the authoritarian eras of President Chiang Kai-shek and President Chiang Ching-kuo?
In addition to domestic political changes, the recent transformations in the international system are generating both challenges and opportunities for Taipei. For example, the end of the Cold War and the accompanying demise of the so-called strategic triangle initially helped Taiwan strengthen its ties with its most important friend and supporter—the United States. More recently, however, the war against terrorism and the North Korean nuclear crisis have helped push Washington and Beijing closer together. How have these developments and other changes in global politics influenced Taipei’s foreign policy establishment?

**Defining foreign policy**

The first step in any investigation of a state’s foreign policy is to define what we mean by the term. Like many other concepts and phrases employed in the field of international relations, however, foreign policy is a term that means widely differing things to different people. Perhaps this helps explain why many, if not most, foreign policy studies don’t even attempt to define the term. Still, a careful search will reveal that there are dozens of different definitions of the concept. Further complicating matters is the argument advanced by some individuals and governments that Taiwan is not a state.

In a classic introductory textbook, *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process*, Charles Kegley and Eugene Wittkopf defined foreign policy as “the goals that the nation’s officials seek to attain abroad, the values that give rise to those objectives, and the means or instruments through which they are pursued” [emphasis added].

Despite the benefits of defining foreign policy in terms of three core concepts—goals, values and instruments—the authors limited foreign policy behavior to nations, a concept that causes even more problems for those interested in the foreign policy of Taiwan than does the term “state.”

In his study, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, Christopher Hill provides readers with a less restrictive definition of foreign policy. According to Hill, “a brief definition of foreign policy can be given as follows: the sum of official external relations conducted by an independent actor (usually a state) in international relations.” By employing the phrase “independent actor,” Hill provides for the inclusion of phenomena such as the European Union or Taiwan. Even if one agrees the proposition that Taiwan is a state, however, Hill’s broad definition still presents difficulties because of the use of the term “official.” Due to practical necessity, many of Taiwan’s most important foreign ties technically are “unofficial” relations conducted by “unofficial” government organizations. Moreover, use of the word “external” includes Taiwan’s relations with China. Although Taipei no longer claims jurisdiction over the mainland, most Taiwan officials still take care to make a distinction between foreign policy and relations with the PRC. For example, relations with foreign governments are the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while ties with China are handled by the Mainland Affairs Council and Straits Exchange Foundation.

For the purposes of this study, foreign policy will be defined as the sum of the foreign relations conducted by an independent actor (usually a state) in
international politics. This definition squares with the PRC position that Taiwan is not a state. When discussing the “origin of the Taiwan question,” PRC authorities claim that, after the ROC government in Nanjing was “finally overthrown by the Chinese people,” in 1949, the PRC became the sole, legal government of all China (including Taiwan). At that moment, however, “a group of military and political officials of the Kuomintang (KMT) clique took refuge in Taiwan and, with the support of the then US administration, created the division between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits.” If one agrees with this interpretation of events, it leads to the intriguing question as to whether a “clique” is capable of engaging in foreign policy.

It is the position of this writer that, while foreign policy may be undertaken by non-state actors in Taiwan and elsewhere, Taiwan is indeed a state. A brief review of three core concepts in international relations—sovereignty, the state and the nation—will help one understand this point.

The idea of sovereignty was one of the most important intellectual developments that led to the Westphalian revolution. According to Jean Bodin (1530–96), the French philosopher who contributed much to the development of the concept, sovereignty is the “absolute and perpetual power vested in a commonwealth.” Sovereignty is “the distinguishing mark of the sovereign that he cannot in any way be subject to the commands of another, for it is he who makes law for the subject, abrogates law already made and amends law.” Sovereignty resides in the state—a body that exercises predominant authority within its geographic borders, possesses a relatively stable population that owes its allegiance to a government and maintains diplomatic ties with other states. A state differs from a nation. A nation refers to a group of people with a shared sense of identity, often based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, language, history or culture. Consequently, it is possible for two or more states to reside within one nation, or for a nation to exist within two or more states. When a national group is coterminous with a state’s boundaries, that entity may be described as a nation-state.

The ROC exercises predominant authority within its borders, possesses a relatively stable population that owes its allegiance to the ROC government, maintains formal diplomatic ties with roughly two dozen of its “little friends” and strong “unofficial” links with many others. Despite PRC protestations to the contrary, it is obvious that the ROC does exist and meets all the requirements of statehood. Bau Tzong-Ho, vice president of Taipei’s prestigious National Taiwan University, explains:

The problem is that the ROC never lost its conditions as a sovereign state even if the territory of it shrunk after 1949. The ROC continues to maintain its territory, people, government and ability to deal with foreign countries. In other words, the existence of the ROC is a political reality.

When Japanese imperialists invaded China in 1937, the ROC government was compelled to move the capital from Nanjing to Chongqing. The ROC’s territory changed during the conflict, but it continued to survive as a sovereign and independent state.
In a similar vein, after Chinese communist forces captured Nanjing in 1949, the national government moved to Chongqing and then Guangzhou before ultimately landing in Taipei—a city that was often described by Chiang Kai-shek as the “wartime capital” of the ROC. Once again, the ROC’s territory changed, but the state and governmental apparatus remained largely intact. As one Taiwan governmental study concluded, “that the ROC has been an independent sovereign state since its establishment in 1912 is an incontrovertible historical fact.”

Other arguments employed by Beijing, including the suggestion that the ROC cannot exist because it is no longer a member of the UN, are similarly flawed. According to this logic, the PRC has existed only since 1971 (when it gained admission to the UN) and Switzerland has only existed since 2002.

A strong case may be made that two separate states exist within one Chinese nation. Officials in Bonn ultimately reached a similar conclusion with respect to Germany’s status prior to that nation’s unification. Therefore, the ROC’s demands that the PRC treat it as an equal “political entity” or, more recently, as a “state” cannot be equated with independence from China. On the other hand, however, there is strong evidence suggesting that Taiwan might be moving beyond this point. A number of developments, including references to the KMT as an “alien” regime, revisions in the island’s educational curriculum and efforts to create a “new Taiwanese” identity may all be interpreted as moves intended to foster a new sense of nationalism among the island’s population. These initiatives could be viewed as a precursor to the establishment of a separate, independent Taiwanese nation.

In many respects, Taiwan’s international status in the global community is complicated, unusual and perhaps even unique. It is also controversial. Those who wish to quarrel with the author’s contention that Taiwan is a state may take solace in the fact that the definition of foreign policy provided in this study includes both state and non-state actors. In the chapters that follow, the reader is invited to judge for himself or herself whether Taiwan is a nation, a state or perhaps something else.

Analyzing Taiwan’s foreign policy

Any analysis of a state’s foreign policy should begin with a brief overview of theoretical approaches that identify different factors that shape foreign policy. A variety of studies have been conducted to determine the efficacy of theories that seek to explain foreign policy behavior. Perhaps most familiar to students of comparative foreign policy is James N. Rosenau’s seminal “pre-theory” of foreign policy. Rosenau suggested that the considerations capable of influencing a state’s foreign policy may be grouped into five major categories: the external (global) environment, the state’s societal environment, the global setting, the roles played by decision makers and the individual characteristics of a state’s leaders. On the other hand, Robert Jervis outlined four levels of analysis: the level of decision making, the level of bureaucracy, the internal operations of the state and the international environment. In his examination of international relations, Kenneth
Waltz identified only three “images” of international politics: the individual, the state and the state system.13

At the most basic level, the various forces that shape a state’s foreign policy can be grouped into two broad categories of explanation: external variables and internal variables.14 The first category seeks to explain foreign policy behavior in terms of multiple factors that are external to the state. According to this perspective, considerations such as the organization of the international system, the characteristics of global politics and the behavior of other states (including China) would prompt Taiwan to act in certain ways. For example, an analyst might suggest that Taipei is arguably so dependent on Washington that it has given up its autonomy in foreign policy for the sake of its security.

The second approach points to domestic political considerations as the primary source of a state’s foreign policy. These factors might include public opinion, interest groups, governmental organizations and even the characteristics of individual leaders. An analyst who subscribes to this interpretation of events might argue that Taiwan’s most controversial foreign policy initiatives could be traced to domestic public opinion and/or electoral politics. These might include the drive to return to the UN, the decision to hold “peace referendums” during the 2004 presidential campaign, the calls for a new constitution and the junking of the National Unification Council and the National Unification Guidelines in 2006.

It is clear that countless stimuli influence a state’s foreign policy behavior and that there is no consensus among analysts as to which factors best explain a state’s foreign policy outputs. In fact, scholars have long engaged in acrimonious debates over the merits of various approaches to the study of foreign policy:

Some argue that individual-level phenomena are simply irrelevant in the bigger world of state and global politics—“bigger” things matter much more in the latter arena. Some schools of thought say we need to understand state-level characteristics, most notably the power and interests of the states involved. Other schools say that even the state is too low a level of analysis in terms of understanding global politics, that instead we need to know the configuration of the “system.”15

Not surprisingly, the task of the foreign policy analyst—determining which approach carries the most explanatory value when seeking to understand foreign policy behavior—remains a daunting one. It is likely that quarrels over various perspectives will persist and “that even twenty years from now these debates—or variations on them—will be alive and well.”16

The analytical framework

The extraordinary political, economic and cultural changes occurring within both Taiwan and the international system have attracted interest among policy makers, members of the academic community and the media. Surprisingly little attention, however, has focused on the various forces that now influence and shape Taiwan’s
foreign policy. Consequently, the making of Taipei’s foreign policy remains something of a “black box” to both academics and practitioners. This is unfortunate because some of Taiwan’s foreign policy initiatives have put the island on a collision course with its arch-rival—the PRC. And as President George W. Bush has promised to “do whatever it takes” to help defend Taiwan, it makes sense for us to gain a fundamental understanding and appreciation of the various forces that are now driving the island’s foreign policy. In short, the case of Taiwan represents one of those instances in international politics when the actions of one actor “may lead to upheaval in the [international] system as a whole.”17

There are numerous books that examine Taiwan’s foreign policy. In fact, a superb study examining the forces that shape Taiwan’s security policy was published immediately after Chen Shui-bian was elected president in 2000.18 Unfortunately, some of the authors’ observations and conclusions, such as the suggestion that President Chen Shui-bian had embraced “a relatively low-profile and non-provocative foreign policy stance,” now appear dated or inaccurate.19 Moreover, there are no comprehensive case studies that compare and contrast the various hypotheses that might be advanced in an effort to explain the trajectory of Taiwan’s foreign policy. This should not be considered unusual. The vast majority of case studies in the field of foreign policy analysis—particularly those that discuss the role of public opinion, bureaucratic politics or societal influences on the external relations of a state—have focused on the United States.20 This study is an exception.

This book examines Taiwan’s foreign policy-making process. It discusses both the external and internal influences that shape Taiwanese foreign policy. The following chapter will provide readers with an historical overview and introduction to Taiwan’s foreign policy. It explores changes in Taipei’s foreign policy since 1949 and examines Taiwan’s present approach to foreign policy—pragmatic diplomacy. It shows how the current approach to international relations found a receptive audience during the early years of the post-Cold War era. But it also explains why recent changes in global politics have complicated Taiwan’s foreign policy.

Chapter 3 shows how changes in the structure of the international system, the characteristics of global politics and the behavior of other states influence Taiwan’s foreign policy. It explains how seismic shifts in global politics and the conduct of two external powers (the US and the PRC) have long played a critical role in shaping the island’s foreign policy. Taipei’s links with these states influence its relations with its neighbors and the entire global community.

Chapter 4 explores the characteristics of the Taiwan government and its political institutions and how these variables influence the crafting of foreign policy. It also shows how Taipei is seeking to employ a variety of unconventional diplomatic tactics that fall under the broad rubric of “people to people” diplomacy to boost its international profile and improve ties with foreign nations.

Chapter 5 examines how Taiwan’s society and domestic politics affect the Taipei government and the policy-making process. It discusses the role and influence of public opinion, political parties, interest groups, think-tanks and the
media in the making of Taiwan’s foreign policy. The chapter suggests that, while these actors do play a role in foreign policy making, their influence often is exaggerated.

Chapter 6 discusses the proposition that Taiwan’s foreign policy behavior can best be understood not as a result of the structure of the international system or domestic political forces, but because of the personality of the island’s presidents. It shows how every president has played a central role in dealing with Taiwan’s foreign policy problems and suggests that it is probable that this phenomenon will not change soon.

Chapter 7, the concluding chapter in this study, suggests that every level of analysis—the international system, governmental structure, societal forces and individual factors—possesses some explanatory value when seeking to understand Taiwan’s foreign policy behavior. In fact, Taiwan’s foreign policy decision making is an extremely complex and convoluted process involving many important variables. Democratization is proving to be a double-edged sword for Taiwan—it holds both challenges and opportunities for Taipei’s foreign policy. For a relatively small and isolated state like the ROC the difficulties posed by democratization are particularly acute. Despite this fact, however, it is clear that external factors have long exercised an extraordinary degree of influence over the island’s foreign relations. Therefore, despite the remarkable changes that have occurred in Taiwan, the system level of analysis best explains Taipei’s foreign policy conduct.

The concluding chapter also examines the future direction of Taiwan’s foreign policy. While it is likely that changes in the island’s foreign relations will be slow and incremental at best, Taiwan does face a number of internal and external foreign policy challenges. Some of these could have a dramatic impact on its ability to continue to survive as a sovereign, albeit isolated, state in the international system. Perhaps most worrisome, there exists the potential for a sharp and dangerous escalation in tensions with the PRC, a rising world power that is determined eventually to annex Taiwan.
2 Historical overview of Taiwan’s foreign policy

Since 1949, Taiwan’s foreign policy has undergone a substantial transformation. This chapter provides an overview of Taiwan’s foreign relations and explores the evolution of its contemporary foreign policy. In doing so, the chapter shows how Taipei has adjusted its diplomatic strategies in an effort to cope with changes in the international environment. These innovative and creative adjustments are designed to help Taiwan overcome some of the obstacles it confronts as a “unique actor” in global politics.1 But these initiatives have also generated numerous challenges for the ROC government.

I Background and evolution of Taiwan’s foreign policy

On December 8, 1949, the remnants of Chiang Kai-shek’s Kuomintang (KMT) government formally moved to Taipei. Almost 2 million troops, party and government officials and refugees poured into the island to escape the communist juggernaut. Many believed that this outpost—generally regarded at the time as a backwater in Chinese politics—would serve either as Chiang’s last stand or as his base to “take back the mainland.” Few could have imagined that the ROC would still be rooted in Taiwan at the turn of the twenty-first century.

Since retreating to the island of Taiwan, the ROC’s approach to foreign policy has gone through a complete cycle that started with active participation in global politics, moved to relative indifference and isolation, and finally returned to a passionate desire to participate. The discussion below examines each of these stages.

Phase one: the golden era (1950–1971)

When the ROC retreated to Taiwan in 1949, it appeared that its days were numbered. Although American officials had discussed ways to keep the island out of the hands of the Chinese communists in the late 1940s (including the removal of Chiang Kai-shek), the Truman administration seemed resigned to the fact that Taiwan would come under PRC control.2 The US planned to wait until the new Chinese government established control of all of the country’s territory—including Taiwan—before extending formal diplomatic recognition to it.3 However, the
outbreak of hostilities on the Korea peninsula in 1950 “transformed American policy from the abandonment of the ROC to the defense of Taiwan.”

Realizing that Taiwan’s continued survival would depend largely upon external military support, one of the primary goals of Chiang Kai-shek’s foreign policy during the late 1940s and early 1950s was to form anticommunist alliances. After Chiang’s efforts to forge a multilateral security pact with the Republic of Korea and the Philippines in 1949 failed, he directed all his energies toward concluding a mutual defense treaty with the US.5

In November 1949, Chiang’s government first requested that American military advisors be sent immediately to Taiwan.6 In 1951, an American Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) was established in Taiwan to provide training to the ROC’s armed forces. Massive amounts of American military and economic aid began to pour into Taiwan. But this did not go far enough to satisfy the ROC government. In 1953, ROC officials approached the Eisenhower administration and proposed that the two countries sign a mutual security treaty. In fact, after meeting with Chiang Kai-shek in 1954, John Foster Dulles, US Secretary of State, reported to President Dwight D. Eisenhower that “the burden of the talks was a great plea by Chiang for a mutual security treaty with the US.”7 But US officials initially demurred. They did not want to conclude a treaty that might somehow result in an American commitment to go to war with the PRC (a conflict Chiang might provoke). President Eisenhower believed that there was little prospect of the KMT ever returning to the mainland and speculated that “Chiang’s only hope was in a general uprising in China, for which Chiang would be called back, like Napoleon from Elba.”8 The administration also did not want to embroil the US in a conflict with China over Taiwan’s offshore islands (most notably Quemoy and Matsu).

PRC military operations during the offshore island crisis of 1954 prompted the Eisenhower administration to reconsider the question of a security pact with Taiwan. On November 23, 1954, the two governments concluded a mutual defense treaty.9 In keeping with American concerns at the time, the document was defensive in nature and did not clearly commit US forces to the protection of the offshore island and other islets claimed by the ROC.

For over two decades following Senate ratification of the US-ROC Mutual Defense Treaty and the passage of the Formosa Resolution in 1955 (a congressional measure that gave the president broad powers to defend Taiwan), the US maintained a firm military alliance with the ROC. The alliance bolstered the KMT regime’s security and enhanced its legitimacy both at home and abroad. But Taiwan was not an American puppet. In fact, the alliance “was very much a give-and take relationship… Chiang Kai-shek seemed to be aware of this fact and manipulated the alliance masterfully.”10

Another major objective in the ROC’s diplomacy during its early decades in Taiwan entailed discouraging foreign governments from switching formal diplomatic recognition to the communist regime in Beijing. Although the ROC suffered a small number of diplomatic setbacks (for example, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom recognized the PRC in 1950 and France switched sides in 1964), it was largely successful in realizing this goal.
Several factors contributed to Taiwan’s success in recruiting and retaining diplomatic allies. First, America’s diplomatic recognition and support was an important consideration that helped keep a large number of Western countries on Taipei’s side. It was an open secret that dozens of non-communist countries would abandon Taiwan as soon as Washington agreed to do so. Second, the PRC’s revolutionary approach to international affairs intimidated and frightened many countries. Fears of a “China on the march” escalated sharply during the early years of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) and even contributed to America’s intervention in the Vietnam conflict:

The Chinese Communist threat to world peace that the Americans and the Chinese Nationalists had so often invoked now began to look real to many countries, including the Soviet Union. Mao declared the Soviet ‘social imperialism’ to be as evil as ‘American imperialism.’ He and Lin Piao called for ‘peoples wars’ across the globe and supported Marxist guerillas in India, Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines. Radicals in the camp of Mao’s wife, Chiang Chi’ng, seized control of foreign policy. Red Guards burned down the British embassy in Peking and harassed the Soviet diplomats and their families.

By the late 1960s, Moscow’s relations with Beijing ultimately deteriorated to such an extent that the Soviet Union opened discussions with the ROC government to explore the feasibility of a coordinated joint attack on the mainland. Third, Taiwan’s foreign aid programs designed to assist nations in the developing world helped Taipei increase its number of diplomatic allies and retain its membership in international organizations. In 1959, Taiwan launched the International Technical Cooperation Program to promote agricultural development in Africa. The program was later expanded to other regions of the world.

Taiwan’s final major diplomatic objective during the 1950s and 1960s was the retention of its membership in the United Nations (UN), where it occupied the Chinese seat in the Security Council. Challenges to Taipei’s seat at the UN began to surface in 1950. However, the US was successful in branding the PRC as an aggressor nation following its intervention in the Korean conflict and from 1951 to 1960, Washington and its allies argued that the PRC did not meet the UN charter’s prerequisites that members must be “peace loving states.” In the early 1960s, as support for Beijing’s admission began to mount, they switched tactics. On December 15, 1961, the General Assembly (GA) adopted Resolution 1668, which stated that “in accordance with Article 18 of the Charter, any proposal to change the representation of China is an important question.” This meant that any change would require a two-thirds majority vote of the GA. The resolution was reaffirmed on several occasions—including during the 1970 meeting of the UN’s 25th GA.

Throughout the early and mid-1960s, the US quietly explored scenarios whereby both the PRC and ROC might participate in the UN. However, Chiang Kai-shek adamantly refused to consider such a possibility. As the Generalissimo.
explained in a letter to President John F. Kennedy, “there is no room for patriots and traitors to live together.”¹⁷

In October, 1971, the UN’s 26th GA rejected the proposition that the Chinese representation issue was “an important question.” This prompted the Nixon administration to launch what some analysts describe as a “half-hearted” effort to promote a “dual recognition” policy that would give Taiwan a seat in the GA.¹⁸ Despite this move, however, a majority of UN members approved Resolution 2758—a “highly unusual” and “unprecedented” measure that authorized a shift in representation for China.¹⁹

Rather than suffer the humiliation of expulsion from the UN, Chiang Kai-shek ordered his delegation to walk out of the global body. Ironically, the Generalissimo had reportedly acquiesced to American pressures and indicated that he might be willing to accept two Chinese seats in the UN.²⁰ But it is doubtful whether Chiang actually instructed his UN delegation to strive for dual representation as ROC diplomats worked against US proposals to seat both Beijing and Taipei.²¹ In any event, it was too late for a deal and there is no indication that Beijing would have agreed to such an arrangement. Taiwan’s withdrawal from the UN signaled the end of its halcyon days in world politics—a golden era during which the ROC government was “larger than life or even larger than the island to which it had been exiled.”²²


The second phase in Taiwan’s foreign relations extended roughly from 1971—the year that Taiwan withdrew from the UN and President Richard M. Nixon announced that he would travel to China—until the late 1980s. During this period, Taipei’s diplomatic position eroded steadily as the island became more and more isolated from the international community.

Events in the early 1970s, including Canada’s recognition of Beijing in 1970, the UN debacle in 1971 and Nixon’s visit to China in 1972, set off a chain of events or a “domino effect” that left the leadership cohort in Taipei reeling. These disasters paved the way for numerous countries to switch diplomatic recognition to Beijing. Between 1971 and 1979, 46 governments broke relations with Taiwan and recognized the communist regime in Beijing.²³ The most crushing blow came when the US severed formal relations with Taipei in January 1979.

It was also during this period that Taiwan lost its membership in most international bodies. Following the loss of its UN seat, Taipei lost representation in numerous other institutions. For example, in 1980 the ROC was forced to yield its World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) seats to Beijing. By the mid-1980s, Taiwan had been expelled from most international organizations.

To be sure, shifts in global politics had contributed to Taiwan’s increasingly precarious international position. In the 1970s, the US and the PRC had forged an informal alliance to combat Soviet expansionism. At the same time, the PRC became more acceptable to the global community toward the end of the most violent phase of the Cultural Revolution. Beijing abandoned its calls for a “world
revolution against reactionary regimes” and now pursued a more nuanced approach to international affairs. But some of the responsibility for Taiwan’s diplomatic defeats must be traced to the ROC government’s dogmatic approach to foreign policy during this period.

Throughout the 1970s, the ROC continued to abide by Chiang Kai-shek’s practice of “not living together with the communist regime under the same sky.” When a nation opted to recognize Beijing, Taipei would sever official relations with that country. Similarly, if an international organization chose to admit the PRC, the ROC would withdraw from it. In short, as a prominent China analyst observed, Taipei’s rigid adherence to its “one China” policy “was like a straitjacket imposed on Taiwan as it gradually lost its international legitimacy as an independent country.”

Following the death of Chiang Kai-shek in April 1975, the ROC gradually began to pursue a more “flexible approach” to foreign affairs. The new policy could perhaps best be considered as a precursor to Taipei’s “pragmatic diplomacy” (see below). President Chiang Ching-kuo sought to replace formal diplomatic ties with strong “substantive” or “unofficial” relations. In order to accomplish this goal, he accelerated the use of person-to-person exchanges, revitalized the government’s foreign aid programs and invited prestigious foreign firms to participate in the island’s lucrative multibillion dollar development programs. Moreover, Chiang Ching-kuo directed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to find ways to replace embassies lost to Beijing with trade offices or other institutions that would carry out all the normal functions of an embassy.

Finally, in 1984, the ROC signaled that it was willing to compromise on some very sensitive issues when it reached a compromise with the International Olympics Committee to compete in the games as “Chinese, Taipei” and not fly the national flag in Olympic ceremonies. These moves helped to pave the way for other changes that would be pursued by Chiang’s successors—President Lee Teng-hui and President Chen Shui-bian.

The final years of the Chiang Ching-kuo presidency witnessed numerous setbacks for Taiwan’s foreign policy. But this period also enjoyed some measure of success. Perhaps most significant, Taipei forged an extraordinarily strong and robust “unofficial” relationship with the US. According to the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) —the law that guides American policy toward Taiwan in the post-normalization period—the US will maintain its “current commercial, cultural, trade and other relations with Taiwan through non-governmental means.” The two countries set up “de facto” embassies that do “just about everything done by the previous embassies.” Moreover, the TRA warns that it is the policy of the US “to consider any attempt to resolve the Taiwan issue by other than peaceful means, including threats or embargoes, a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States.” In terms of arms sales to Taiwan, the law states that the US “will make available to Taiwan such defense articles and defense services in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability.”

Given the fact that the TRA could be accurately described as a “tacit” or “virtual” alliance, it is understandable that Chiang Ching-kuo was pleased with
the arrangement. In fact, toward the end of his life, the president told an American diplomat that US–ROC relations were “better than any time before,” including the 1950s. He even suggested that the break in formal relations was a positive development in the sense that it had led the world to finally see Taiwan as “an autonomous and increasingly important world actor.”

Finally, there is some evidence to suggest that the drift toward diplomatic isolation sparked a legitimation crisis at home and abroad that helped pave the way for Taiwan’s remarkable democratization. According to this view, “the failure of Taipei’s internationally based legitimation required it to replenish its supply of legitimacy by seeking deeper legitimation via democratization at home.” This may have been one of the considerations that ultimately led Chiang Ching-kuo to lift martial law in Taiwan on July 15, 1987—a move that led to numerous other political reforms and full democratization.

**Phrase three: pragmatic diplomacy (1988–present)**

The third phase in Taiwan’s diplomacy extends from the late 1980s to the present. Reflecting President Lee Teng-hui’s 1988 pledge that Taiwan must “strive with greater determination, pragmatism, flexibility and vision in order to upgrade and break though a foreign policy based primarily on substantive relations,” Taiwan adopted a new diplomatic strategy described as “pragmatic diplomacy.” Employing this approach, Taiwan has sought to recover its position in the international community. In fact, President Lee claims that Taiwan would have made no progress in foreign affairs and have “no room for international development” if he had not opted to practice pragmatic diplomacy. Despite the change in administrations in 2000, the ROC continues to practice pragmatic diplomacy. It is for this reason that pragmatic diplomacy will be discussed in much greater detail below.

**II Pragmatic diplomacy**

Since the 1980s, Taiwan has experienced a metamorphosis. Some might even go so far as to describe it as a renaissance. Changes in domestic politics include the lifting of martial law, the legalization of opposition political parties, the deregulation of the media, a revitalization of moribund governmental institutions, a reform of the educational system and a growing sense of Taiwanese consciousness and identity. On March 18, 2000, Taiwanese voters stunned international observers when they went to the polls and for the first time elected a candidate other than one from the ruling KMT as president of the country.

Dramatic transformations in the ROC government’s mainland policies—its relations with the PRC—have accompanied changes in domestic politics. In May 1991, Taiwan unilaterally declared an end to the Chinese Civil War. Bilateral trade has now soared to more than US $60 billion and by 2003 China had replaced the US as Taiwan’s leading trading partner. Moreover, Taiwanese investment in the mainland has soared to over US $100 billion and according to some estimates over a million Taiwanese now live and work in China. On the other hand, tensions
with the PRC have escalated as Taiwan’s presidents have characterized relations between the two sides of the strait as a “state-to-state” relationship and inched the island closer and closer to de jure independence from China.

Perhaps equally significant to the changes in Taiwan’s domestic politics and its relationship with China (often characterized as “something else” that falls between domestic politics and foreign relations), is Taiwan’s current approach to foreign policy. Pragmatic diplomacy calls for (1) the advancement and reinforcement of formal diplomatic ties; (2) the development of substantive relations with countries that do not maintain formal relations with Taiwan; and (3) admission or readmission to international organizations and activities vital to the country’s national interests. The following discussion explores Taiwan’s progress in meeting these objectives.

**Advancement and reinforcement of formal diplomatic relations**

Taiwan is presently recognized by roughly two dozen states (see Table 2.1). Most of these are located in Central America, the Caribbean or the South Pacific. None of these countries could be described as significant actors on the world stage. Although Taipei has won a string of small victories in its struggle with Beijing over diplomatic recognition since adopting pragmatic diplomacy, it also experienced some major defections. The last three important nations to formally recognize Taiwan (Saudi Arabia, South Korea and South Africa) all moved their embassies to Beijing in the 1990s.

Taiwan no longer considers its battle with the PRC over diplomatic recognition as a “zero-sum” game. The establishment of formal relations with Grenada in 1988, a state that still maintained official ties with China, signaled Taiwan’s willingness to abandon its “one China” policy and accept the principle of “dual recognition.”

**Table 2.1 Taiwan’s diplomatic allies (2005)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Republic or Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belize</td>
<td>Republic of the Marshall Islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burkina Fasa</td>
<td>Republic of Nauru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Chad</td>
<td>Republic of Nicaragua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Costa Rica</td>
<td>Republic of Palau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>Republic of Panama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of El Salvador</td>
<td>Republic of Paraguay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Gambia</td>
<td>Saint Christopher and Nevis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Guatemala</td>
<td>Saint Vincent and the Grenadines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Haiti</td>
<td>Sao Tome and Principe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Holy See</td>
<td>Republic of Senegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Honduras</td>
<td>Solomon Islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Kiribati</td>
<td>Kingdom of Swaziland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Malawi</td>
<td>Tuvalu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the world wide web at www.mofa.gov.tw/*
Since that time, Taiwan has established relations with numerous countries that maintain diplomatic ties with the PRC. In December, 2004, Michael Kau, Taiwan’s Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, even went so far as to suggest that Taiwan and China might evenly divide the recognition of one small country, Vanuatu, along geographic lines. The diplomat explained that, since Vanuatu has six provinces, “three provinces Taiwan could help develop economically, the other three provinces China could develop.” However, Beijing refuses to accept the principle of dual recognition. In keeping with its longstanding “one China” policy, China promptly severs diplomatic ties with any country that formally recognizes Taiwan.

The willingness to accept dual recognition represents a dramatic turn in Taiwan’s foreign policy. Initially, Taiwanese officials stressed that the new policy did not reflect an abandonment of the so-called “one-China principle.” During an interview with the author in 1992, Frederick Chien, then Taiwan’s Foreign Minister, stressed that “we still adhere to the position of one China and that Taiwan is a part of China.” By the late 1990s, however, it was clear that “the key objective of ‘pragmatic diplomacy’ was to escape the straightjacket of the ‘one China’ principle so that Taiwan’s de jure independence and sovereignty could be recognized by the international community.” When a diplomat from Vanuatu explained in 2004 that his government could not possibly recognize Taiwan because it maintains “a one-China policy [and a] ‘one Taiwan’ policy. This would be best for you.”

In recent years, Taiwan’s record with respect to advancing or reinforcing formal diplomatic ties with foreign nations has been a mixed one. Some of the island’s “small friends,” including Grenada, Liberia and the Commonwealth of Dominica, recently switched recognition to China. But Taipei has managed thus far to thwart Beijing’s efforts to lure Haiti, Panama and some other Latin American countries into its camp. This is no small feat as the Chen administration claims that it has put an end to the KMT’s long-standing practice of “dollar diplomacy”—a policy whereby Taiwan bribed small countries to remain loyal diplomatic allies. As an alternative to financial payoffs, President Chen has stressed that Taiwan will provide foreign nations with missions that will promote economic development or improve medical conditions, particularly with regard to HIV/AIDS and malaria.

There is evidence to suggest that Taiwan’s emphasis on foreign aid programs may be yielding some dividends. As Tupeni Baba, a former Fijian politician explained, “China may be important in global politics, but not so much in building bridges, water wells and sewer lines…[Taiwan] has a very grass roots approach to issues, that’s why they endear themselves with local politicians and community leaders.” Still, Beijing does its best to ensure that switching to Taipei will cost a developing country dearly. When Macedonia recognized Taiwan, China used its clout in the UN to end a peacekeeping mission in that war-torn country in 2001. Consequently, the former Yugoslav republic switched back to Beijing. Furthermore, despite Taiwanese government protestations to the contrary, there is evidence that Taipei still engages in some forms of “dollar diplomacy” to retain diplomatic allies and the practice has become a divisive issue in the island’s domestic politics.
**Substantive relations**

Although Taiwan maintains formal diplomatic relations with only a handful of states, it maintains “92 representative offices or branch offices in the capitals and major cities of 59 countries.” As outlined in Tables 2.2–2.5, Taiwan’s informal diplomatic network spans the globe.

Taiwan’s diplomatic missions operate under a wide variety of names, including Taipei Representative Office, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office and Trade Mission of the Republic of China. However, the Taiwan government boasts that they all “perform most of the functions of embassies and consulates general.”

When feasible, foreign governments establish a counterpart organization in Taipei. As of 2004, 48 countries had established 58 “unofficial” representative offices or visa issue centers in Taiwan.

Since adopting pragmatic diplomacy, Taiwan has aggressively sought to cultivate or upgrade its substantive relations. During the 1990s, new offices were established in a wide variety of countries including Portugal, India, and a number of countries emerging from the rubble of the former Soviet empire. Several have agreed to establish consular ties—a level of relations just below official recognition.

In addition to forging new bonds, Taiwan has sought to upgrade existing ties. For example, in May 1992, the Japanese government allowed Taiwan to change the name of its representative office in that country from the cryptic Association of East Asian Relations—a name that gave no clue as to the identity of the country that it represented—to the Economic and Cultural Representative Office of Taipei. In September 1994, Washington followed in Tokyo’s footsteps and permitted Taipei to change the puzzling name of its US representative office from the Coordination Council for North American Affairs to the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office.

In 2004, the Chen administration launched a controversial drive to “rectify” the names of some of the island’s diplomatic outposts and state-owned corporations.

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**Table 2.2 Taiwan’s unofficial representative offices in North and South America**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>Commercial and Cultural Office of Taipei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>Commercial Office of Taiwan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Economic and Cultural Office of Taipei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Cultural Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>Economic and Cultural Office of Taipei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>Commercial Office of Taipei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>Commercial Office of the Republic of China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Economic and Cultural Office of Taipei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>Economic and Cultural Office of Taipei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>Economic and Cultural Office of Taipei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the world wide web at www.mofa.gov.tw/
As part of this initiative, the government is now seeking to replace the word “Taipei” with “Taiwan” in its “unofficial” overseas representative offices—a move that has met with resistance in the US and some other countries. The government is even

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.3</th>
<th>Taiwan’s unofficial representative offices in East Asia and the Pacific</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Cultural Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Taipei Representative Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Cultural Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>Trade Mission of the Republic of China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>Chung Hwa Travel Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Cultural Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Trade Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macau</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Cultural Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Cultural Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Cultural Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
<td>Trade Mission of the Republic of China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Cultural Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>Taipei Representative Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
<td>Taipei Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Cultural Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Cultural Office</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the world wide web at www.mofa.gov.tw/*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.4</th>
<th>Taiwan’s unofficial representative offices in the Middle East, West Asia and Africa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>Trade Mission of Taiwan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belarus</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Trade Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Cultural Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Commercial Office of the Republic of China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>Taipei Commercial Representative Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>Taipei Trade and Economic Representative Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Trade Mission of the Republic of China (Taiwan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Cultural Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Representative Office for the Taipei-Moscow Economic and Cultural Coordination Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Taipei Liaison Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Taipei Economic and Cultural Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>Commercial Office of the Republic of China</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the world wide web at www.mofa.gov.tw/*
studying the idea of changing the name of its official embassies. Thus far, however, only the name plaque of the ROC embassy in the Pacific island-nation of Kiribati has been modified to include the name “Taiwan.” Diplomatic personnel explain that, as the ROC embassy is located directly opposite the former PRC embassy, the name “Taiwan” has been added to the front of the building in order to avoid confusion.42

Taiwan is also managing to raise the acceptable level of government-to-government communication. In 1991, Roger Fauroux, French Minister of Industry, became the first European cabinet-level official to visit Taipei in more than two decades. Shortly after this visit, the US sent Thomas Duesterberg, US Assistant Secretary of Commerce, to Taiwan. These trips helped to pave the way for calls by cabinet-level ministers from Italy, Ireland, Sweden, Great Britain and numerous other nations. Perhaps most surprising to some observers, American military teams—specialists removed in 1979 as a precondition for establishing relations with China—have returned to Taiwan. US military personnel now observe Taiwanese defense exercises and offer military advice.

In addition to foreign dignitaries visiting Taiwan, high-ranking Taiwanese officials have traveled abroad to bolster relations with other countries. President Lee
paid “unofficial” visits to the Southeast Asian countries of Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand in 1994. That same year, he also visited the United Arab Emirates and Jordan. In 1995, Lee became the first ROC president ever to visit the US—an event that prompted China to launch a series of provocative “missile tests” in the Taiwan Strait and contributed to a sharp downturn in cross-strait relations.

With respect to “visit diplomacy” or “vacation diplomacy,” President Chen has sought to follow in Lee’s footsteps. The Taiwanese president has enjoyed several high-profile visits to the US. In May 2001, Chen was granted a transit visa to “rest” in New York City and Houston while en route to Central America. In a notable departure from the past treatment accorded high-ranking Taiwanese officials, Chen was permitted to meet with American lawmakers during the visit. Consequently, he met with Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and 20 legislators during a three-day stay in New York City and enjoyed a barbecue with Representative Tom DeLay (R.-Texas) during a visit to Texas.

In October 2003, President Chen returned to New York City while en route to Panama. In addition to meeting with American lawmakers, the president delivered a public speech, met with members of the press and posed for photographs with the UN building in the background. Upon his arrival in Panama, Chen publicly shook hands with Colin Powell, then the US Secretary of State, during an event celebrating that country’s one hundredth birthday. Upon his return to Taiwan, Chen boasted that his journey to the US and Panama represented “a foreign policy breakthrough.” Many Taiwanese appeared to agree with the president’s assessment as his approval rating jumped seven points after the trip.

The Chen visits helped pave the way for a steady stream of other high-ranking Taiwanese officials to journey to the US. Recent visitors have included the vice president, defense minister, the president’s wife and a host of lawmakers and politicians. In fact, Ma Ying-jeou, widely considered to be the front-runner in the 2008 presidential election, spent over a week in Washington in 2006. In some instances officials were granted transit visas. In other cases, however, the US was the final destination for the visitors.

Finally, Taiwan is achieving significant breakthroughs in improving global transportation and communications linkages and otherwise strengthening cooperation with countries that no longer have diplomatic relations with Taipei. For example, Taiwan has established air links with most of the world’s major countries (including special arrangements for direct travel to the PRC during the Lunar New Year holidays) and its largest air carriers—China Airlines and Eva Airlines—now serve numerous cities in Europe.

International organizations

International organizations are often divided into two broad categories—intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). By employing pragmatic diplomacy, Taiwan is making a strong bid to join (or rejoin) the world’s major IGOs and NGOs.
When attempting to gain admission to an international body, Taiwan no longer insists on the PRC’s expulsion from the institution. Taiwan also is willing to accept membership in organizations under names other than its official designation—the Republic of China. Moreover, beginning with its participation in the 1989 Asian Development Bank (ADB) meeting in Beijing, Taipei has agreed to participate in international conferences or activities conducted in mainland China.

Taiwan has enjoyed its greatest success in joining NGOs. According to the ROC’s calculations, the island “participated in the activities of 2,074 international NGOs as of the end of November 2002.” These organizations have provided emergency humanitarian relief in over 50 nations, participated in the US-led anti-terrorism campaign and helped in Iraqi reconstruction efforts. In short, NGOs are considered a vital part of Taiwan’s drive to use unconventional diplomatic tactics to achieve foreign policy goals.

Taiwan’s efforts to participate in the world’s most important IGOs have met with limited success. Due to China’s obstructionism, Taiwan enjoys full membership in only 22 IGOs. But it participates as an “observer” or an “associate” in 14 other institutions.

Beijing has grudgingly acquiesced to Taipei’s participation in IGOs with an economic focus. In 1988, Taiwan resumed participation in the ADB under the name “Taipei, China.” In 1991, it accepted membership in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum under the title “Chinese, Taipei.” In 1992, Taiwan entered the South Pacific Forum using the name “Taiwan/Republic of China.” Taiwan also participates, albeit “unofficially” in the Pacific Basin Economic Community (PBEC) and the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference (PECC). More recently, Taipei has sought to become a full economic dialogue partner of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), and it now participates as an “economy” in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). It also participates as an economy (“the Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Jimmen and Matsu”) in the World Trade Organization (WTO).

At the present time, Taiwan is directing its energies toward rejoining two of the world’s most important IGOs—the UN and the World Health Organization (WHO). The UN campaign was launched in 1993 when President Lee proclaimed that “we will actively seek participation in the United Nations” and Taiwan’s Foreign Ministry announced that reentering the world body would be its “first priority.” Ever since that time, a group of Taiwan’s diplomatic allies, all of whom have benefited from generous ROC aid packages, grants or low interest loans, have annually presented various proposals to the UN requesting that it find a way to allow Taipei’s participation in the organization. In 2005, things were different—there were two Taiwan-related proposals that were submitted to the UN. The representatives of 15 countries also requested that the UN play an active role in promoting peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. Thus far, however, the UN campaign in all its various guises has been stalled. In fact, even the US has failed to get behind it.
In 1997, Taiwan launched a campaign to rejoin the WHO as an observer. Since that time, proposals calling for Taiwan’s participation as an observer have been submitted to the steering committee of the World Health Assembly (WHA) on an annual basis. Like the UN campaign, each year a group of countries with diplomatic ties to Taiwan will raise the issue. But Washington and Tokyo have also voiced support for Taipei’s admission to the WHO.

Beginning in 2002, Taiwan has sought admission to the WHO as a non-state actor—a “health entity” with “observer” status. Officials reason that this approach might ultimately prove acceptable to Beijing. After all, Taiwan participates in the WTO as an “economic entity” and in various international fishing institutions as a “fishing entity.” Moreover, a variety of “non-state” actors participate in the WHO as observers, while others—including Puerto Rico and Tokelau—participate as “associate members.”

Taiwan’s push to participate in the WHO has been energized by a number of health emergencies, especially the island’s disastrous 1999 earthquake and the 2003 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic. The PRC seeks to block Taiwan’s participation, believing that the campaign is nothing more than a part of a conspiracy to promote Taiwan’s independence. However, an increasing number of states agree that the island’s participation in the organization makes sense as a matter of public health and that isolating Taiwan could prove a threat to the health of the entire global community. Taiwanese officials believe that it is only a matter of time before Taiwan returns to the WHO and there are hopeful signs that China ultimately may agree to this.

Summary

The discussion above includes most of the major diplomatic initiatives undertaken by Taiwan since adopting the practice of pragmatic diplomacy. But a more complete discussion would also examine other programs as well. For example, President Chen is pushing for Taiwan to establish free trade agreements (FTAs) with a number of trading partners around the world. Highest on Taipei’s wish-list is a FTA with the US. Moreover, Taiwan’s Ministry of National Defense (MND) hopes to expand ties with the US. But MND officials hope for more than an increase in American arms transfers and hardware. They also seek an increase in military-to-military contacts, including joint US–Taiwan military exercises. Perhaps most important, Taiwan is striving to somehow maintain a delicate balance between “safeguarding its sovereignty” and provoking Beijing. As described in following chapters, the US has warned Taiwan repeatedly about provocative statements and moves guaranteed to infuriate the PRC. The White House apparently fears that Taiwan is moving too close to declaring itself independent of China—a development that could ignite a war in the western Pacific at a time when US forces are tied down in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere in the global war against terrorism. Perhaps most worrisome for Taipei’s foreign policy agenda, however, is the fact that the war against terrorism and the North Korean nuclear crisis have helped push Washington and Beijing closer together.
III Future trends

To many analysts of international relations, the ROC appears an enigma. It was a founding member of the UN, but it no longer possesses a seat in that global body or any of its affiliated organizations. Despite its democratization and status as one of the world’s largest trading nations, only a handful of small nations now maintain diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Although Washington abrogated its defense treaty with Taipei in 1979, the island remains highly dependent on the US for its security. Today, more than five decades after the ROC fled mainland China and retreated to Taiwan, the PRC still refuses to acknowledge the existence of the Taiwanese government and will not rule out the use of force to take the island. As Lee Teng-hui, former president of Taiwan, observed during an interview with the author, Taiwan “is a very complicated case.”

During the 1970s, Taiwan became increasingly isolated from the global community and “many foreign nations considered the ROC a passing phenomenon and hesitated to make contact with it.” Ironically, this drift toward diplomatic extinction coincided with a period of rapid social and political change on the island and its emergence as a world-class economy. Just as the island’s corporations and citizens went abroad for business, Taiwan’s isolation accelerated and “the quality of its service in international interactions deteriorated.” Indeed, Taiwanese businessmen discovered that they could not even obtain visas to some of the world’s major trading countries. Many Taiwanese came to the conclusion that desperate times required desperate measures.

Since its adoption in the late 1980s, pragmatic diplomacy has yielded numerous dividends for Taiwan. The island’s participation in the world’s major international economic institutions (particularly the WTO) enables it to have a voice in decisions that will have a direct impact on the welfare of the Taiwanese people. The maintenance of diplomatic ties with foreign nations helps Taiwan safeguard its continued existence as a sovereign and independent state in the international system. As Mark Chen, then Taiwan’s foreign minister, explained, “diplomatic ties are an important symbol of a sovereign state.” If formal relations are not possible, “informal,” “substantive” or “virtual” ties serve as an excellent substitute. Some even contend that Taiwan’s ever expanding and complex international linkages, irrespective of their precise forms, bolster the island’s security and deter PRC aggression. According to this view, “an assault on Taiwan would harm the PRC economically and damage Beijing’s relationships with Taiwan’s global networks of political and economic partners.” Finally, Taiwan’s foreign policy successes have bolstered the government’s domestic legitimacy. Public opinion polls reveal that an overwhelming majority of the Taiwanese people consider their island to be a sovereign and independent state.

Taiwan is no longer completely isolated. But Taipei’s diplomatic victories are exacting a high cost. Namely, they are evoking negative reactions from the PRC—a rising global power and a major player on the world stage that also happens to enjoy the fastest growing economy on earth. China is stepping up its military modernization program. But military pressure represents only one option in
Beijing’s strategic calculus. China is also employing its economic muscle and diplomatic leverage in a massive campaign to convince foreign nations that Taiwan is an international troublemaker. Many countries—including the US—are now heeding Beijing’s call to “keep Taiwan in the box.”
Countless stimuli influence a state’s foreign policy behavior and each level of analysis contributes something to one’s understanding of a government’s foreign policy outcomes. This chapter examines evidence supporting the proposition that the system level of analysis best explains Taiwan’s foreign policy conduct. It shows how external factors have long exercised an inordinate degree of influence over the island’s foreign relations. Indeed, it is probable that two great powers—the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and the US—will continue to be crucially important players in Taiwan’s foreign policy calculations.

I The system level of analysis and Taiwan’s position in the global community

According to the system level of analysis, a wide variety of external considerations may shape the foreign policy behavior of any given state. These factors include the configuration of the international system (whether it is unipolar, bipolar or multipolar), the relative power, size and influence of a state in that system, the territorial ambitions or designs of other states in the system, and a state’s participation in international organizations and alliances. For example, the foreign policy orientation of neutrality chosen by Switzerland might be attributed to the fact that it is a relatively small, land-locked state located at the juncture of the major powers of Europe, including Germany, France and Italy. Or the low-profile political role played by some of the newly independent Central Asian states might, in part, have been chosen in recognition that bold foreign policy initiatives might be resisted by large neighboring states like Russia.

Geographic realities may play an especially important role when examining foreign policy behavior. The landscape of a country, its location, size, resources, level of development, neighbors and inhabitants will all have an imprint in the designing and implementation of the foreign policy of that particular state. In short, a state’s physical environment and geographical realities may serve “as a major backdrop determining the orientations of foreign policy even in an age of global economy and urban sprawl.”

All states are subject to pressures from outside their borders. But small states seem to be especially susceptible to external factors. According to conventional
wisdom, the “influences of actors and conditions outside a state’s borders are considered to be greater for small states than for the ‘movers and shakers’ in the international system.” A recent study of small state behavior concurs that “small state foreign policy is heavily constrained by systemic factors… international and regional dynamics are always at the top not only of small states’ foreign policy agendas, but also of the list of forces that explain those agendas and the behavior directed at them.” [emphasis added].

A small state may conceivably wield considerable influence over other states. It may even play an important role in the international system as a whole. Nevertheless, a small state is distinct from a great power in that it is “a state which recognizes that it cannot obtain security primarily by use of its own capabilities and that it must rely fundamentally on the aid of others.” The ROC on Taiwan is such a state.

Taiwan has been described as “a minuscule island with scantiness of resources, with an exploding population and with few friends.” The island has a population of roughly 23 million that has been crammed into a territory of only 14,000 square miles (roughly the same size as America’s state of West Virginia). Taiwan is situated between Japan and the Philippines and occupies an important strategic position linking the waterways of the Pacific and Indian oceans. It lies approximately 100 miles off the coast of China, a continental power that has repeatedly sworn that it has a “sacred mission” to reunify with Taiwan and will not rule out the use of force to realize this goal.

Other than Israel, it is difficult to imagine any other modern state that confronts a more asymmetrical and unfavorable environment than Taiwan. As a US Naval War College study observed, “Taiwan suffers from small size, lack of strategic depth, and proximity to threat… [defensive] forces would be faced with an unfavorable geographic position—the defense of a small island only a hundred nautical miles away from a hostile continental power in possession of a long coastline and significant strategic depth, including active defense far out to sea.”

To be sure, Taiwan occupies an unenviable geopolitical position in the global community. But complicating matters further is the fact that no clear consensus has emerged within Taiwan as to whether the island eventually should seek unification or de jure independence from its gigantic neighbor. As Chen Shui-bian, Taiwan’s president, observed, it appears that the Taiwanese cannot agree whether their island is part of China, independent of China or perhaps something else. Moreover, Taiwan’s chief friend and protector—the United States—no longer formally recognizes the Taiwanese government as a sovereign state and is not legally bound to defend it from China. As discussed below, America’s commitment to the island’s continued survival has been shaped largely by external events that are beyond Taipei’s control.

II Taiwan: a shrimp between whales

The Korean people sometimes complain that their country may be compared to “a shrimp between whales.” Throughout Korea’s history, the nation has found itself
at the mercy of large powers such as Japan, China or Russia. More recently, the United States has wielded considerable influence on the Korean peninsula.

Like Korea, Taiwan could be described as a shrimp between whales. For centuries, the island’s fate has been shaped largely by external events and outside pressures. The discussion below examines several stages in Taiwan’s political development and shows how geopolitical and geostrategic considerations have prompted external powers to play a major role in the trajectory of the island’s internal and external affairs.

The early years in Taiwan: from backwater prefecture to colony

It is believed that aborigines, an ethnic group that now constitute less than two percent of Taiwan’s population, began to settle in Taiwan several millennia ago.10 Chinese began to emigrate to the island during the Tang dynasty (618–907). Although Portuguese, Spanish and Dutch imperialists sought to occupy Taiwan (the Dutch actually ruled it for roughly 40 years), it was loosely administered as a prefecture of the mainland Chinese province of Fujian from 1683 until 1886, at which time it became a separate province of China. For most of this period, however, Taiwan was considered as a “backwater” of Chinese politics and received little attention from the central government.

In 1895, following China’s defeat in the first Sino–Japanese War, Taiwan was formally ceded to the Empire of Japan by the Treaty of Shimonoseki. Efforts by local inhabitants to resist the occupation and establish an independent republic were brutally crushed by Japanese troops and received no support from the impotent and corrupt Chinese government. For five decades, Tokyo ruled Taiwan and conducted foreign relations on its behalf.

The Japanese viewed Taiwan as an important strategic asset. During World War II, the island was used as a staging area for Japan’s invasion of Hong Kong, Burma, Singapore and the Philippines. As part of the Japanese Empire, the Taiwanese were compelled to support Tokyo’s imperialist war aims. Thousands of Taiwanese were conscripted into the Japanese military and perished in the global conflict.

On December 1, 1943, the US, the Republic of China (ROC) and the United Kingdom issued the Cairo Declaration, a document proclaiming that “all territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa and the Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China [emphasis added].”11 In keeping with this agreement and other wartime pacts, the ROC began to govern Taiwan following Japan’s unconditional surrender in 1945.12 The Taiwanese population was never consulted about this arrangement.

Taiwan during an era of rigid global bipolarity

In 1945, forces loyal to the ROC government of Chiang Kai-shek arrived in Taiwan to oversee the Japanese surrender on the island. Almost five decades later, Lee Teng-hui, then the ROC’s president, complained that an “alien regime” had
arrived in Taiwan in 1945—a sentiment that came to be shared by numerous Taiwanese.\textsuperscript{13} Inept and corrupt ROC governance sparked a Taiwanese uprising that was brutally suppressed on February 28, 1947. It is estimated that 20,000 to 30,000 people perished in this massacre.

In 1949, Chiang Kai-shek, his government and military and more than a million refugees poured into Taiwan. China’s gold reserves and art treasures also were transferred to the island. But few believed that ROC forces could hold out for long against the Chinese communists.

As conditions deteriorated in the mainland, many of the unsavory elements associated with the Chiang regime cast a vote of “no confidence” with their feet and chose to emigrate to safer havens such as America or Hong Kong, rather than risk capture in Taiwan. But elements within the ROC government believed that the island’s strategic importance might eventually lead the US to reverse its policy of non-intervention in the Chinese civil war and to intervene on its behalf. During a meeting on April 8, 1949, George Yeh, then ROC Foreign Minister, “indicated that since the US is thought to consider Taiwan an essential link in its Western Pacific defense chain, there was little likelihood that it would be allowed to fall to the Reds.”\textsuperscript{14} Ultimately, the foreign minister’s prediction proved correct.

During 1949 and the early months of 1950, reports about Taiwan’s chances to hold out against PRC forces grew increasingly pessimistic. In 1949, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) reported to President Harry S. Truman that “no amount of US aid, short of armed intervention and control of Taiwan, can ensure its indefinite survival as a non-communist area.”\textsuperscript{15} On April 10, 1950, the CIA reported that “the fall of Taiwan before the end of 1950 still seems the most likely course of future developments.”\textsuperscript{16} Department of State personnel concurred with this assessment. On May 17, following the fall of Hainan and the unexpected evacuation of the Chussan Islands, the American chargé in China informed the secretary of state that “in the opinion of attaches and myself (the) fate of Taiwan is sealed.”\textsuperscript{17} Two days later, Americans were advised to withdraw from Taiwan as soon as possible.\textsuperscript{18} Not surprisingly, conditions in Taiwan grew tense as KMT forces rounded up suspected communists and subversive elements (including independence activists) and prepared for the final showdown of the Chinese Civil War.

In 1949, the Department of State had issued a directive to US representatives stationed abroad instructing them as to how they should respond publicly to the anticipated fall of Taiwan. Embassy personnel were notified to explain that Taiwan “politically, geographically and strategically, is part of China in no way distinguished or important.”\textsuperscript{19} Moreover, they were told to stress that the island has no “special military significance” and will provide “no special strategic advantage to the Chinese Communist armed forces.”\textsuperscript{20} But this view was not shared by all elements within the US government.

For several years, American military planners had been warning that, while Taiwan might not improve American military capabilities in East Asia, it would certainly enhance the military capabilities of any power hostile to the US. Shortly before the outbreak of the Korean conflict, General Douglas MacArthur, then
Commander in Chief Far East (CINCFE), suggested that Taiwan both “geographically and strategically” represented an “integral part” of America’s “western strategic frontier… extending from the Aleutians through the Philippine Archipelago.” MacArthur described the island as “an unsinkable aircraft carrier and submarine tender” and warned that its occupation by an unfriendly power “would be a disaster of utmost importance.”

International political developments—particularly the signing of the Sino–Soviet treaty of mutual assistance in 1950—bolstered the view among American decision-makers that Taiwan would indeed be occupied by a hostile power. Consequently, Truman administration officials discussed a number of schemes aimed at preventing Taiwan’s fall to the PRC including the idea of UN Trusteeship for Taiwan, Taiwan independence, support for a coup d’état, and even returning the island to Japan. However, there is no evidence that any of these plans advanced beyond the talking stage. Rather, the Truman administration continued to express its determination to avoid actions that would lead the US to become embroiled in the Chinese civil war.

Following the outbreak of the Korean conflict on June 25, 1950, the Truman administration reversed its policy toward Taiwan. Not surprisingly, strategic considerations played a key role in the president’s decision. On June 27, 1950, President Truman made the following announcement:

The occupation of Formosa by Communist forces would be a direct threat to the security of the Pacific area and the United States forces performing their lawful and necessary functions in that area. Accordingly, I have ordered the Seventh Fleet to prevent any attack on Formosa. As a corollary of this action I am calling upon the Chinese Government on Formosa to cease all air and sea operations against the mainland. The Seventh Fleet will see that it’s done. The determination of the future status of Formosa must await the restoration of security in the Pacific, a peace settlement with Japan, or consideration by the United Nations [emphasis added].

Truman suspected that the North Korean invasion was launched with the support of the PRC and USSR. As such, it represented an important battle in the war against the expansion of a communist empire in East Asia. However, it is also likely that domestic political considerations contributed to Truman’s decision to deploy the fleet to the waters surrounding Taiwan. After all, pressures had been mounting for the president to do something to save Taiwan and by 1949, “the question of Taiwan had become embroiled in American domestic politics.”

It is noteworthy that Truman did not “neutralize” the Taiwan Strait to rescue Chiang Kai-shek or the Taiwanese. In fact, the American president detested Chiang and his KMT government. In August 1950, General MacArthur observed that Truman “had conceived a violent animosity toward Chiang Kai-Shek.” This view did not soften over time. Long after his retirement from the presidency, Truman insisted that “I never changed my mind about Chiang and his gang… every damn one of them ought to be in jail and I’d like to live to see the day they are.”
Moreover, US policy still held out the possibility that Taiwan might be returned to mainland China once hostilities ceased on the Korean peninsula.

China’s intervention in the Korean conflict in November 1950 led to a hardening of US policy and was a major factor leading to the development of the rigid bipolar structure that characterized the international system during the first decades of the Cold War. US government officials abandoned all hopes of reaching some sort of understanding or accommodation with the communist government in Beijing. Plans to remove the Seventh Fleet from the Taiwan Strait and resolve the international status of Taiwan after a cessation of hostilities in Korea were shelved indefinitely. On the contrary, China’s entry into Korea moved Washington closer to Taipei and Beijing closer to Moscow. But much to the chagrin of both the ROC and the PRC, the US now adopted the position that Taiwan’s international status was undetermined.

On May 17, 1951, President Truman approved NSC 48/5, a document proclaiming that the US would “deny Formosa to any Chinese regime aligned with or dominated by the USSR and expedite the strengthening of the defensive capabilities of Formosa.” American military and economic aid began to pour into Taiwan during the final years of the Truman administration and the two countries signed a mutual defense pact in 1954 during the Eisenhower administration. For over two decades, the US was formally aligned with the KMT government in Taipei. The relationship grew especially close during the 1950s, an era of intense cold war rivalry when the US and its allies confronted a unified Sino–Soviet bloc. Ties between the two governments “were determined by their mutual interests rather than the form of government Taipei adopted.”

For Taiwan, the US–ROC alliance yielded more dividends than those normally associates with a security pact—extended deterrence and military assistance during a conflict. The KMT regime also gained both domestic and international legitimacy. The strong American support enabled Taipei to hold onto its seat in the UN and other international organizations, and maintain formal diplomatic relations with many of the most important states in the global community. It also bolstered Taipei’s claim to be the legitimate government of all China. In short, a seismic shift in the structure of the international system and the American support for Taiwan that accompanied this transformation played a pivotal role in Taipei’s ability to conduct foreign relations. Indeed, without US support it is questionable whether the ROC could have survived as a sovereign state.

The US–ROC alliance was not entirely a one-sided affair. The pact provided Washington with more benefits than simply denying a strategically important island outpost and/or a degree of international legitimacy to a hostile power. Throughout much of the Cold War, the ROC proved to be an extremely useful ally. The US employed the island as a base for U-2 reconnaissance flights over the PRC (the planes were manned by ROC pilots) and Taipei shared much of the human intelligence that its espionage agents gathered on the mainland with relevant US intelligence agencies. Taiwan even dispatched several hundred military and paramilitary personnel from the ROC’s Special Warfare Center to Vietnam.
during the mid-1960s. Furthermore, the US could always count on the ROC to champion the causes of “the free world” in the United Nations and other international forums.

The US–ROC alliance proved to be an extraordinarily close and cooperative relationship. But it also was fraught with the same tensions and suspicions that characterize most alliances. As Glenn Snyder explained in his classic study, “The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics,” the partners in an alliance often fear abandonment and/or entrapment. If a state considers itself more dependent on its ally, it will fear abandonment. On the other hand, if a state perceives that an ally’s security interests deviate from its own defense concerns, it will fear that it will be entrapped in a conflict with other states over issues that are of little concern to its own security.

Throughout the decades of the US–ROC alliance, officials in Taipei feared the ROC government would be abandoned by Washington. Given America’s abandonment of the KMT regime in the late 1940s, the history of US–ROC relations was not especially reassuring. Suspecting that the Americans might betray Taiwan, the ROC vigorously opposed all US contacts with the PRC during talks conducted in Geneva and Warsaw in the 1950s and 1960s. Moreover, Taipei sought and received assurances that it would receive briefings about the content of all US–PRC negotiations. Perhaps most important, however, Taipei received a formal pledge from John Foster Dulles, then US Secretary of State, that “the US will not enter into negotiations dealing with the territories or rights of the ROC except in cooperation with the ROC.”

Unlike their counterparts in Taipei, officials in Washington feared both abandonment and entrapment. Chiang Kai-shek understood that Taiwan’s strategic importance and domestic political clout within the US provided his regime with leverage over US decision makers. Perhaps borrowing a page from his World War II experiences, the Generalissimo extracted numerous concessions from the Americans (including support for disastrous guerilla raids on the mainland and muted criticism of the regime’s human rights violations) by threatening them with the prospect of collapse and turmoil. Most important for Chiang, he received assurances from his American friends that the US might eventually support operations to recover the mainland. If Chiang had concluded that there was no prospect for retaking the mainland and reuniting his country, there was a real possibility that he would defect from the alliance and abandon the Americans:

Nationalist leaders were Chinese patriots committed to the establishment of China as a leading world power. They had no interest in becoming instruments of the permanent alienation of Taiwan from the Chinese nation, a role that would condemn them to being recorded by future Chinese historians as traitors to the Han race. If Nationalist leaders were confronted with the reality that their great mission of overthrowing the Communists could simply not be fulfilled, in part because of US support, Nationalist leaders might strike a deal with the CCP.
In addition to fears of abandonment, Washington feared entrapment. Support for Chiang’s efforts to recover the mainland might drag the US into a global conflict with the Sino-Soviet bloc. Consequently, the US acquiesced to support limited ROC offensive operations against the PRC, while seeking to convince Chiang and other KMT leaders to use “political means” to achieve the ultimate victory.™ Moreover, whenever Chiang’s representatives approached their alliance partners to request the military support to retake China, as was the case during the PRC’s disastrous Great Leap Forward (1958–1960), the Americans replied that the time was not yet ripe for such an operation. Fearing abandonment by Chiang, however, the US never completely ruled out support for military action against Mao’s regime sometime in the distant future.

In sum, a momentous shift in the structure of the international system during the late 1940s and early 1950s led Washington to scrap its policy of abandonment of the ROC and enter into an economic, political and strategic partnership with Taipei that enabled the Chiang regime to survive and prosper. As one study observed, each party had “its own axe to grind” and the end result was a relationship that might best be characterized as “a quaint combination of partnership and bitterness.”™ Although both parties feared abandonment by the other, it would be the US that ultimately defected from the formal alliance. Once again, external events—another shift in global politics with which Taiwan had practically nothing to do—had a dramatic impact on Taiwan and its ability to conduct foreign affairs.

Taiwan and the end of the US–ROC alliance

The disintegration of the Sino–Soviet bloc beginning in the late 1950s signaled the end of the era of rigid, bipolar global politics. Although the international system could not yet be described as truly multipolar, it had definitely changed. There was now more room for states to maneuver within the system and shift alliances to balance the power of other states.

Initially, changes in the international system had little impact on Taiwan or the alliance structures that had come to characterize the global community since China’s intervention in the Korean War. Much of this may be traced to the fact that Beijing’s leadership cohort embraced a fanatically hostile approach to relations with both Washington and Moscow. In fact, during the early to mid-1960s, many American defense planners considered the PRC to be the more threatening of the two communist giants. With the passage of time, however, the US and the PRC began gradually to view each other from another perspective.

The series of historic steps that led ultimately to the rapprochement between the US and China have been extensively documented elsewhere and there is no need to recite them here. However, it is important to gain an understanding of the forces that pushed these two adversaries together and how the new relationship undermined Taiwan’s ability to function as a sovereign state.

As the 1960s had witnessed a steady escalation in Beijing’s tensions with Moscow, the PRC had ample motivation to abandon its dual adversary strategy toward the superpowers and patch up relations with the US. The 1968 Soviet
invasion of its communist ally, Czechoslovakia, and the subsequent proclamation of the Brezhnev Doctrine alarmed Beijing. But most worrisome was the 1969 clash between the PRC and Soviet militaries along their respective borders. According to one account, the crisis led to “genuine panic in China, at both the elite and popular level.”39 At one point, Soviet representatives even approached officials in Washington and Taipei to discuss possible support for a preemptive nuclear strike on the PRC.

As for its part, a variety of geopolitical and strategic considerations played a major role in the American decision to seek a rapprochement with the PRC. President Richard M. Nixon sought to enlist Beijing’s aid in achieving an honorable end to America’s involvement in the Vietnam War. His administration also gradually came to view the PRC “as a desirable counterweight to the Soviet Union which was rapidly gaining strategic nuclear parity with the United States.”40 But it would be an exaggeration to suggest that only strategic factors led to Nixon’s 1972 trip to China. The president and his aides calculated that a major breakthrough in relations with the PRC would boost his chances for re-election in 1972.41

As described above, China’s leader’s realized that they needed America’s assistance to counter a growing Soviet threat. But they also were cognizant of the fact that America held the key to the recovery of Taiwan—a matter they considered China’s most important “domestic” political problem. It is now clear that both considerations were of paramount importance to the PRC at the time and that Chinese leaders insisted on meaningful concessions on the Taiwan issue before any new relationship with America could move forward. In fact, the Chinese initially insisted that talks must focus only on the removal of American military forces from Taiwan—a precondition the US rejected.42

In their memoirs, both Nixon and Henry Kissinger stressed that negotiations with Chinese leaders focused largely on other issues—particularly the Soviet threat. The president even went so far as to proclaim that he had held firm to his belief that the US “could not and should not abandon the Taiwanese” because America was “committed to Taiwan’s right to exist as an independent nation.”43 But recently declassified documents reveal that the Nixon administration made important concessions related to Taiwan without informing American lawmakers, the American public, or Taiwan.

In July 1971, Henry Kissinger, then US national security adviser, violated America’s pledge to notify Taiwan of any meetings with China when he embarked on a secret journey to Beijing to open a dialogue with PRC leaders. Contrary to the accounts in his memoirs, The White House Years, much of the discussion focused on Taiwan.44 During talks with Premier Zhou Enlai, the premier asked Kissinger about the US government’s attitude toward the Taiwan independence movement and Taiwan’s independence from China. The national security adviser replied, “the Taiwanese? We do not support this.”45 Given the fact that only several months earlier, in April 1971, the Department of State had reiterated the official US position that “in our view sovereignty over Taiwan and the Pescadores is an unsettled question,” this pledge represented a meaningful concession.46 Kissinger also promised
his Chinese hosts that no US government employee would encourage or support
the independence movement. He even boasted that, “if you [Zhou] have informa-
tion of any American engaging in those activities and you give me his name, I can
promise in the name of the president he will be removed.”

More significant than Kissinger’s pledge to oppose Taiwan’s independence
were concessions related to the future of Taiwan. When Zhou insisted that Taiwan
was “an inalienable part of Chinese territory that must be restored to the mother-
land;” Kissinger promised, “as for the political future of Taiwan, we are not
advocating a ‘two Chinas’ solution or a ‘one China, one Taiwan’ solution.” This
pledge eventually was enshrined in the US–China Joint Communiqué of 1982.

But much more sweeping was Kissinger’s reassurance to Zhou that Taiwan’s
“political evolution is likely to be in the direction which Prime Minister Zhou
Enlai indicated [emphasis added].” It would appear that the US national security
adviser had conceded that Taiwan eventually would be absorbed by the PRC
regime.

Declassified documents also have yielded some surprises relating to President
Nixon’s 1972 visit to China. In addition to surreptitiously providing the PRC with
top secret intelligence on the Soviet Union (the Pentagon, CIA and other relevant
agencies within the US government were not informed of this action), the US side
made more concessions on Taiwan. During his meeting with Zhou Enlai, Nixon
outlined five principles he claimed would guide American policy toward the PRC:

- There is one China and Taiwan is a part of China;
- There will be no more statements indicating that Taiwan’s international status
  is undetermined;
- The US will discourage Japan from moving into Taiwan or supporting
  Taiwan’s independence;
- The US will support any peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue that can be
  worked out and will not support any military attempts by Taiwan’s govern-
  ment to retake the mainland and
- The US seeks the normalization of relations with the PRC.

Portions of the Nixon and Kissinger pledges went far beyond official US policy
toward Taiwan as outlined in the 1972 Shanghai Communiqué, the 1979 US–PRC
Normalization Communiqué, the Taiwan Relations Act and the US–China Joint
Communiqué of 1982. For example, a careful examination of all the US–China
communiqués reveals that Washington only acknowledges Beijing’s position that
there is one China and Taiwan is a part of China. The word “acknowledge” was
purportedly employed to indicate cognizance of the PRC position, but not neces-
sarily agreement with it. However, it appears that Nixon stated plainly that
Taiwan is a part of China during his 1972 visit to China. As described, Kissinger
seems to have made the astonishing concession that Taiwan eventually will be
absorbed by the PRC, whereas official US policy holds that Washington does not
take any position on the future status of Taiwan. When coupled with other con-
cessions granted to normalize relations in 1979—the “derecognition” of the ROC,
the termination of the US–ROC Mutual Defense Treaty, and the withdrawal of all US forces stationed on Taiwan—it is clear that Beijing gained substantially from its new relationship with Washington.

During the final decades of the cold war, the US and the PRC entered into a tacit alliance to combat Soviet expansionism. The CIA has revealed that the two governments “went to extraordinary lengths to cooperate with one another against Moscow… they regularly shared intelligence and teamed up devising anti-Soviet strategies.” In 1984, President Ronald Reagan even cleared the way for direct government-to-government arms transfers (foreign military sales) to the PRC by declaring, as required by law, that such sales would “strengthen the security of the United States and promote world peace.”

In short, a shift in global alignments had once again generated a profound impact on Taiwan, its ability to conduct foreign affairs and its status as a sovereign state in the international system. It was hardly coincidence that Taiwan’s expulsion from the UN coincided with one of Henry Kissinger’s journeys to the PRC. Furthermore, scores of Taipei’s diplomatic allies defected to Beijing’s camp after the Kissinger and Nixon visits. When the US finally severed official relations with the ROC in 1979, Taipei released an official statement proclaiming that “regardless of how the international situation may develop, the Republic of China, as a sovereign nation will… have full confidence in the future.”

As one China specialist noted in the 1970s, Taiwan was becoming “increasingly isolated” and “its future international status looks uncertain.” Despite the secret pledges of Nixon and Kissinger, however, it would be an exaggeration to suggest that the US completely abandoned the ROC in the 1970s. Rather, the US–ROC Mutual Defense Treaty was supplanted by a highly unusual piece of legislation—the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA).

According to three of the TRA the US will “make available to Taiwan such defense articles and defense services in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability.” Sales of American-built military equipment have included missiles, advanced fighter aircraft, tanks, sophisticated anti-submarine helicopters and the Patriot Anti-Missile System. The US also has provided Taiwan with the technological assistance required to enable the island to develop its own weapons systems. Moreover, the TRA provides America with an option to defend Taiwan. According to Section 2 of the law, it is the policy of the US “to consider any attempt to resolve the Taiwan issue by other than peaceful means, including boycotts or embargoes, a threat to the peace and stability of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the US.” As President Jimmy Carter observed during an interview in 1979, the TRA provides a president with “the option of going to war and protecting Taiwan.” As in the past, therefore, the US continued to play a key role in the island’s defense.

**Taiwan and the post-Cold War international system**

During the Cold War, the US and the PRC successfully concluded what Zbiniew Brzezinski, former national security adviser for President Carter, described as
“a de facto alliance or, if you will, an alliance by stealth... because of certain common and enduring geopolitical interests.”

In the early 1990s, however, the strategic rationale for this alignment disintegrated along with Soviet Union and the bipolar structure that had dominated international politics for four decades. As Lloyd Bentsen, then a US Senator (Democrat-Texas), observed in 1992, “US courtship of mainland China is no longer strategically imperative.”

By the 1990s, the US and China found themselves at odds over a wide variety of issues including trade, human rights, arms sales, proliferation, theater missile defense and America’s military ties with Japan. Domestic political pressures and quarrels over Taiwan and Tibet contributed to the tension. Incidents such as the 1999 American bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade (an attack the PRC described as a “planned accident”) and the accidental 2001 EP-3 spy plane collision off China’s coast served only to exacerbate tensions between Washington and Beijing.

As the world entered the new millennium, the global momentum seemed to be shifting in Taiwan’s favor. During the 2000 US presidential campaign, George W. Bush openly questioned the policy of strategic ambiguity toward Taiwan’s defense and claimed that his administration would be “clear about Taiwan.” Bush stressed that “it is important for the Chinese to understand that if there is a military action, we will help Taiwan defend itself.” The candidate also described the PRC’s behavior as “alarming abroad and appalling at home” and criticized the Beijing regime as a “sponsor of forced abortion and an enemy of religious freedom” and an “espionage threat to our country.” He pledged that China would no longer be considered a “strategic partner” of the United States. Rather, it would be viewed as a “strategic competitor.” Public opinion polls revealed that a majority of the American population shared this perception.

Given Bush’s tough campaign rhetoric, many of Taipei’s friends and supporters embraced the belief that his election represented “the best chance to improve US–Taiwan relations since Ronald Reagan became president in 1981.” During the first years of the Bush administration, these individuals were not disappointed. Indeed, in 2002, one prominent foreign policy analyst argued that the administration had carried out “the most significant rebalancing of US policy in the US–PRC–Taiwan triangular relationship, in favor of Taiwan and US–Taiwan relations, since Richard Nixon went to China in 1972.” There was ample evidence to support this view.

In April 2001, President Bush approved the sale of four Kidd-class destroyers and 12 P-3C Orion submarine-killer aircraft to Taiwan. Perhaps most surprising, however, was Bush’s promise to help the island secure eight diesel submarines—boats that had been denied to Taipei for decades. Following the president’s announcement, Representative Tom DeLay (R.-Texas) proclaimed that “the Bush administration has approved the most robust package of defensive weapons approved for Taiwan in over a decade.” A study conducted by the US Congressional Research Service (CRS) concurred. According to the CRS report, the 2001 weapons sale was “surpassed only by President Bush senior’s 1992 sale of 150 F-16s, valued at $5.9 billion.”
In another sharp departure from past policy, the Bush administration approved sending military teams to Taiwan to observe military exercises. Moreover, in 2002, the President signed into law the Foreign Relations Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2003. According to Section 1206 of the law, “for the purposes of the transfer or possible transfer of defense articles or defense services, Taiwan shall be treated as though it were designated a major non-NATO ally.” The President also signed into law an Act calling on the administration to study the feasibility of “expanding US-Taiwan military ties, possibly including combined operational training exercises and the exchange of senior officers between the two militaries.” However, the most significant adjustment in policy was related to America’s security commitment to defend Taiwan.

On the morning of April 25, 2001, President Bush was asked whether the US had an obligation to defend Taiwan if China attacked it. The President replied, “Yes, we do and the Chinese must understand that. Yes I would.” When asked if this meant protecting the island “with the full force of the American military,” Bush replied, “whatever it took to help Taiwan defend itself.” The President stressed later in the day that the US still adhered to its one China policy (a declaration generally interpreted to mean the US recognizes only one Chinese government). Although this statement was probably intended to signal to Taipei that Washington might not defend the island if it declared independence from China—his earlier pledge ignited a storm of controversy. As one reporter noted, Bush’s remarks “threw the planet into turmoil.”

The discussion above provides only the most dramatic examples of changes in US policy toward Taiwan in the post-Cold War era. A more complete description would include other developments as well. For example, there was a sharp escalation in the number of high-level visits and exchanges between Washington and Taipei (beginning in 1995, Taiwanese leaders made several high-profile visits to the US). Moreover, the Bush administration quietly jettisoned President Bill Clinton’s “Three No’s Policy,” a policy that had limited US support for Taiwan’s participation in international organizations. On the other hand, the administration publicly embraced the former President’s pledge that any resolution of the Taiwan issue must be acceptable to the Taiwanese people.

In sum, it appeared that the end of the bipolar international structure that had dominated global politics for several decades yielded some dividends for Taiwan. Moreover, this shift in the international system coincided with Taiwan’s democratization, the island’s emergence as a major economic player on the world stage, China’s brutal crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators in Beijing and the dawn of what some perceived as an era of globalization. These considerations prompted numerous governments to upgrade relations with Taipei. Arms sales packages previously denied—including advanced warplanes, tanks, missiles, anti-missile systems and even submarines—were also offered to Taiwan. Support for the island’s admission or readmission to the world’s major international organizations accelerated. However, in 2001, another shift in world politics—namely the global war on terrorism—drastically altered the landscape of international relations and helped push the US and the PRC closer together again.
Taiwan and the global war on terrorism

The September 11, 2001, sneak attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon led to a dramatic shift in global politics and what some describe as America’s foreign policy paradigm. Within the US, new government departments and agencies have been established, while others have been tasked with new anti-terrorist duties and awarded huge budget increases. Moreover, American military strategy “has shifted away from the deterrence that characterized the Cold War and toward pre-emptive action against terrorists.” Perhaps equally significant, US law enforcement agencies have received sweeping powers to combat terrorism at home (the Patriot Act). In short, the evidence is compelling that recent changes in American foreign policy are as dramatic as the changes that accompanied the onset of the cold war in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

The new American foreign policy paradigm has effectively moved China off America’s “enemies list.” In fact, US national security strategy now calls for Washington to “preserve the peace by building good relations among the great powers.” Gone are the descriptions of China as a “strategic competitor” and even the Republican party platform calls for cordial relations with Beijing. President Bush now praises the PRC as “an emerging marvel” and “the most important country” in the Asia-Pacific region. Although he has stopped short of designating the country as a “strategic partner,” Bush claims to pursue a “constructive, cooperative and candid” relationship with Beijing. During her Senate confirmation hearings in January, 2005, Condoleezza Rice underscored this commitment when she also called for building “a candid, cooperative and constructive relationship with China.”

The PRC was among the first countries in the world to proclaim support for President Bush’s war on terror. Beijing helped draft two UN Security Council resolutions supporting the US-led anti-terrorist campaign; pressured Islamabad to help ensure Pakistan’s cooperation in the war on terror; shared intelligence with the US on militant Islamic groups based in Asia, cracked down on terrorist cells in China and froze their bank accounts in Hong Kong. According to some reports, China has even allowed the US to station FBI counter-terrorism agents in Beijing.

These and other moves were not purely altruistic gestures. As Li Zhaoxing, China’s Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, explained, “China is also a victim of terror.” Beijing has fought a quiet war against extremist Islamic separatist groups based in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region for over a decade. Some of the terrorists—who aim to establish an Islamic Eastern Turkestan republic—received training and support from the al-Qaeda in neighboring Afghanistan. In fact, in late 2002, the Chinese government revealed that “a handful of Chinese Muslims” had been captured by American troops during operations in Afghanistan and were being detained in Guantanamo Bay.

Just as the threat of Soviet expansionism contributed to a rapprochement between China and the US in the 1970s, the war on terror has brought the two
countries closer together. In 2002, Colin Powell, then US Secretary of State, acknowledged that the September 11 attacks had helped “speed up an improvement” in Washington’s relations with Beijing:

Here was something that had nothing to do with contests between two competing ideologies; communism and capitalism. Here was an enemy that affected us all. And it was something that everybody could join in against.84

Chinese officials concur that bilateral relations have been “greatly enhanced” in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks.85 But they have expressed hopes that Washington might agree to concessions on the Taiwan issue. As General Liang Guanglie, Chief of Staff of the People’s Liberation Army, explained, “the Taiwan issue is the most important sensitive issue facing the entirety of Sino–US relations. We hope the US side will stand by its commitment, properly handle the issue of arms sales to Taiwan and do more things that are beneficial to the peaceful reunification of China.”86

The Bush administration has pledged that it will not sacrifice Taiwan to gain China’s friendship and support. Nevertheless, many observers have detected a perceptible change in Washington’s ties with Taipei. Namely, it appears that the Bush administration is seeking to prevent Taipei from taking steps that might entrap Washington in a major conflict in East Asia at a time when US forces are tied down with an anti-terrorist campaign in the Middle East, or otherwise jeopardize relations with Beijing. Perhaps most indicative of this trend is a series of administration statements criticizing recent efforts by the Taiwanese government to become a “normal state” within the global community.

During the run-up to Taiwan’s 2004 presidential election, Chen Shui-bian made several calls for Taiwan’s independence along with proposals for an island-wide “peace referendum” and a new constitution. Analysts reason that Chen was seeking to provoke China as Beijing’s bellicose behavior had helped Lee Teng-hui win the presidential election in 1996 and even boosted Chen’s support in 2000.87 As Su Chi, a senior member of the KMT observed, “China is a useful enemy for Chen. It’s a scarecrow he can point at to mobilize many people in Taiwan who resent China trying to influence our democracy.”88 However, the president’s attempts to replay the “China card” prompted an angry rebuke by President Bush. When meeting with Wen Jiabao, PRC Premier, in Washington, DC, on December 9, 2003, Bush publicly warned that “the comments and actions by the leader of Taiwan indicate that he may be willing to make decisions unilaterally that change the status quo, which we oppose.”89 The president’s reprimand stunned Taipei. But it represented only the first burst in a salvo of criticisms directed at Taiwan’s leadership.

During an interview with Hong Kong-based Phoenix television in October 2004, Colin Powell, then US Secretary of State, proclaimed that “there is only one China. Taiwan is not independent. It does not enjoy sovereignty as a nation and that remains our policy, our firm policy.”90 Powell also claimed that “we want to see both sides not take a unilateral action that would prejudice an eventual outcome, a reunification that all parties are seeking [emphasis added].”91
In December 2004, another US official dropped a “bombshell” on the Taiwanese. During an interview with America’s Public Broadcasting System, Richard Armitage, then US Deputy Secretary of State, described Taiwan as the “biggest landmine” in Sino–American relations and claimed that the US is not required to defend Taiwan if it is attacked by the PRC. These observations were technically correct—the Taiwan issue is unquestionably the most contentious issue in Sino–American relations. Moreover, the Taiwan Relations Act—the law that outlines America’s defense commitment to Taiwan—only provides a president with an option to defend the island. However, thepronouncement was especially significant as it appeared to nullify President Bush’s 2001 open-ended commitment to “do whatever it took” to defend Taiwan. Perhaps to underscore this point, Armitage added that it would be up to the US Congress, not the president, to determine whether the American troops would be deployed to aid in the defense of Taiwan. He closed the interview by noting that “we all agree that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China [emphasis added].”

President Bush’s warning to President Chen, and the subsequent Powell and Armitage declarations, were only the most sensational manifestations of a downturn in US–Taiwan relations. For example, in December 2004, the US warned Taipei that it opposed the plan to rename its state-owned enterprises and overseas representative offices. As a State Department official explained, “these changes of terminology for government-controlled enterprises or economic and cultural offices abroad, in our view, would appear to unilaterally change Taiwan’s status and for that reason we’re not supportive of them.” Moreover, President Chen’s request for transit stops in Chicago, New York, Miami and/or Houston during a 2004 trip to visit diplomatic allies in Latin America was denied. The Bush administration agreed only to two stops (Hawaii and Seattle) and Chen was warned to keep his visit brief. With respect to defense ties, American officials began to complain publicly about Taipei’s lack of progress concerning its massive arms procurement deal from the US. Furthermore, Taiwan lost its strongest friend and supporter in the Bush administration when Therese Shaheen, Chairwoman and Managing Director of the US-based office of the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT), was dismissed from her position in April 2004. Finally, US officials criticized President Chen’s 2006 Lunar New Year’s announcements that he planned to scrap the National Unification Guidelines (NUG) and National Unification Council (NUC), engineer his government’s admission to the UN as “Taiwan” and hold a referendum for a new constitution as “inflammatory” and a threat to the “status-quo.”

Summary

For much of its history, a series of changes in the structure of the international system have generated both challenges and opportunities for Taiwan. In 1895 and 1945, the great powers traded jurisdiction over Taiwan without consulting the island’s population. The outbreak of war in Korea in June 1950 and the entry into the conflict of PRC troops in November 1950 resulted in America’s intervention in
the Chinese civil war and the formal incorporation of Taiwan into the US western Pacific defense perimeter. The ROC was provided with an opportunity to survive, prosper and shine diplomatically. As one study observed, “certainly the greatest beneficiaries of the Korean war were the people and army of Taiwan.”99 In the late 1960s, the Sino–Soviet split led to a restructuring of global alignments and a perceptible decrease in American support for Taiwan. These developments contributed to a dramatic deterioration in Taiwan's diplomatic position. In contrast to most other states, Taiwan was forced to turn to unconventional approaches to foreign affairs. However, the raison d'être for US–PRC rapprochement crumbled with the Berlin Wall in 1989.100 On balance, the end of the era of superpower rivalry helped Taiwan to recover some of its stature in the international community.

Like some previous shifts in global alignments, recent transformations in the international environment represent challenges for Taiwan. Once again, Taiwan’s foreign policy behavior is being heavily constrained by systemic factors. The discussion below suggests that two external powers—the PRC and US—will continue to play a major role in Taiwan's foreign policy calculations in coming years.

III Taiwan’s foreign policy and the changing international system

As Taiwan’s chief ally, albeit an “unofficial” one, the US wields enormous leverage over the island’s domestic and foreign policies. In the 1950s, Washington played a critical role in convincing Taipei to shelve plans to retake the mainland. During the 1980s, US congressional pressure had a direct impact on President Chiang Ching-kuo’s decision to liberalize the island’s political system.101 More recently, America has helped serve as a brake on Taiwanese moves toward de jure separation from China. According to numerous accounts, the US convinced President Chen Shui-bian to tone down his pro-independence rhetoric during his inaugural addresses of 2000 and 2004. More recently, the US dispatched emissaries to Taipei to persuade the president not to “abolish” the NUC. Responding to the US pressure, Chen proclaimed only that the NUC would “cease to function” and that its guidelines would “cease to apply.”102

Looking to the future, it is probable that the US will continue “to deter Taiwan from unilaterally disrupting the status quo with provocative moves toward independence.”103 Even US congressional leaders, widely regarded as Taipei’s staunchest supporters in Washington, warn that “a unilateral political effort by Taiwan to seek independence and dissolve all bonds with China would cause America’s commitments under the Taiwan Relations Act to become inoperable.”104

In addition to the US, another external power will continue to exercise tremendous influence over Taiwan in coming years—the PRC. The current Beijing government has never exercised any control over Taiwan, has never written its laws or funded its government and is not accepted by the people of Taiwan as having any authority within its borders. In other words, PRC sovereignty does not extend to Taiwan and Taiwan is not part of the PRC. Consequently, the PRC is an external, albeit not foreign, power. But authorities in Beijing see things differently. They contend that the Taiwan question is a “domestic” political issue.
For more than five decades, Beijing has subscribed to a “one China policy” and insisted that the government in Taipei does not exist. When discussing the “origin of the Taiwan question,” communist authorities claim that the PRC became the legitimate government of all China (including Taiwan) after the ROC government was “overthrown” in 1949. At that time, however, a “clique” of high-ranking KMT military officers and political leaders fled to the province of Taiwan with the assistance of the US thereby creating the division of the country. According to Beijing, the authorities on Taiwan are not a government. Rather, they should be considered as local officials. As Dr. Ding Kuisong, Director of North American Studies at the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations in Beijing, explained during an interview with the author, “the ROC doesn’t exist.”

In keeping with the “one China policy,” Beijing has done everything possible to strip Taiwan of any vestiges of statehood. For example, China insists that foreign nations cannot recognize both the Beijing and Taipei governments—it must choose between them. Consequently, all of the world’s major powers have abandoned Taiwan and now recognize the PRC. With respect to the poorer nations, bountiful aid packages and low interest loans are provided to those willing to sever relations with Taiwan. Beijing also successfully blocks Taiwan’s participation in most international intergovernmental organizations. Only Beijing stands in the way of Taiwan’s membership in the UN, the World Health Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and a host of other global institutions.

In addition to the “one China policy,” a hard-line position that has led Taipei to become an international orphan, Beijing rigidly adheres to the “one China principle.” The PRC insists that there is only one China and Taiwan is a part of it. Indeed, Beijing contends that “Taiwan has belonged to China since ancient times.” That being the case, the “central government” in Beijing reserves the right to intervene in Taiwan’s domestic affairs and even use military force against the island. Taiwanese security analysts have identified various situations that might lead Beijing to resort to military action. They speculate that the PRC would employ force against the island under the following circumstances:

- If Taiwan declared independence;
- If massive disturbances break out in Taiwan;
- If the comparative fighting strength of Taiwan’s military weakens significantly;
- If foreign forces interfere in Taiwan’s affairs;
- If Taiwan continues to reject reunification talks and
- If Taiwan develops nuclear weapons.

Some have warned that an attack would be most likely between the years 2005 and 2010—after China has completed its military modernization program and before the deployment of America’s theater ballistic missile defense system (TMD) in East Asia. It is generally believed that, among the considerations that might lead to a PRC attack, the most likely one is a Taiwanese declaration of independence. But it
is noteworthy that China also hinted at the possibility of military action when Taiwan was engulfed in turmoil after the controversial presidential election in 2004.109

As Taiwan has inched closer and closer to independence from China, Beijing’s threats to use force against the island have accelerated. The People’s Liberation Army’s (PLA) build-up continues unabated and additional missiles are being deployed to provinces directly opposite Taiwan. PRC officials emphasize that Beijing will not be deterred from the use of military force by the threat of losing the opportunity to host the 2008 Olympic Games.110 Moreover, the National People’s Congress—China’s rubber-stamp parliament—passed an “anti-secession” law in early March 2005. Not surprisingly, public opinion polls reveal PRC threats do dampen popular support for *de jure* independence in Taiwan.111

Increased military pressure represents only one element in Beijing’s strategy. China is also employing its economic muscle and diplomatic leverage in a massive campaign to convince foreign nations to isolate Taiwan and oppose the island’s independence. The strategy appears to be yielding some dividends. International opposition to the prospect of the establishment of a new Taiwanese nation is growing. Edward Friedman, one of America’s foremost experts on Chinese politics, contends that the international community has made Taiwan “absolutely powerless” to advance the goal of *de jure* independence from China:

> The international community heeds great power to China’s preferences and ignores little Taiwan’s. Taiwanese can rewrite their history books so the texts are not Sinocentric; the majority of Hokkiense can make their mother tongue, Taigi, an official language; Taiwanese can pass legislation to make island-wide referenda part of democracy on Taiwan. But so what? No major nation is going to respond by changing recognition from Beijing to Taipei and incur the wrath of great power China. *De jure* Taiwanese independence is going nowhere.112

Goh Chok Tong, Singapore’s prime minister, concurs with Friedman’s assessment. He has suggested that, “no Asian and, I believe, no European government, would recognize Taiwan’s independence. To do so would earn China’s permanent enmity. And China is the economic story of this century.”113

Perhaps equally significant, by 2003, China had replaced the US as Taiwan’s biggest export market and Taiwanese firms had invested over US $100 billion in the mainland. The PRC is pressuring members of Taiwan’s business community with investments in the mainland to distance themselves from the independence movement. This is one of the reasons why Taipei’s leadership is worried about the island’s growing economic dependence on China and the implications that these links hold for Taiwan’s future. As Mark Chen, then Taiwan’s foreign minister, explained during an interview with the author, “with such a big amount of investment in China, of course you can feel a tremendous amount of force and influence which, in a way, is going to make some significant changes in our foreign policy.”114
In sum, Taiwan’s foreign policy behavior will continue to be heavily influenced by actors and conditions outside its borders in coming years. Systemic factors and two external powers—the US and the PRC—will remain crucially important. Like the proverbial shrimp caught between whales, Taipei must chart a careful course in the troubled waters of international politics. In order to survive and prosper, it must avoid antagonizing Washington, its chief ally, and Beijing, its only potential adversary. This will not be an easy task. In fact, it is difficult to imagine a more challenging position than the one that Taiwan confronts in the international system.
In order to understand a state’s foreign policy behavior, one would be well advised not to limit oneself solely to the system level of analysis as discussed in the preceding chapter. The state level of analysis may also hold some explanatory value. After all, as one study observed, “much of what goes on in world politics revolves around interactions between governments.”

The purpose of this chapter is to conduct a state-level analysis of Taiwan’s foreign policy-making process. In other words, primary emphasis is placed upon what Kenneth Waltz describes as the “second image” in foreign policy analysis. The chapter examines the characteristics of the Taiwanese government and its political institutions and how these variables influence the crafting of foreign policy. In addition, it discusses some of the unconventional diplomatic tactics that the Taiwanese foreign policy establishment has adopted in an effort to circumvent the growing economic, political and military power of China. The chapter closes with an examination of Taipei’s foreign policy decision-making process.

I Political institutions

The political structure of Taiwan’s national government is somewhat unique as it was established to meet the special requirements and needs of Chinese society. It consists of a popularly elected president (until relatively recently the president was indirectly elected) and five branches of government or Yuan. The Executive Yuan includes the president’s cabinet which is largely responsible for policy and administration. The Legislative Yuan serves the main legislative body of the national government and recently gained the power to amend the constitution. The Judicial Yuan functions “much like the judicial branches in other nations, although structurally it is somewhat different.” The Control Yuan and Examination Yuan might best be described as holdovers from Imperial China. The former conducts special investigations and has the power of impeachment, while the latter administers civil service examinations.

When discussing the making of American foreign policy, a political scientist once observed that “the pieces of the foreign policy package are scattered all over town.” This observation applies with special force to foreign policy decision making in Taipei. As discussed below, numerous institutions now play a role in shaping Taiwan’s foreign policy.
A The president

During the Chiang era in Taiwan (1949–1988), the president of the ROC exercised almost unlimited power over both domestic and foreign policy. Other actors played a very circumscribed role in the policy-making process. Following the lifting of martial law in 1987, however, things began to change. Emergency decrees and provisions that had granted the president almost unlimited powers were repealed, the government’s legislative bodies were revitalized and the Constitution was amended in such a way as to significantly modify the powers of the president.

Under the ROC Constitutional revisions, Taiwan’s president is popularly elected for a four-year term (with a limit of two terms). The president shares power with an appointed premier and cabinet. Should a majority of lawmakers disagree with the policies pursued by the premier, they may initiate a vote of no confidence against the premier. At this point, the president may either appoint a new premier or dismiss the legislature and call for elections. Absent a vote of no confidence, however, the president cannot dismiss the legislature and call for elections. The new system appeared to work fairly smoothly when the president’s party enjoyed control over a majority of the seats in the Legislative Yuan. However, if an opposition party controls the legislature, a president may confront gridlock and seemingly endless partisan bickering. This became a major concern during the Chen Shui-bian administration. Such problems led an American legal expert to describe Taiwan’s present semi-presidential system as “dysfunctional.”

With respect to international relations, the president of the ROC possesses numerous powers. In the most general sense, he is responsible for developing the ROC’s foreign policy goals, objectives and strategies, outlining the basic principles of national security and setting the direction and tone of cross-strait relations with the People’s Republic of China (PRC). The president also exercises, “the powers of concluding treaties, declaring war and making peace” and represents the ROC in foreign relations. Finally, the president is responsible for appointing a variety of officials including the premier, the minister of foreign affairs and high-ranking military officers and defining the foreign policy responsibilities, if any, of the vice president.

A number of foreign policy initiatives have been launched during the post-martial law period in Taiwan. Perhaps foremost among President Lee Teng-hui’s accomplishments was the creation of “pragmatic diplomacy.” Shortly after being sworn in as president of the ROC in January 1988, Lee began to promote a “pragmatic approach” to international relations. As described in preceding chapters, pragmatic diplomacy calls for the advancement and reinforcement of formal diplomatic ties, the development of substantive relations with countries that do not maintain formal relations with Taiwan and admission or readmission to international organizations and activities vital to the country’s national interest. Taipei’s controversial drive to return to the UN, moves to upgrade ties with nations that recognize the PRC and other efforts to enhance the island’s international stature may be traced to President Lee’s bold initiative. It is noteworthy that pragmatic diplomacy remains as the cornerstone of Taiwan’s approach to foreign policy.
On March 18, 2000, Chen Shui-bian was elected as the tenth president of the ROC. The election was especially significant as it marked the first time that an opposition candidate had won a presidential election in Taiwan.

President Chen continues to embrace pragmatic diplomacy. At the same time, however, he has sought to chart his own course in foreign policy. For example, Chen recently called on Japan to play a bigger role as a leader in East Asia to balance the rising power of China. The Chen administration has also sought to convince the UN to help promote peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. Perhaps most significant, however, Chen has pushed Taiwan's foreign policy establishment to be creative. He has called on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) to be more supportive of Taiwan's efforts to participate in non-governmental organizations and to find ways to encourage parliamentary diplomacy, party-to-party diplomacy and other alternatives to traditional diplomacy.

After assuming the presidency in 2000, Chen pledged to put an end to the long-standing practice of "dollar diplomacy"—a policy whereby Taiwan "buys" diplomatic allies. In 2003, Parris Chang, then an influential Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) legislator, declared that "we will say no to any country that demands financial aid in exchange for the maintenance of diplomatic relations." President Chen has emphasized that Taiwan should provide its small friends with missions that improve medical conditions, particularly with regard to HIV/AIDS and malaria rather than financial payoffs. Despite such rhetoric, however, it appears that Taipei still engages in some forms of dollar diplomacy.

Finally, President Chen has sought to boost Taiwan's international standing by visiting numerous countries. Perhaps most significant are the president's high profile visits to the US while purportedly en route to Central America. But Chen has also visited many other countries. As one DPP lawmaker boasted, "President Chen has been very active in enhancing Taiwan's profile internationally. I think he has been more active than any of his predecessors in traveling and exchanges with others."

In sum, despite the lifting of martial law, the Taiwanese president's foreign policy responsibilities remain impressive. However, some lawmakers are seeking to further enhance those powers. Indeed, in late 2005, DPP legislators called for the president to gain the power to launch a pre-emptive first strike against the PRC's military in the face of an imminent attack by Beijing.

**B The premier**

The premier of the ROC is the highest official in the Executive Yuan, the institutional branch of the ROC government that administers all the major ministries, councils and administrations. In keeping with President Chen's calls to streamline, reorganize and reduce the size of the central government, the Executive Yuan will be downsized in 2006. Officials explain that the aim of the government reform is "to exchange the ponderous control orientation of 'big government' for the capable flexibility of 'small government.'" They concede that "the restructuring plan is one of major proportions."
After several years of intense political bickering and numerous revisions to the original legislation, Taiwanese lawmakers passed the *Basic Organizational Code for Central Government Agencies* and it was signed into law by the president in June, 2004.¹⁷ According to the *Basic Organizational Code*, the Executive Yuan will include thirteen ministries, four commissions and five politically independent agencies (see Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3).¹⁸ Some actors involved in the foreign policy process will be eliminated. For example, the Government Information Office (GIO), whose responsibilities include the dissemination of propaganda overseas, is among the governmental bodies slated for elimination. The GIO’s foreign affairs duties will be assumed by the MOFA, while responsibilities related to the regulation of the media will be tasked to the new Information and Broadcasting Commission.¹⁹ Other bureaucratic players will be moved. For example, government officials stress that the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), which coordinates matters related to the PRC, is not to be abolished or downgraded. Rather, “the MAC will become a policymaking body.”²⁰ Still others, such as the National Unification Council, will be mothballed. Overall, it is estimated that after governmental reform is completed, the number of civil servants will remain at less than 200,000 people (since 2001 staffing at central government agencies has been cut by 67,493).²¹ However, a cursory glance at the tables below reveals that many of the remaining governmental agencies share some foreign policy making duties.

In addition to presiding over the Executive Yuan, the premier may serve as a key adviser to the president and play an important role in matters relating to foreign policy.²² The degree of influence he may wield is most often dependent upon his personal relationship with the president. In rare instances, however, a premier

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**Table 4.1**  Executive Yuan ministries after reorganization

1. Interior and Homeland Security
2. Foreign Affairs and Overseas Compatriot Affairs
3. National Defense and Veterans Affairs
4. Finance
5. Education and Sports
6. Justice
7. Economic Affairs
8. Transportation and Construction
9. Labor and Human Resources
10. Agriculture
11. Health and Social Security
12. Resources and the Environment
13. Tourism and Culture

**Governmental institutions and foreign policy**

**Table 4.2** Executive Yuan commissions after reorganization

1. National Development and Technology Commission
2. Maritime Affairs Commission
3. Indigenous People’s Affairs Commission
4. Hakka Affairs Commission


**Table 4.3** Executive Yuan politically independent agencies after reorganization

1. Central Bank
2. Central Election Commission
3. Fair Trade Commission
4. Financial Supervisory Commission
5. Information and Broadcasting Commission


may have his own power base and seek to challenge or even sabotage a president’s foreign policy initiatives. An example is provided by Premier Hau Pei-tsun’s opposition to President Lee Teng-hui’s policies toward Outer Mongolia and the UN question during the early 1990s.

Should the president approve, the premier may serve as a chief foreign policy spokesperson. For example, in 2002 the somewhat complicated and sensitive task of explaining why Mongolia would no longer be considered as a part of the ROC fell to Yu Shyi-kun, then ROC premier. More recently, the Taiwanese premier has called on government officials to develop closer contacts with foreign diplomats when attending international forums such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting. He has also echoed the president’s proposal that Japan should assume a greater role in ensuring peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.

**C The National Security Council**

Taiwan’s National Security Council (NSC) was established in 1967. Like its counterpart in the US, it is supposed to serve as an advisory body to the ROC president in matters relating to foreign policy, security and defense. Formal members include the president, vice president, premier, minister of national defense, minister of foreign affairs, minister of economic affairs, and the director of the mainland affairs council. The NSC is supported by a secretariat and also has a small support staff. Considered by some to be a holdover from Taiwan’s authoritarian era, it barely escaped destruction in the early 1990s.
In addition to its advisory role, the NSC is charged with the responsibility of overseeing the operations of other organizations related to national security, including the National Security Bureau. According to a 2001 study, the NSC rarely meets and is “not a major actor in the national security policy process and in particular has very little influence over defense-related matters.” But the Chen administration has reversed this trend and revitalized the NSC.

During an interview with the author, Dr. Parris Chang, Deputy Secretary General of the NSC, conceded that “we do not get involved in the implementation of foreign policy as such, that’s for sure.” However, Dr. Chang stressed that “we deal with foreign policy on a day to day basis in terms of our making recommendations and suggestions.” Cables sent from Taiwan’s overseas embassies and missions are routinely forwarded to the NSC for analysis and evaluation. Moreover, although the NSC’s staff is miniscule when compared to its American counterpart, it conducts extensive research on foreign policy questions (including those involving national security) and makes frequent recommendations to the president. As Chang observed, “we prepare things for the president before he asks for them, so we are quite initiative taking so to speak.” For example, when Southeast Asia was struck by a devastating tsunami in December 2004, the NSC quickly developed various policy options outlining how Taiwan might respond to the disaster and forwarded them to the president for his consideration. More recently, the NSC was tasked with figuring out the foreign policy ramifications of abolishing the National Unification Guidelines and the National Unification Council. In February 2006, the NSC recommended that both be shelved indefinitely.

D The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) website, the organization is responsible for conducting “the nation’s foreign affairs and related matters with its main purpose [being] to preserve and protect the nation’s interests.” In addition to the standard duties associated with the everyday maintenance of formal and substantive relations with foreign states, the MOFA has a number of other responsibilities.

The MOFA is expected to implement and support the president’s foreign policy initiatives. The MOFA has launched a series of measures designed to comply with President Chen’s calls for the advancement of “people’s diplomacy” or “people-to-people-diplomacy.” For example, the MOFA operates training schools for those involved in foreign affairs. Students from over a dozen different governmental agencies have enrolled in the MOFA’s Foreign Service Institute. The MOFA also administers the new Taiwan Foundation for Democracy, an organization that seeks to increase understanding about Taiwan’s democratization process and achievements.

The minister of the MOFA sometimes serves as a key foreign policy adviser to the president and premier. From time to time, the minister will unveil diplomatic goals for the nation and specific objectives for the MOFA, but it is believed that
his role in national security matters is quite limited. Like other high-ranking officials, the minister of MOFA engages in “visit diplomacy” and represents Taiwan overseas. For example, in June 2005, Dr. Mark Chen, then Taiwan’s foreign minister, participated in a two-day conference in Colorado (the 2005 World Forum) and made a low-profile stop-over in New York City.

E The Ministry of National Defense and General Staff Headquarters

According to Article 137 of the ROC Constitution, “the national defense of the ROC shall have as its objective the safeguarding of national security and the preservation of world peace.” The Ministry of National Defense (MND) is headed by a minister “who directs and oversees the national defense system formed by the three systems responsible for military administration, military command, and military armament.” The defense minister (who must be a civilian by law) may potentially exert significant “influence over the setting of both national security strategy and defense policy through his interactions with the president (as commander-in-chief and head of state) and the premier (as head of the executive branch).” The MND as a whole, however, does not play a leading role in shaping the island’s overall national security strategy. Rather, this is the responsibility of the president.

During the Chiang era, the president of the ROC exercised enormous power over national security policy. Like foreign policy initiatives, major military decisions were made after consultation with a small number of officials and party members. Once a decision was made, the president, as Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, issued orders directly to the Chief of the General Staff (CGS), who commanded the troops. This meant that the CGS, rather than the defense minister, was “the most important person in Taiwan’s military structure.” Moreover, as the CGS was not a member of the cabinet, he did not have to answer to the legislature or consult with other government agencies.

Under this arrangement, the defense minister was relegated to a position of secondary importance and was responsible for handling “administrative matters.” Thus, the CGS was in charge of the military command system, while the defense minister was responsible for the military administration system. As Dr. Lin Chong-pin, then Deputy Minister of the ROC, explained during an interview with the author, the defense minister was so weak that he “could not even push his orders beyond his office.”

Since the late 1980s, democratization has transformed Taiwanese society. Not surprisingly, the armed forces were not immune to these changes. As Taiwan’s MND observed, the old military system “did not meet the requirements of democratic politics.” Voices began to call for a significant restructuring of the national defense system that would establish the clear supremacy of civilian control over the military. Others pressed for the “nationalization” of the ROC military. In April 2002, legislation drafted to achieve these goals—the National Defense Law and the Organization Law of the MND—went into effect.

Under the new national defense system, the defense minister, a cabinet member who must be a civilian by law, is the most powerful figure in the armed forces and no
less than one-third of the MND employees must be civilians.43 The separate military systems have been unified and the defense minister “directs and oversees the national defense system formed by the three systems responsible for military administration, military command, and military armament.”44 The CGS now serves as the defense minister’s chief of staff and the General Staff Headquarters (GSH) has been moved into the MND. The GSH functions as the MND’s “military command staff and the command institution for joint operations of the ROC armed forces.”45

President Chen has praised the restructuring of the ROC military establishment as “the most important change in our national defense system.”46 Chen and others contend that these structural modifications do much more than reinforce the principle of civilian leadership. They promote integration and cooperation among the government’s numerous departments and agencies—moves that will enhance national security. As Taiwan’s 2002 Defense White Paper explained, “through the National Security Council, various departments and agencies under the Executive Yuan [cabinet] can be included in the national defense policymaking mechanism so that the nation’s resources can be integrated, the national strength fully utilized and the goal of all-out defense achieved.”47 The new system also promotes transparency and accountability within the MND.

Finally, it is noteworthy that the new defense laws clearly impose political neutrality on Taiwan’s armed forces—a process initiated during President Lee Teng-hui’s administration (1988–2000)—and the military no longer operates as a KMT institution. As President Chen explained, “the military has the task to protect the country and the people, be loyal to the government and the people, take an unprejudiced stance and be free from control by any political group.”48 At the same time, however, the MND has not hesitated to voice support for controversial initiatives related to national defense. For example, the ministry commissioned public opinion polls in 2005 to show that most Taiwanese favor the special arms procurement bill designed to purchase three major weapons systems from the US (submarines, PAC-3 Patriot anti-missile batteries and P-3C patrol aircraft) in an effort to drum up support for the acquisitions.49 The MND has also publicly criticized the legislature’s “emotional partisanship” that it claims has blocked passage of the special arms budget.50 In 2006, the MND revealed that the number of missiles deployed directly opposite Taiwan had soared to over 700 in an effort to drum up support for arms purchases.

F The Legislative Yuan

During the Chiang era, the Legislative Yuan served as little more than a rubber stamp. For many years, a majority of lawmakers were mainlanders who had fled China along with Chiang Kai-shek in 1949. Like the “old thieves” who occupied the National Assembly (the government body that was responsible for electing the president and amending the constitution during the martial law era), they were determined to hold onto their seats for life and seldom, if ever, questioned government policy. With democratization and the passage of time, however, all of this has changed.
According to Article 63 of the ROC Constitution, “the Legislative Yuan shall have the power to decide by resolution upon statutory or budgetary bills concerning martial law, amnesty, declaration of war, conclusion of peace or treaties and other important affairs of state.” Moreover, Article 57 stipulates that lawmakers “shall have the right to question the president and the ministers and chairmen of Commissions of the Executive Yuan.” Since democratization, Taiwan’s lawmakers have exhibited a strong determination to wield these powers. Indeed, the legislature has evolved into what Dr. Ta-chi Liao of Taiwan’s prestigious National Sun Yat-sen University describes as a “roaring lion.”

Beginning during the Lee Teng-hui era (and continuing to this day), Taiwanese lawmakers have played an increasingly important role in the foreign policy making process. It is now common practice for lawmakers to grill various ministers and officials from the Executive Yuan about foreign policy. Even the premier is regularly called upon to explain and/or defend governmental policy and these sessions can be very confrontational. Moreover, approval of expensive foreign policy projects—particularly major defense outlays—is no longer automatic. The legislature has slashed the budget for some foreign policy programs (the practice of “dollar diplomacy” has proved to be especially unpopular), government agencies and presidential committees. Perhaps most noteworthy is the legislature’s refusal to pass the special arms procurement bill which had been voted down almost 50 times by 2006. Such moves have led President Chen to complain that the political opposition is attempting to “cripple the government.” On the other hand, however, the Chen administration has applauded moves by friendly lawmakers who seek to play a role in launching foreign policy initiatives. For example, the administration enthusiastically embraced the campaign to upgrade the names of Taiwan’s overseas representative offices that was initiated by a group of DPP lawmakers.

G The National Security Bureau

The National Security Bureau (NSB) was established in February 1967 as an executive agency under the auspices of the NSC. Described by critics as “the Taiwan KGB,” many Taiwanese reportedly feared the intelligence agency “so much that the mere mention of its name would ‘silence a crying child.’” Throughout the martial law era, the NSB engaged in covert surveillance activities and clandestine operations directed against the government’s perceived opponents in Taiwan, the PRC and overseas. Taiwan citizens apprehended by NSB agents “were prosecuted and often convicted without trial.”

With the lifting of martial law, the NSB no longer resembles the KGB. Rather, Parris Chang has suggested that today’s NSB “is somewhat like the CIA.” During an interview with the author, he indicated that clandestine operations have been scaled back and the organization’s activities are closely monitored:

Of course it’s under the NSC’s instructions and guidelines to do things… analyze intelligence. They have station chiefs in different capitals just like the
CIA has. I don’t think it runs wild, conducts its own things. Even during President Lee’s time it was really directed by President Lee. I guess it has much less authority under Chen Shui-bian.\textsuperscript{60} 

In short, the NSB serves as the ROC’s chief intelligence agency. As such, it wields little direct influence over the policy-making process or the implementation of policy. Nevertheless, the NSB provides the president and other key government officials with intelligence that can influence the policy-making process.\textsuperscript{61} Moreover, it has been involved in some controversial operations conducted in China, the US and Japan during the post-martial law period. Revelations about the so-called “Te-Ming Project,” a series of covert operation designed to influence lawmakers and public opinion in Japan and the US during the Lee Teng-hui administration, proved to be a major embarrassment for Taiwan (for more information, please see Chapter 6). The 2004 arrest of Donald Keyser, a senior China specialist in the US Department of State, proved to be another embarrassment. Between 2002 and 2004, the American diplomat reportedly passed top secret documents to NSB personnel and even made a secret trip to Taiwan.\textsuperscript{62}

\textbf{H Mainland Affairs Council}

The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) is charged with the responsibility of handling matters related to the PRC (technically an external “political entity,” but not a foreign power).\textsuperscript{63} It also supervises the activities of the Straits Exchange Foundation, the quasi-official body that handles and coordinates affairs related to exchanges between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. Strictly speaking, therefore, some contend that these institutions do not engage in foreign policy. Nevertheless, officials from both organizations go to considerable lengths to ensure that the international community understands the nuances of Taiwan’s relationship with the PRC.

Joseph Wu, MAC Chairman, has made several high-profile trips to the US since Taiwan’s March 2004 election in an effort to explain Taipei’s strained relations with Beijing and call for increased American support.\textsuperscript{64} He has also traveled to Japan and other countries. In addition to traveling overseas, Wu seeks to clarify Taiwan’s mainland policy for visitors who travel to Taiwan:

\begin{quote}
We get lots of visitors from all over the world who come to Taiwan and want to understand our cross-strait policy and they come to see me. And I try to explain our cross-strait policy… I am explaining cross-strait policy.\textsuperscript{65}
\end{quote}

Despite such activities, the MAC Chairman stresses that, while he outlines the government’s cross-strait policy to foreigners, “I wouldn’t say that I am one of those who are making our foreign policies.”\textsuperscript{66} Moreover, he stresses that this represents only “a small part” of his responsibilities as MAC chairman.\textsuperscript{67}
I Other foreign policy actors

The discussion above includes only the major governmental actors that play a role in shaping Taiwan’s foreign policy. A more complete discussion would include other actors and institutions as well.

Taiwan’s vice president, Annette Lu, has traveled throughout the world demanding that the international community treat her country as a sovereign state and promoting the island’s separation from China. As MOFA explained, the vice president goes abroad to “score diplomatic gains.” Lu also has proposed a number of initiatives that she believes will help promote Taiwan’s linkages with foreign governments. For example, the vice president has suggested that Taipei should work together with its diplomatic allies in developing countries in running cooperative agricultural enterprises.

The Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission promotes friendly ties and cooperation with pro-Taiwan organizations in the US and elsewhere. It encourages the members of such groups to remain loyal to the ROC, support Taipei’s foreign policy initiatives and invest in the island. This has proved challenging in recent years. Following Chen’s election as president in 2000, some organizations switched allegiances to the PRC.

Finally, several agencies contribute to the making of economic policy. These include the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank of China and the Council for Economic Planning and Development. All of these institutions play a role in the development and implementation of Taiwan’s economic policies, including those related to foreign trade and investment. In short, the democratization of Taiwan has opened the doors for many parts of the government to influence the foreign policy-making process.

II New actors in the foreign policy process

President Chen Shui-bian has called on Taiwan’s foreign policy establishment to help “usher in a new spring” in the country’s diplomatic efforts. The Chen administration contends that creative means of diplomacy must be employed if Taiwan is to successfully circumvent the growing economic, political and military power of the PRC. Hsiao Bi-khim, a DPP lawmaker, explains:

They [the Taiwanese] are trying to find alternatives. When one door is closed to them, then they will find another door. That is why the government has been very active in advocating different levels of diplomacy—not just traditional state-to-state diplomacy, but also parliamentary, party-to-party and non-governmental organization interactions. All of this requires not just government efforts but also the involvement of society at large.

The discussion below provides a brief overview of Taiwan’s recent efforts to increase the use of unconventional diplomatic tactics in foreign affairs.
A Inter-parliamentary diplomacy

The Chen administration did not give birth to the idea of inter-parliamentary diplomacy. The Lee Teng-hui administration was behind the initial push for parliamentary diplomacy and instructed the MOFA to “set up a parliamentary liaison group in 1993 to assist parliamentarians in organizing exchange programs with their foreign counterparts, and to assist other countries in forming pro-Taiwan associations in their parliaments.” When running for president in 2000, however, Chen Shui-bian raised the idea of accelerating the use of this novel approach to international relations in his foreign policy white paper. The initiative is beginning to yield some dividends.

Following Taiwan’s democratization, the island’s popularly elected lawmakers began to “become fully involved in international activities, including exchanges with foreign counterparts.” The inspiration for such activity is the hope that increased contacts and personal connections with foreign lawmakers may ultimately garner additional support for Taiwan. As Parris Chang explained, “other countries such as the US and Japan may not attach much importance to inter-parliamentary diplomacy, but Taiwan is different because we have official relations with a mere 28 states.”

Inter-parliamentary diplomacy has contributed to a string of small victories for Taipei. For example, the US Congress has passed a series of pro-Taiwan resolutions and laws, including a controversial demand that the George W. Bush administration treat Taiwan as a non-NATO ally. Taiwanese lawmakers also played an important role in convincing American lawmakers to establish a new bipartisan, pro-Taiwan association in the US Congress—the Taiwan Caucus.

The activities of Taiwan’s parliamentarians are not limited only to the US. Their efforts also have yielded dividends in Europe and Japan. The European Parliament, the only popularly elected legislative body that represents all the citizens of the European Union’s member states, has passed a variety of pro-Taiwan resolutions. These include demands that China remove the hundreds of missiles it has deployed directly opposite Taiwan, calls for the international community to support Taiwan’s bid for membership in the World Health Organization (WHO) and a resolution supporting the ban on European arms sales to the PRC. Lawmakers in 17 European nations have also established inter-parliamentary friendship groups with Taiwan’s legislature and regularly voice their support for the island. For example, members of Great Britain’s British–Tawanese All-Party Parliamentary Group have called on London to give Taipei “the recognition it deserves” and proclaimed that “the island’s democratic development can be regarded as a model for many other Asian countries.”

B Party-to party diplomacy

Party-to-party diplomacy may be defined as “Taiwan’s political parties forging friendly relations with their foreign counterparts, particularly those of similar ideological outlook and joining in inter-party organizations.” The use of the
practice as a means by which Taiwan can achieve its diplomatic goals has accelerated during the Chen administration.

During the martial law era, the KMT forged strong ties with many of the overseas Chinese communities. In fact, branch offices of the party were established in numerous “Chinatowns.” Through its many and varied activities, the KMT sought to bolster support among the overseas Chinese communities for the Chiang regime.

Following democratization, most of Taiwan’s political parties have sought to develop linkages with individuals and groups in foreign countries. In a notable departure from past practice, these activities are not limited solely to garnering support of the overseas Chinese. The parties also seek to establish strong ties with foreign political parties. By the late 1990s, the KMT “had developed various degrees of friendly relations with 120 political parties in 60 countries, taking particular interest in the US Republican Party, Japan’s Liberal Democratic Party, Britain’s Conservative Party and the German Christian Democratic Party Union.”79 The DPP has followed a similar course of action, establishing friendly bonds with dozens of more progressive political organizations.

DPP officials contend that their party has used its membership in Liberal International, an organization of more progressive political parties, to conduct informal or “track-two” diplomacy.80 In some instances, however, Taiwan’s major political parties join together to send delegations to meet with members of a foreign political party. For example, in December 2002, a nine-person delegation consisting of representatives from Taiwan’s four largest political parties journeyed to Bangkok to engage in a bout of “party diplomacy.”81 Interestingly, both the KMT and DPP now send representatives to observe the Democratic and Republican presidential conventions in the US.

By developing strong ties with political parties in foreign countries, Taiwan’s parties hope to be able to draw upon a reservoir of support should a need for assistance arise. There is evidence to support this view. Taiwan does enjoy deep support among a wide range of foreign political parties—particularly America’s political parties. But even minor Taiwanese parties have discovered that their counterparts overseas will support the country if threatened by China. For example, when the PRC conducted a series of provocative “missile tests” off Taiwan’s coastline in 1996, Taiwan’s Green Party appealed to the European Federation of Green Parties for support. The Greens sympathized with Taiwan’s plight and sent a member of its executive committee to the island in a show of solidarity.82 As one Taiwanese academic observed, the incident proved that “political parties, whether in power or not, should pursue inter-party diplomacy.”83

In sum, Taiwan’s foreign policy establishment has generally supported the practice of party-to-party diplomacy. The diplomatic tactic, however, became very controversial when Lien Chan and James Soong, then the leaders of the opposition KMT and PFP parties respectively, journeyed to China to meet with Hu Jintao, head of the CCP and president of China, in 2005. DPP officials charged that the opposition parties were undermining the authority of the central government and perhaps even engaging in treason. During discussions with the
author, DPP stalwarts claimed that such links should not be considered a component of party-to-party diplomacy as the CCP is an authoritarian political party ruling a hostile regime.

\[ \text{C Non-governmental organizations} \]

Taiwan has confronted its greatest challenges when attempting to join or rejoin intergovernmental international organizations (IGOs). The PRC goes to great lengths to block Taiwan’s participation in these institutions. Beijing defends this policy by claiming that the ROC is not a government and that only the PRC has the right to represent the Taiwanese people in international affairs. Nevertheless, the PRC has grudgingly acquiesced to Taiwan’s membership in some IGOs—particularly those with an economic focus. Perhaps most noteworthy is Taiwan’s participation in the World Trade Organization (WTO) as an “economy” (the Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Jimmen and Matsu). But Taiwan’s attempts to join (or rejoin) most important IGOs have met with little success. For example, the highly visible campaign to return to the UN has been stalled ever since it was launched in 1991.

As opposed to the frustrating experiences with IGOs, the Taiwanese enjoy much greater degrees of success when seeking to join non-governmental organizations (NGOs). During an interview with the author, Lee Teng-hui, former president of the ROC, emphasized that it was his administration that launched the drive to expand Taiwanese participation in NGOs.\(^8\) The Chen administration, however, has seized upon the idea of increased NGO participation as a means by which the island’s people can help raise Taiwan’s international profile and ultimately help the government achieve its diplomatic goals. Consequently, the MOFA established a NGO Affairs Committee in 2000 to assist Taiwanese NGOs wishing to participate in international activities. Each year, the committee approves approximately 400 grant applications from Taiwan’s NGOs to hold international events, meetings and conferences in Taiwan or to travel to participate in such activities overseas.\(^8\) The Committee has also coordinated NGO participation in humanitarian relief projects and sponsored training camps and internships for NGO workers.

As of November 2002, the Taiwanese participated in over 2,074 NGOs. As outlined in Table 4.4 (below) these organizations engage in a wide variety of activities ranging from science and technology to religion.

In sum, NGOs are viewed as a vital part of the drive to use unconventional diplomatic tactics to achieve foreign policy goals. As Eugene Chien, then Taiwan’s foreign minister, observed, it is “crucial for all the people of Taiwan to engage in diplomatic work.”\(^8\) It is believed that many of Taiwan’s NGOs are actively engaged in such activities. For example, in January 2001, the Taiwan International Medical Alliance was established by a group of medical professionals. The organization has one key objective—to help Taipei achieve its long-standing goal of becoming a member of the WHO.\(^8\)
Governmental institutions and foreign policy

Table 4.4 Taiwanese membership in NGOs by nature of organization

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<th>Nature of Organization</th>
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<tr>
<td>Science and Technology</td>
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<td>Medicine and Hygiene</td>
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<td>Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Animal Husbandry</td>
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<td>Religion</td>
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<td>Charity and Social Welfare</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>Law and Police Administration</td>
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<td>Labor</td>
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<td>Transportation and Tourism</td>
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<td>Leisure and Recreation</td>
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<td>Women, Family and Youth</td>
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<td>Business, Finance and Economics</td>
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<td>Engineering</td>
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<td>Industrial Technology</td>
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<td>Electronic and Mechanical Science</td>
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<td>Mining and Energy</td>
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<td>R&amp;D and Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wildlife Conservation and Environmental Protection</td>
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<td>Sports</td>
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**Summary**

In 2002, Parris Chang appeared to reflect the opinions of many Taiwanese when he repeated the old adage that “diplomacy is too important to be left to the diplomats.”88 By employing a variety of unconventional diplomatic tactics that fall under the broad rubric of “people-to-people diplomacy,” Taipei is seeking, with some degree of success, to boost its international profile and improve relations with foreign nations. Thus far, the PRC has done little to block these moves. Rather, Beijing seems to be borrowing a page from Taipei and attempting to use similar strategies to promote its own foreign policy agenda. For example, like Taiwan’s major parties, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has sought to establish relations with America’s political parties. Thus far, however, the CCP’s efforts have been stymied.

It is noteworthy that, unlike China, Taiwan’s non-state actors are, for the most part, actually non-state actors.89 As such, they do more than simply try to help the ROC government implement policy. Taiwan’s business community, for example, has long pressured the government to increase links with China while resisting
calls that it invest primarily in Southeast Asia (the so-called “go-south policy”). As the island’s NGOs, political parties and parliamentarians seek to influence policy, they do not always support the national government’s position on a given foreign policy issue.

III Foreign policy decision making

The characteristics of a state’s foreign policy structures and decision-making processes may exert a significant influence over its foreign policy behavior. During the martial law era, Taiwan’s governmental system was “authoritarian, based as it was on one party rule, a strong executive, pervasive police, and military control.”90 The president ruled all of these institutions with an iron fist. This enabled the regime to circumvent the Legislative Yuan and craft policy with little or no concern for other institutions or political actors. The dictatorial system also empowered the state apparatus to act with the speed, secrecy and decisiveness so often required for survival in an anarchic international system. For a nation like the ROC, a country confronted by a powerful neighbor seeking to engineer its destruction as a sovereign state, the need for efficiency and secrecy in foreign relations appeared especially acute.

When making decisions, the president consulted with a small number of trustworthy senior advisers, military officers and high officials within the KMT. Once a decision was made, the state apparatus and KMT implemented it faithfully. During an interview with the author, Lai I-Chung, Director of Foreign Policy Studies at the prestigious Taiwan Thinktank, described the foreign policy decision-making process during the Chiang era:

All the major policy decisions and policy initiatives were basically formed and discussed within the KMT Central Standing Committee and meetings over there. And then the bureaucrats—the so-called Executive Yuan—would simply execute or implement the policy that has been laid out by the KMT Central Standing Committee.91

After a policy was implemented, the bureaucracy would channel feedback regarding its success or failure back to the party’s leaders. At that point, adjustments would be made if deemed necessary.

The KMT hierarchy’s influence over foreign policy declined gradually during the Lee Teng-hui administration, while the power of other actors—particularly the Legislative Yuan—began to grow. When crafting policy, Lee relied less upon KMT party stalwarts and military officers and more upon personal assistants, friends and associates. By the end of his term, Lee felt compelled to move much of the decision-making process into the Office of the President because he no longer trusted his party, the legislature or the foreign policy bureaucracy. In fact, during discussions with the author, the former president indicated that some career bureaucrats opposed his innovative foreign policy initiatives and even sabotaged a number of them.92
Following the KMT’s defeat in the 2000 presidential election, President Chen Shui-bian inherited what might best be described as a dysfunctional foreign policy decision-making system. For decades, foreign policy directives had flowed from the top of the KMT down to the bureaucracy. However, the DPP “is not a strong party, its not Leninist… they don’t have very coherent policy views within themselves regarding specific domestic and foreign policies.” Consequently, the DPP provided the new president with little guidance or direction in matters related to foreign policy.

According to most accounts, Taiwan’s foreign policy bureaucracy did not step in and fill the void created by the downfall of the KMT decision-making structure. Taiwan has a “weak state bureaucracy… [and] there is no culture for interagency consultation as well as policymaking.” This means that MOFA and other foreign policy actors play a very limited role in the policy-making process.

Further complicating matters for the Chen administration is the fact that people-to-people diplomacy sometimes undermines government policy. A case in point is the 2002 visit by a group of KMT lawmakers to Washington, DC. The legislators lobbied against the government’s policy toward the thorny “one China” question and informed their American counterparts that the DPP position on national referendums did not reflect public opinion in Taiwan. As one academic observed, “by bringing their differences of opinion to the US, these lawmakers totally embarrassed Taiwan.” During an interview with the author, however, one DPP official conceded that during the KMT era, “we actually did that. We always complained how the KMT had damaged the country and society.”

When the developments described above are coupled with an extremely combative legislature and a bureaucracy staffed largely by holdovers from previous administrations, it should come as little surprise that some analysts contend that Taiwan’s foreign policy decision-making process might best be described as “very chaotic.” Like his predecessor, President Chen reportedly relies upon a small group of trusted friends and advisers. After initially seeking to distance himself from party politics, the president resumed the position as chair of his party in an effort to enhance party cohesion and support for his programs within the legislature. But he resigned from the position following the DPP’s defeat in the island’s December 2005 local elections.

To be sure, not everyone agrees with this proposition that Taiwan’s foreign policy-making process should be described as “chaotic.” During discussions with the author, Dr. Mark Chen, then Taiwan’s foreign minister, emphasized that bureaucratic resistance to foreign policy initiatives is grossly exaggerated. Moreover, he insisted that MOFA and other ministries do indeed propose meaningful foreign policy initiatives—recommendations that ultimately are adopted by the president. Chen contends that while “outsiders may have some kind of criticism saying every decision in terms of foreign policy is being made without consulting MOFA, I think this is not true.”

In order to support his position, the foreign minister provided an example. According to Chen, it was the MOFA that crafted the innovative policy designed to convince the UN to investigate the cross-strait standoff and develop ways to
promote peace between Taiwan and the PRC in 2005. The foreign minister describes the decision-making process as follows:

To begin with, we had internal discussions here in MOFA… and after we came up with [the peace resolution] we talked with some scholars in this country. Then, when we realized that this is a good way to go, we presented this case to the president and asked for his opinion.100

As a result of this MOFA initiative, two Taiwan-related proposals were submitted to the UN in September 2005. In addition to the annual effort to convince the UN General Committee to place Taiwan’s participation in the world body on the General Assembly’s agenda, more than a dozen countries also requested that UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan deploy a special envoy or an investigative team to Taiwan. The team would assess the security equation in the Taiwan Strait and share their findings with the General Assembly and related agencies. Unfortunately for Taipei, however, both proposals were defeated.

**Summary**

Taiwan’s foreign policy structure and decision-making process has changed dramatically since the martial law era. The system is now much more transparent and open to public scrutiny. Foreign policy issues are subject to widespread discussion and debate and the island’s voters hold decision makers accountable for their actions. Furthermore, many new actors have been brought into the policy-making process. In addition to the president, the “players” in Taiwan’s foreign policy making “game” now include a handful of ministries and councils, the Legislative Yuan, political parties, parliamentarians, NGOs, and an assortment of other actors.

In general, it would appear that democratization has complicated the foreign policy-making process in Taiwan. The efficient foreign policy of the authoritarian era has been replaced with a lack of cohesion and unity of purpose. Despite the protestations of some government officials, policy making appears uncoordinated within the Executive Yuan and there is evidence suggesting that the numerous ministries responsible for developing and implementing policy now feel free to pursue their own organizational interests and undermine policies that they do not support.101 However, few Taiwanese want to return to the days of dictatorial rule. They seem to agree with Winston Churchill’s observation that “democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the rest.” Moreover, the challenges posed by democratization for Taiwan’s foreign policy should not be exaggerated. After all, a consensus exists among a majority of Taiwanese, irrespective of political party affiliation, with respect to most foreign policy issues. As discussed in the following chapter, a vast majority of the Taiwanese population support the many and varied elements of pragmatic diplomacy and the Chen administration’s recent moves to employ people-to-people diplomacy and other unconventional tactics to achieve the nation’s foreign policy goals.
5 Societal influences and Taiwan’s foreign policy

The discussion of actors involved in Taiwan’s foreign policy process in the preceding chapter focused largely on formal institutional actors—the president, the legislature and the foreign affairs bureaucracy. These organizations are all legal parts of the Taiwanese government and play formal roles in crafting and implementing policy. The chapter also showed how Taiwan’s foreign policy establishment seeks to employ non-state actors and unconventional diplomatic tactics to achieve its foreign policy goals. These state and non-state actors, however, are not the only “players” in Taiwan’s foreign policy “game.”

Like other democracies, Taiwan’s political parties quarrel over some policy issues related to foreign policy. Moreover, the island’s interest groups, think-tanks, media and public are highly involved in foreign policy. These societal actors do not have a formal role in the making of foreign policy. Nevertheless, they do play a part in the policy process and may help influence and shape Taiwan’s external relations.

I Political parties

When compared to their counterparts in some other democracies, Taiwan’s four major political parties—the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU), the Kuomintang (KMT) and the People’s First Party (PFP)—do not offer voters clear and consistent foreign policy choices. In fact, they are neither ideologically distinct nor internally cohesive. But the essential sameness of the island’s major parties should not be attributed to any sort of bipartisan collaboration or cooperation. In Taiwan, politics certainly does not “stop at the water’s edge.” Rather, each party’s respective foreign policy options are heavily constrained both by the international environment and domestic politics.

The realities of the international system and public opinion have helped create a foreign policy consensus that provides a degree of continuity and consistency for Taiwan. As Shelley Rigger, a leading authority on Taiwan’s domestic politics, has observed, the island’s political parties generally subscribe to several common principles, “differing only over what tactics will best serve these ideals.”¹

First, no political party in Taiwan can afford to cave in to Beijing’s pressures for unification under the so-called “one country, two systems” unification scheme.
After all, almost no Taiwanese support the PRC formula and most agree that the government must do everything possible to preserve and safeguard its position as an independent and sovereign actor in the international system. Charges that any particular party will “sell out” or “surrender” to Beijing—allegations frequently hurled in the midst of heated political campaigns—are patently absurd.

Second, with the possible exception of the TSU, Taiwan’s political parties will go to considerable lengths to avoid provoking the PRC—the only external power determined to engineer Taiwan’s demise as a sovereign state. For example, DPP politicians felt compelled to tone down their pro-independence rhetoric significantly after Chen Shui-bian captured the presidency in 2000. Plans for island-wide referendums, constitutional revisions and a “rectification of names” have been subjected to so many modifications and changes that it is increasingly difficult to identify the ruling party’s genuine position toward these matters. Perhaps equally significant, the president has pledged that he will not declare Taiwan independent of China so long as the mainland does not use military force against the island.

Third, each of Taiwan’s political parties is determined to maintain close and cordial relations with the US. As one of Taiwan’s chief economic partners and the only foreign power likely to protect the island in the event of a PRC attack, this position obviously makes a great deal of sense. Given the significance of the US–ROC relationship, it should come as little surprise that Taiwan’s political parties regularly attack each other for somehow “damaging” bilateral ties. Ironically, it is also a common practice for the island’s politicians to accuse each other of caving in to pressures from Washington, while seeking to show how they “stand up” to the US.

Fourth, it is noteworthy that Taiwan’s political parties all support the chief elements of pragmatic diplomacy. For example, lawmakers routinely quarrel over “dollar diplomacy” and the number of diplomatic allies that Taiwan requires, but they agree that the island does indeed need formal diplomatic allies. As one DPP official explained during an interview with the author, these states help the island maintain its sovereignty, boost its “self confidence” and often are the only nations that will “speak out for Taiwan.” Moreover, most politicians share the belief that Taipei must boost its informal or substantive relations with countries that maintain relations with Beijing and that the government should actively seek out opportunities to join or rejoin the world’s major international organizations. Finally, each of Taiwan’s political parties supports increased economic growth. In order to accomplish this objective, they seek to make it “easy to do business overseas.”

The fact that Taiwan’s political parties agree upon several overarching foreign policy principles should not obscure the fact that the island’s politicians engage in countless battles related to international affairs. Since the late 1990s, Taiwanese politics has been characterized by intense partisan bickering that extends to every facet of society—including foreign policy. The quarrel over American arms sales provides a case in point. DPP lawmakers who criticized the KMT government for purchasing expensive weapons systems from the US in the 1990s now endorse the practice. On the other hand, KMT politicians who lobbied Washington for decades to acquire submarines and other big-ticket armaments now criticize the
government for wasteful spending. Another example is provided by “dollar diplomacy,” the practice of buying diplomatic allies. The DPP, which once vociferously attacked the tactic, now employs it. Not surprisingly, the KMT opposes it. Yet another example is provided by “visit” or “vacation” diplomacy. The DPP, which denounced presidential journeys as a waste of “precious resources” in the 1990s, now boasts of President Chen’s numerous overseas visits. Predictably, the KMT criticizes Chen’s journeys.

The foreign policy “flip flops” described above are troublesome as the end result is often gridlock in the nation’s legislature. Perhaps most disturbing, however, is the continuing fallout from the controversial 2004 presidential election. As one MOFA official explained, “they [the opposition] don’t think President Chen should be the president now.” Consequently, some members of the opposition parties have opted to undermine the government’s legitimacy abroad by claiming that Chen “stole the election” and is illegitimate. Given the fact that most governments do not even recognize Taipei, these tactics appear to have succeeded only in compounding the government’s foreign policy predicament. Moreover, according to some MOFA accounts, the opposition has encouraged both Beijing and Washington to “get tough” with Taipei:

Here is what I’ve heard, but I don’t know if it’s true. I’ve heard that the opposition for a long time has told China they should be really tough on Taiwan—on the DPP. And, of course, also tell the US government they should be tough.

There is evidence supporting this view. For example, after President Chen scrapped the National Unification Council (NUC) and the National Unification Guidelines (NUG) in March 2006, Ma Ying-jeou, KMT chairman, reportedly complained that the Bush administration had not responded forcefully enough to the provocation. Irrespective of the merits of the accusations surrounding the 2004 presidential election and the president’s behavior, it is clear that Taiwan does not profit from such tactics.

In short, continued political wrangling between Taiwan’s political parties is complicating an already difficult foreign policy environment. In fact, it represents a challenge to both foreign and domestic politics. As Dirk Saenger, Chairman of Taiwan’s European Chamber of Commerce, explained, “for investors such as us, nothing is more important than stability. We hope that indeed you [the Taiwanese] will build a bridge of trust between the government and the opposition parties.”

II Public opinion

What is the role of public opinion in the foreign policy process? Although political scientists have long studied the relationship that exists between public opinion and foreign policy, there is no single answer to this question. In recent years, studies have suggested that the public opinion–foreign policy dynamic in many democratic societies might best be described as an interactive one. In other words,
Societal influences and Taiwan's foreign policy

Political leaders only influence public opinion—they do not control it. Conversely, public opinion does not drive foreign policy decision making. Rather, it only helps to shape it. In short, “each influences the other.”

Public opinion may influence foreign policy in several ways. First, it may set limits on the range of a government's acceptable policy options. In other words, the public may act as a constraint that helps to define permissible foreign policy parameters—including a state's relationships with other powers. For example, no Taiwanese political party possesses the political capital to embrace China's “one country–two systems” unification scheme. As Ma Ying-jeou, chairman of the KMT and mayor of Taipei, observed, Beijing's proposal will not work “because public opinion polls in Taiwan show that very few people support ‘one country, two systems.’” In fact, as outlined in Figure 5.1, a majority of the Taiwanese public has long opposed the plan. Furthermore, public opinion polls reveal that most support

**Figure 5.1 Support for one country, two systems**

*Source: Mainland Affairs Council, Republic of China, on the world wide web at www.mac.gov.tw*
the idea that Taiwan should engage in pragmatic diplomacy and enhance ties with foreign nations even if it jeopardizes cross-strait ties (see Figure 5.2). Not surprisingly, all of Taiwan’s political heavyweights support strengthening relations with foreign governments.

A second way that public opinion may influence foreign policy in a democracy is its impact on a legislature. Most lawmakers are very sensitive to public opinion on foreign policy and respond not only to polls, but also to the perceived preferences of powerful constituencies. For example, legislators with strong ties to the business community have consistently supported moves to ease restrictions on investment in China and scoffed at government schemes designed to channel overseas investment elsewhere.

Yet another avenue for the public’s influence is through presidential elections. Voters may be persuaded to vote for a particular candidate due to his foreign policy positions or perhaps simply a general perception of which candidate might be best suited to stand up to an external power (such as China or the US). In countries like

![Figure 5.2 Support for pragmatic diplomacy over cross-strait ties](source: Mainland Affairs Council, Republic of China, on the world wide web at www.mac.gov.tw)

Survey conducted by
(a) Election Study Center, National Chengchi University, Taipei (886-2-29387134)
(b) Burke Marketing Research, Ltd., Taipei (886-2-25181088)
(c) China Credit Information Service, Ltd., Taipei (886-2-87873266)
(d) Center for Public Opinion and Election Studies, National Sun Yat-sen University, Kaohsiung (886-7-5252000)
(e) Survey and Opinion Research Group, Dept. of Political Science, National Chung-cheng University, Chiayi (886-5-2720411)
(f) e-Society Research Group, Taipei (886-2-27213658)

Respondents: Taiwanese adults aged 20–69 accessible to telephone interviewers
Taiwan, referendums on foreign policy issues—such as the so-called 2004 peace referendum—may also provide the citizenry with another avenue to influence decision makers.\textsuperscript{10}

A strong argument may be advanced that public opinion plays a major role in the crafting of Taiwan’s foreign relations. For example, in addition to those cases cited above, Taiwan’s drive to rejoin the UN supports the proposition that the public’s preferences play a role in the policy-making process. Officials have long acknowledged that important domestic political interests are served by the quixotic drive to rejoin the global body.\textsuperscript{11} During an interview with the author in March, 2000, Chen Chien-jen, then ROC Foreign Minister, explained:

The majority of the people on this island support this effort (the UN drive). No government can ignore the aspirations of its people. Otherwise, they have to face the electorate and be ousted.\textsuperscript{12}

Again, during an interview in 2002, Shen Ssu-tsun, then Director-General of the Department of International Organizations in Taiwan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reiterated that domestic political considerations are a contributing factor in the UN campaign:

Our society has been undergoing some transformation. Our people are well educated. They have strong aspirations to be engaged internationally. As a democratic government, we have to take into account those aspirations and translate those aspirations into policy.\textsuperscript{13}

During his 2000 inaugural address, President Chen Shui-bian declared that “the government must rule on the basis of majority public opinion [emphasis added].” Perhaps responding to the presidential edict, Hung-mao Tien, then the ROC foreign minister, proclaimed that the island’s diplomacy would be based, in part, “on the principle of public opinion based diplomacy.”\textsuperscript{14} The foreign minister went on to explain that polls would be used when crafting policy:

A responsible government or administration should base its policy making on democratic principles and on the respect of public opinion. Any policy that does not follow public opinion will not win the genuine support of the people and will not succeed. Hence, the government should fully grasp public opinion and take it as an important reference in policy-making… in view of the above, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is planning to conduct opinion polls on a variety of foreign affairs issues. We will then combine all opinions and suggestions on how to expand our international space and these will serve as a basis to review and improve our foreign policy.\textsuperscript{15}

It appears that MOFA has followed through on the foreign minister’s promises. Officials have revealed that a total of nine public opinion polls were conducted when studying the issue of whether or not the government should add the word
“Taiwan” to ROC passports. In short, as one high-ranking MOFA official explained, “opinion polls are quite important to us.”

As William Quandt observed, “in a democratic polity, foreign policy is inevitably influenced by domestic realities.” As the leader of a democratic country, Taiwan’s president must consider public opinion in the making of foreign policy, not only for legitimacy reasons, but also for political considerations. But relying on public opinion represents a serious challenge to Taiwan’s foreign policy decision makers. In fact, it is debatable whether it actually is feasible.

Ever since martial law was lifted in 1987, Taiwanese politicians have claimed to follow public opinion when developing both domestic and foreign policy. Public opinion polls are cited routinely as a critical factor in determining policy toward China, defense issues (including Taiwan’s participation in a theater missile defense system), the overseas visits of ROC officials, the drive to return to the UN and a host of other important issues. As described, the MOFA even sought to

Figure 5.3 Support for friendly foreign ties or friendly cross-strait ties
Source: Mainland Affairs Council, Republic of China, on the world wide web at www.mac.gov.tw
explain the recent decision to add the name “Taiwan” to the cover of passports by claiming that polls showed support for the move. However, studies have long acknowledged that it is unwise for decision-makers to base foreign policy decisions on the whims of public opinion.

Like their counterparts in other democracies, many Taiwanese are unfamiliar with the complexities of foreign policy issues. For example, when President Bill Clinton unveiled his “three no’s” policy toward Taiwan in 1995, public opinion polls showed that most Taiwanese opposed the policy. However, polls also revealed that a majority of respondents did not understand or grasp the meaning of the policy. Further complicating matters is the fact that the public’s policy preferences sometimes may appear unclear or even contradictory. As outlined in Figure 5.3, no consensus exists as to whether maintaining cordial relations with China should take precedence over promoting friendly ties with foreign governments. If the Chen administration hopes to rely upon polls when making policy, how should it proceed in this instance?

There are numerous other problems associated with public opinion polls in Taiwan. Many Taiwanese, particularly those individuals who reside in the countryside, refuse to answer polls truthfully. Moreover, many polls are flawed methodologically—either intentionally or unintentionally—and might be best described as “nonsense polls.” Candidates, political parties, the media and even governmental agencies have manipulated polls to achieve desired results. These developments led one political scientist at National Chengchi University to complain that “Taiwan’s public opinion research environment has become polluted.”

III Think-tanks

The term “think-tank” was coined during World War II to describe the safe and impartial environment in which American defense planners and experts developed military strategies and operational plans to conduct the war. After victory was achieved in 1945, the term was expanded to include a plethora of institutions that conduct research on domestic and/or foreign policy issues. These research centers have often been described as “universities without students.”

Think-tanks may play several foreign policy roles. They may serve either as partisan or nonpartisan policy advocates and as sources of policy expertise. They may also function as vehicles for communication among the elite by holding conferences and publishing books and journals. Think-tanks often appeal to decision makers because they have no vested bureaucratic interests within a government and possess both the time and expertise required for extensive research on complex foreign policy problems. Perhaps equally important, they may serve as recruitment agencies for the government. When there is a change in government, vacancies often are filled by individuals occupying positions in prestigious think-tanks. As might be expected, officials who have lost a high position may often find a safe harbor in a think-tank.

Taiwan’s think-tanks have been described as “half official and half non-governmental.” Taiwan’s first think-tanks—the Institute of International Relations
(IIR) and the Chung Hua Institution for Economic Research—were established with government funding. The IIR, which was established in 1953, brought together some of the island’s foremost political, economic and strategic experts to study the PRC and make suggestions about ROC policy toward the mainland and the global community. It was eventually attached to Taiwan’s prestigious National Chengchi University during the mid-1970s. The Chung Hua Institution for Economic Research was founded in 1981. The government established it to help decision makers develop strategies to promote continued economic growth in the face of the island’s increasingly precarious diplomatic position.

Following the lifting of martial law in 1987, dozens of think-tanks were established in Taiwan. Most of them are private organizations funded by corporations and conglomerates. Moreover, they are clearly partisan and aligned with one political party or camp. Not surprisingly, these think-tanks tend to advocate or support policies embraced by their respective political patrons.

Several think-tanks are closely aligned to former President Lee Teng-hui and his followers. These include the Taiwan Research Institute, the Taiwan Institute for Economic Research, the Institute for National Policy Research and Taiwan Advocates. The Taiwan Thinktank, generally considered one of Taiwan’s most influential think-tanks, is often described as a “brain trust” for President Chen Shui-bian. With respect to the KMT, it established the National Policy Foundation after losing the 2000 presidential election. The organization is largely staffed with former KMT officials. Interestingly, even the government-funded think-tanks appear to have political orientations. For example, the IIR has never been able to escape the impression that it supports the “pan blue” forces and the newly established Taiwan Foundation for Democracy is widely considered to be part of the “pan green” camp.

Taiwan’s think-tanks engage in all of the many and varied activities practiced by their American counterparts. They hold conferences, provide advice to government ministries, testify before the legislature, operate websites, and publish journals and position papers. Moreover, some have suggested that the island’s think-tanks play an important role in Taiwan’s “track two” diplomacy. In other words, Taiwanese think-tanks may serve as a back channel for communication between Taipei, Beijing and Washington.

Taiwan’s think-tanks do play a role in the foreign policy process. But insiders concede that their power often is exaggerated. During an interview with the author, I-Chung Lai, Director of Foreign Policy Studies at Taiwan Thinktank, suggested that, while various Taiwanese research centers may play a role in “track two” diplomacy, their actual influence is very limited. As Lai explained, “my feeling is that the direct influence of our results and policy recommendations from these dialogues to the governments of the three sides are not as great as people expect it to be.” In fact, Lai contends that Taiwan’s think-tanks actually play a very circumscribed role in the island’s foreign policy-making process.
IV Interest groups

One of the major theories about how democratic political systems work is called pluralism. In essence, this approach to the study of politics suggests that a democratic society is an amalgam of many different interest groups. Interest groups may be defined as “formal organizations of people who share a common outlook or social circumstance.”26 According to pluralist theory, these associations “band together in the hope of influencing government policy.”27 Thus, interest groups are considered by some political scientists to be pivotal actors in the political process as they help shape both domestic and foreign policy.

There is a broad literature on the different types of interest groups. Suffice it to say here, however, that they may be divided into two broad categories—economic groups and non-economic groups. Economic groups include business, labor and agricultural groups. Non-economic groups include environmental activists, ethnic lobbies, human rights groups, peace movements, women’s groups and numerous other public interest groups. Interest groups may vary significantly in their strength. Most studies suggest that economic groups wield more influence in the policy-making process than the non-economic groups. But non-economic groups also may be quite powerful.

Interest groups engage in a wide variety of tactics to achieve their goals. Some prefer to lobby lawmakers (and government bureaucrats) or engage in litigation. Others engage in electioneering and seek to influence the outcome of elections. After an election, they may seek to influence appointments to key positions in government. Still others engage in direct action by mobilizing protests and demonstrations to show support for their respective causes. A small number of interest groups engage in corrupt practices (such as bribery) in order to influence policy makers. Not surprisingly, Taiwanese interest groups have engaged in all of these activities.

Interest group activity is generally believed to be most influential during policy making that involves domestic political issues. However, pressure groups may also play an important role in foreign policy. Indeed, there are numerous examples of Taiwanese interest groups seeking to influence the island’s external relations.

Taiwan’s environmental movement successfully blocked the construction of a fourth nuclear power plant. This action generated foreign policy repercussions because it has made the island’s economy more vulnerable to instability in the Middle East and wild fluctuations in the price and availability of imported fuel. Moreover, Taiwanese agricultural groups have lobbied (with limited success) against imports of American beef and poultry. In some instances, demonstrations by farmers bivouacked outside the American Institute in Taiwan (America’s “unofficial” embassy in Taipei) have turned violent and contributed to complications in Taipei’s relations with Washington.

Overseas Chinese groups have long played an important role in Taiwan’s foreign policy. Both Beijing and Taipei compete for their loyalty and support. As Taiwan’s government moves away from China, some overseas organizations have moved away from Taiwan. Some now fly the PRC’s national flag. But other
organizations have remained loyal to the government and officials in Taiwan’s Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission predict that most traditional Chinese organizations in the US and elsewhere will not change their allegiance unless Taiwan changes its national title of the ROC.28

Some overseas organizations with strong links to Taiwan applaud the Chen administration’s moves to distance the island from China. Pressure groups such as the World United Formosans for Independence (WUFI) and the Formosan Association for Public Affairs (FAPA) spearheaded the campaign calling for Taiwan to return to the UN during the early 1990s. More recently, these organizations and others affiliated with the World Taiwanese Congress (WTC) a broad umbrella organization of pro-independence societies, launched the campaign to “rectify” the names of Taiwan’s state-owned corporations, overseas representative offices and the government.29 These initiatives aroused deep anxiety among US officials concerned with peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. In turn, the American government’s opposition to the name-change plans sparked anti-American demonstrations in Taiwan.30 Groups such as FAPA and WUFI also “have influence in terms of helping determine who should be in which positions [in the Chen administration].”31 Perhaps equally important, they have successfully lobbied various American administrations and the US Congress to boost arms sales to Taiwan and permit Taiwanese officials to make high-profile visits to the US.32

In some instances, Taiwanese pressure groups have banded together to support the government’s foreign policy objectives. For example, the Foundation of Medical Professionals Alliance in Taiwan, the Taiwan Business Association in Europe and the World Taiwanese Chambers of Commerce have all voiced strong support for Taiwan’s bid to rejoin the World Health Organization.33 Hundreds of representatives from such organizations gather in Geneva on an annual basis to pressure for Taipei’s admission to the global body. In other cases, however, groups have criticized government policy and called for major changes. Perhaps most noteworthy is the continued criticism voiced by conglomerates, firms and business associations with financial interests in China.

Taiwan’s business interests have long called on the government to ease restrictions on cross-strait trade and investment in the PRC. In fact, China’s threats to retaliate against firms supporting Taiwan independence prompted some of President Chen’s strongest corporate supporters to switch sides and become his harshest critics. In 2005, Hsu Weng-long, the founder of the Chi Mei group and a former Chen supporter, stunned the world when he praised Beijing’s so-called anti-secession law. The business tycoon also announced that “I think Taiwan and China belong to one China… I oppose Taiwan independence because promoting independence would lead Taiwan to war and bring disasters to the Taiwanese people.”34 Numerous Taiwanese business associations based in the PRC have voiced similar opinions.35 Not surprisingly, these business groups criticized Chen’s move to scrap the NUC and NUG in 2006. As Andrew Yang, a prominent Taiwan defense analyst, observed, “Taiwanese businesspeople believe the future of Taiwan depends on the Chinese market.”36
Taiwan’s interest groups are an important aspect of the island’s political process and play a role in the crafting of foreign policy. They serve as important channels through which Taiwan’s citizens, businesses and groups may present their opinions and demands forcefully to the central government. But it is important to remember that they represent only one element in the policy-making process. Sometimes they are successful and sometimes they are not.

One important fact that limits the influence of any interest group (or coalition of groups) is that there is often opposition by other significant political actors. For example, the push by FAPA and WUFI for a “rectification” of names encountered stiff opposition from the US government. During an interview with the author, one MOFA official complained that America’s position toward the issue was “very arrogant” and exclaimed, “I am really mad about that.” But it is noteworthy that the plan to rename the ROC government’s overseas representative offices and state firms has been shelved indefinitely. Moreover, national security concerns most often will trump economic interests. Trade and investment in China provides a case in point. As described, Taiwanese businesses have pressured the government to lift all restrictions on cross-strait economic exchanges for almost two decades. But numerous restrictions remain in place. In a similar vein, the government also has resisted pressures from Taiwan’s sagging tourist industry to open the island’s borders to swarms of PRC tourists. Again, security considerations have been cited as a chief concern.

In sum, interest groups may play a highly visible role in Taiwan’s foreign policy. But high visibility does not guarantee influence. There is considerable debate about how much influence interest groups actually wield in the foreign policy-making process in Taiwan and other democracies.

V The mass media

In its broadest sense, the mass media includes both printed and electronic sources of information and entertainment. The print media consists of newspapers, magazines and journals. The electronic media includes radio, television and film. Together, the print media and electronic media engage in mass communication—the process of transmitting large amounts of information to a vast, diverse audience.

The media may play several important roles in the foreign policy process. First, it may exercise control over the flow of information (sometimes described as “gatekeeping”) and influence what, if anything, the public is told about a given state’s foreign policy. In this broad sense, the media influences public opinion. Moreover, in some instances, the media also provides analyses of foreign policy. As most ordinary citizens lack familiarity with international issues, such news stories may prove important.

Second, the mass media may help determine which issues will be the focus of attention. As one classic study observed, the media may not always succeed in shaping public opinion, but it is stunningly successful in telling an audience what to think about. In other words, it may help to set a country’s political agenda.
A third type of influence is the power that the media may wield over foreign policy decision makers. In a democratic society, officials will often seek to anticipate how the media will respond to a foreign policy initiative when crafting policy. In this important respect, the media may influence relevant actors in the decision-making process while policy is being formulated.

During the martial law era in Taiwan, the media was under tight government supervision and control. After a short period during which government-run newspapers served as the primary source of information, private dailies gained dominance in the early 1950s. However, all papers had to be registered with the government and their content was subject to strict government censorship. Moreover, the number of newspapers remained constant at 31 for several decades and there were limits both on pagination and printing places. Some studies suggest that the Chiang regime tolerated the private press only “because the Kuomintang government was determined to put up a good show on the international level and to ensure American support.” In other words, foreign policy considerations were the driving force that prompted the government to permit a private, albeit not “free,” press.

Like the print media, the electronic media was muzzled during the Chiang era. For over three decades, the television industry was dominated by three government-owned and operated stations. Programming at the time could perhaps best be described as dull and pro-government in its orientation. Other media outlets—including magazines, radio, and film—also were subjected to supervision and censorship. Not surprisingly, a variety of dissident or “underground” publications eventually surfaced.

With the lifting of martial law in 1987, Taiwan experienced a media “explosion.” As Lin Chia-lung, Director General of the Government Information Office, observed, the media was “thrown open to business conglomerates without careful planning.” Although newspapers technically must still register with the government, all restrictions on numbers, pagination or printing places were scrapped. By 2001, the number of newspapers had skyrocketed from the 31 permitted during the martial law era to 454. The electronic media witnessed a similar phenomenon. Countless cable television stations began to broadcast programs and by the mid-1990s the penetration level of cable television in Taiwan exceeded that found in the US. Like the US, television overtook the print media and became the primary source of news information for the population.

Taiwanese government officials have criticized the island’s electronic media as “terrible in the extreme.” In their battles for high ratings, television stations engage in the worst forms of sensationalism and even have been accused of fabricating news stories. Moreover, almost every station is firmly aligned with one of the island’s political camps and news coverage is extremely biased. Unfortunately, the print media isn’t any better. Like the broadcast media, the print media engages in sensationalism and most newspapers could be described as the mouthpieces for political parties. It is a common practice for government officials to be misquoted intentionally by reporters covering a news story. Given this state of affairs, the government is taking steps to reform the media and establish some sort of public
broadcasting system. In the meantime, citizens are urged to read several newspapers and/or watch several news programs if they hope to have any understanding of public affairs.

Although political analysts contend that the “public trust in the media has decreased,” they still believe that it plays a “very influential” role in Taiwanese politics.\(^45\) As in most societies, the media tends to focus largely upon domestic political events. But it also covers issues related to international politics.

Like domestic news coverage, the Taiwanese media puts completely different spins on stories related to cross-strait relations, the drive to return to international organizations, ties with the US and efforts to retain ties with diplomatic allies. Important international news stories may be relegated to the back pages of a newspaper or ignored completely if judged to be detrimental to a particular political camp. The media also engages in sensationalism to boost newspaper circulation or gain television viewers. During an interview with the author, Dr. Mark Chen, then Taiwan’s foreign minister, complained that it seems not to matter if the government adopts one approach to an international issue over another because “either way you will get criticism from our news media here in Taiwan.”\(^46\) He attributed much of this behavior to extreme political partisanship:

> Basically, the way I see it is party partisanship… sometimes in Taiwan I think it [the freedom of the press] has been abused tremendously. The media can combine with some legislators in the same camp ideologically. Then, they can spread some false information, misconceptions, misinterpretations, and create some sort of social instability.\(^47\)

Independent studies appear to support Chen’s argument. There seems to be a tendency by both Taiwan’s legislature and news media to embarrass, humiliate and even undermine the national government and its foreign policy programs. As one analyst observed, “the media and opposition politicians seem to have an unusual passion for exposing the government’s diplomatic tricks and an insatiable appetite for sensationalizing anything which smacks of secretiveness.”\(^48\) In short, Taiwan’s news media is complicating the foreign policy-making process in Taiwan.

**VI Summary**

The task of a foreign policy analyst is to explain how and why the choices of foreign policy are made. As described above, the decision-making process is much more complex than conventional wisdom might suggest. Taiwan’s politics does not “stop at the water’s edge.” Rather, a variety of major social and political actors—including the island’s political parties, interest groups, think-tanks, the media and public opinion—are all involved in the foreign policy decision-making process.

To be sure, these influences generally do not determine foreign policy outcomes. Nevertheless, they sometimes may play an important part in the policy process. In some instances, these factors influence officials. In other cases, they may even set general boundaries for government policy.
In the next chapter, we will see how individual leaders have helped shape the dynamics of Taiwan’s foreign policy process. The chapter will examine the proposition that the personal characteristics of Taiwan’s presidents have made a significant difference in foreign policy outcomes.
This chapter examines the proposition that individual leaders may make a significant difference in international politics and that Taiwan’s foreign policy behavior may best be explained largely as a result of the personal characteristics of an individual leader. It shows how the personalities of Taiwan’s leaders have played a critical role in shaping the trajectory of the island’s external relations. In conclusion, the author explains why it is probable that individuals will continue to matter immensely in Taiwan’s domestic politics and foreign relations.

I Individuals and foreign policy

Analysts have long quarreled over the utility of the so-called “idiosyncratic model” of foreign policy decision making. This approach assumes that a country’s leader is much more than a passive agent who responds to external events, situations or shifts in the structure of the international system. Rather, it is argued that individuals can make a major difference in foreign policy outcomes and that their actions matter immensely. A leader’s values, beliefs, personalities, cultural baggage and perceptions are believed to have a major impact on foreign policy outcomes.

Critics of the idiosyncratic model contend that the personal characteristics of a leader only play a minor role in shaping the foreign policy behavior of a state. In the late 1970s, Margaret Hermann, a prominent political psychologist, summarized these criticisms as follows:

First, individual actors are limited by social forces in the impact they can have on events… the international system so shapes and constrains policy that individual decision-makers can have little impact. Second, the critics state that in the foreign policy arena leaders who have different personal characteristics behave similarly when placed in common situations. Third, the critics argue that because foreign policy decisions are made in complex bureaucracies, organizational constraints limit the effect of individuals’ characteristics.¹

Hermann and other scholars readily concede that these criticisms do hold merit in some instances. For example, bureaucratic organizations (and their accompanying standard operating procedures) often wield substantial influence over a state’s
routine foreign policy behavior. However, the specifics of a situation may determine the extent to which a bureaucracy or an individual leader may matter. When confronted with a crisis situation when information is in short supply and organizational routines are inapplicable, a decision-maker’s personal characteristics may prove to be crucially important.

Analysts have identified several factors that may influence whether a political leader’s personal characteristics will have an effect on foreign policy. First, it is important that an individual have a general interest in international affairs and/or a specific issue related to foreign policy. Some experience in the field is also a plus. Second, an individual’s impact often appears to be greatest when a state’s institutions are young, fragile or in crisis. One might argue that Vladimir Lenin and Mao Zedong wielded enormous influence over the foreign policy of the Soviet Union (USSR) and the People’s Republic of China (PRC) respectively because they were “founding leaders” who governed in the early years of their countries when institutions and practices were being established. Third, individuals appear to have more influence over foreign policy when they have few institutional or societal constraints. In dictatorships and authoritarian regimes, leaders normally are not constrained by public opinion, interest groups, political parties, legislatures and other internal pressures even when charting a bold initiative in foreign policy. For example, Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin confronted little domestic opposition when cementing their astonishing non-aggression pact in 1939. Finally, as described, during an international crisis, “there is a strong tendency for a contraction of authority to the highest levels of government.”

Those leaders who regularly play a central role in dealing with a state’s foreign policy problems have been described as “predominant leaders.” They share the characteristic of possessing “the ability to commit the resources of the society and, with respect to the specific problem being confronted, the power to make a decision that cannot be readily reversed.” However, these leaders differ substantially in other ways.

Numerous typologies have been developed in an effort to classify different kinds of predominant leaders. Some analysts have sought to classify such individuals as directive or consultative, task-oriented or relations-oriented, transformational or transactional or as ideologues or opportunists. Still others have attempted to construct more comprehensive (and complicated) classification schemes by incorporating several elements of each of these typologies into their research designs. Perhaps the most widely acclaimed classification system, however, is John G. Stoessinger’s categorization based on the distinction between crusaders and pragmatists.

According to Stoessinger, a crusader “tends to make decisions based on a preconceived idea rather than on the basis of experience.” The crusader is not receptive to criticism or information that does not reinforce a particular point of view:

If the facts do not square with his philosophy, it is too bad for the facts. Thus the crusader tends toward rigidity and finds it difficult, if not impossible, to
extricate himself from a losing posture. He does not welcome dissent and advisers will tend to tell him what he wants to hear.\textsuperscript{10}

In short, crusaders are more goal-driven leaders who “interpret the environment through a lens that is structured by their beliefs, attitudes, motives and passions.”\textsuperscript{11} They believe that their actions will improve the world, but often manage “to leave it in worse shape than it was before.”\textsuperscript{12}

Examples of crusaders are many and varied. They include leaders of all political persuasions. Woodrow Wilson, who sought to make the world safe for democracy and refused to compromise with the US Senate over America’s participation in the League of Nations, has been classified as a crusader.\textsuperscript{13} Adolf Hitler was another crusader. The fascist dictator’s “personal psyche” helped push him forward to invade Poland and ignite World War II.\textsuperscript{14} Fidel Castro, the Cuban dictator who spent much of his career seeking to export revolution, also has been described as a crusader.\textsuperscript{15}

Not unlike the crusader, a pragmatist may have “some idea about where he or she wants to take the government.”\textsuperscript{16} However, the pragmatic leader tends to be guided more by facts and reality:

He is generally aware of the alternatives to his chosen course of action and explores the pros and cons of each as objectively as possible. He encourages advisers to tell him what he ought to know, not what they think he wants to hear. Always flexible, he does not get locked into a losing policy. He can change direction and try again, without inflicting damage to his self-esteem.\textsuperscript{17}

Such leaders are more “contextually responsive” as they tend not to be “high risk takers” and “are less likely to pursue extreme policies of any kind.”\textsuperscript{18}

There are numerous examples of pragmatic leaders. With respect to foreign policy, a strong argument may be made that Richard M. Nixon was a pragmatist. Nixon ran for office and built his career as an anti-communist. But as president he sought to patch up relations with the PRC to counter a growing Soviet threat and achieve an honorable end to America’s involvement in the Vietnam War. Mohammad Khatami, the recent president of Iran, provides another example. Khatami sought to “work within the system” to reorganize the Iranian government without overturning the Islamic revolution.\textsuperscript{19}

To be sure, these two personality types—crusaders and pragmatists—should not be considered as mutually exclusive. Rather, they might best be characterized as ideal types on the opposite ends of a continuum. As Stoessinger notes, “a pure crusader would be a saint or a fanatic while a pure pragmatist would be an efficient machine. Usually both types are present to some degree in each personality, but one tends to dominate.”\textsuperscript{20} Moreover, people can change over time. Numerous studies have demonstrated that “people do not cease to develop psychologically at puberty, but continue psychological development throughout their lifetimes.”\textsuperscript{21}
II Taiwan’s crusaders and pragmatists

The discussion below applies Stoessinger’s framework to the four predominant leaders who have served as Taiwan’s president since 1945—Chiang Kai-shek, Chiang Ching-kuo, Lee Teng-hui and Chen Shui-bian. It does not pretend to be a thorough history, but employs examples of the characteristics of each president in an effort to explain why a particular leader is classified either as a crusader or a pragmatist. The focus of attention here is on showing how each president’s leadership style has shaped Taiwan’s foreign policy behavior and contributes to an understanding of the island’s foreign relations.

Chiang Kai-shek

Chiang Kai-shek was born in Fenghua, Zhejiang (Chechiang) Province in 1887 and ultimately became one of the pre-eminent figures in the politics of both mainland China and Taiwan. As a privileged child, he learned “to cherish the old, traditional, immemorial ways and to hate and fear change and disorder.”

In 1905, Chiang stunned his family when he announced that he would pursue a military career, rather than study law or prepare for some other respectable profession (soldiers having low status in traditional Chinese society). In keeping with his reverence for Confucian virtues, the decision to go against family and clan must have been very difficult for the young man. But Chiang explained that “China had suffered unprecedented humiliation for more than sixty years… such disgraces were not to be borne, but there would be no disposing of them until China made herself strong enough to drive out the foreign devils.” Rather than challenge Chinese values and traditions, Chiang explained that he was seeking only to restore them.

While studying military science in Japan, Chiang joined Sun Yat-sen’s United Revolutionary League, a political movement dedicated to the overthrow of the despised Ching dynasty. Over time, this assemblage evolved into the Kuomintang (KMT). When the 1911 revolution broke out in China, Chiang returned to help in the overthrow of the imperial government and the establishment of the Republic of China (ROC). During the tumultuous years that followed the collapse of imperial China, Chiang became one of Sun’s most trusted military advisers and was appointed to serve as superintendent and commanding general at the new Whampoa Military Academy.

Following Sun Yat-sen’s death in 1925, Chiang Kai-shek surprised observers when he emerged as Sun’s heir and the leader of the ROC. Almost from the outset, however, Chiang was challenged by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which Sun had allowed to join the KMT and operated essentially as “a party within a party.” The struggle with the CCP would come to dominate the Generalissimo’s life.

The KMT’s ideology is based upon Sun Yat-sen’s San Min Chu I or Three Principles of the People—nationalism, democracy and the people’s livelihood. The third principle called for some sort of land redistribution to address the
pressing problems that confronted China’s peasantry. But under Chiang’s leadership, the KMT government did little or nothing to alleviate the widespread suffering in China’s rural areas. Making matters worse, the party engaged in rampant corruption. The deplorable conditions helped Mao Zedong and his followers recruit supporters.

As early as 1932, Chiang stated publicly that the communist challenge was “seventy percent political… and only thirty percent military.” But his response to the communist threat was confined largely to seeking to destroy the CCP in a series of ill-conceived “extermination campaigns.” In fact, Chiang only called off his anti-CCP military operations and agreed a united front against Japanese invasion forces after he was kidnapped during the notorious “Sian Incident” of 1936.27 Chiang’s Confucian code prevented him from enacting the reforms required to change the existing order of things in China—policies that would have undercut popular support for the CCP. In many respects, Chiang became entrapped by his unbending beliefs:

He was caught by the limitations of the Confucian elite. He could rail against greed and deliver sermons against corruption, both of which he did. But he was bound by old loyalties which prevented him from cracking down on relatives or other connected wrongdoers with fines, imprisonment, or if necessary, execution. Confucian principles dictated that he could lead only by personal example and he was beyond reproach in remaining aloof from the general contagion.28

Rather than adjust to changing conditions in China and embrace measures that would boost the legitimacy and popularity of the KMT regime, Chiang remained largely inflexible and unbending. As one study observed, “the Generalissimo was stuck mentally in the era in which he had grown up, making him incapable of offering anything new to a country that was crying out for progress. Obsessively, he pursued his set ideas to the bitter end.”29

With the close of World War II in 1945, China descended into civil war. As the KMT’s position deteriorated, Chiang made preparations to move the ROC government to the island outpost of Taiwan. He also ordered the country’s gold reserves and art treasures moved to Taipei. The fact that he had resigned as president of the ROC made little difference.30

After retreating to Taiwan in 1949, “the Generalissimo was in charge of all elements of the party and the government in name as well as in reality.”31 By 1950, Chiang had resumed the post as president of the ROC and also served as director-general of the KMT and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. For all practical purposes, the 1946 Constitution was scrapped indefinitely and “all power in all domains inevitably flowed downward from him.”32

In some respects, Chiang appeared to have learned from his mistakes on the mainland. Shortly before departing for Taiwan, the Generalissimo wrote that the blame for his defeat “lay with the KMT for having done nothing to reform society or promote the people’s welfare.”33 After retreating to Taiwan, he reformed the
party and launched a series of major agricultural reforms that gave the regime greater popularity and legitimacy among the island’s rural population than it had ever enjoyed on the mainland. But Chiang opposed major construction projects and infrastructure investments as he had no plans to remain in Taiwan.

With respect to foreign policy, almost all of Chiang’s diplomacy was geared toward “the goal of recovering the mainland and unifying the country under his leadership… practically all his diplomatic moves and all his political initiatives were subordinated to this objective.” The Generalissimo considered his presence in Taiwan only temporary and often referred to Taipei as “the wartime capital of the Republic of China.” Among top ROC government officials, “no one dared to openly challenge Chiang Kai-shek’s belief that a return to the mainland was the supreme mission for which all could be sacrificed.” Not surprisingly, public opinion played little or no role in Chiang’s foreign policy deliberations. Furthermore, dissent was not tolerated and those who sympathized with the PRC or promoted Taiwan’s independence were branded as traitors and punished severely.

During his decades in Taiwan, Chiang remained resolute in his determination to liberate China and failed to adjust to changes in the international community. Throughout much of the 1950s and 1960s, Washington urged Taipei to consider approaching the ROC–PRC dispute in a more creative or pragmatic way. However, Chiang rejected all American efforts to promote a “two China policy” and bristled at any suggestions that the international status of Taiwan was undetermined. Moreover, any proposals for dual Chinese representation in the UN were deemed totally unacceptable. Chiang declared that “there is no room for patriots and traitors to live together” and vowed that the ROC would walk out of the UN if the PRC was ever allowed to join the global body. The Generalissimo also would not tolerate dual-recognition by foreign powers—countries had to choose between Taipei and Beijing. As one study noted, “the near constant throughout this period [the 1950s and 1960s] was Chiang Kai-shek’s rigid adherence to principle in the face of American pragmatism and creativity.”

According to Chiang, there was only one legitimate Chinese government and it was located temporarily in Taipei. He had no interest in compromise or accommodation with the bandit regime (or its allies). Rather, Chiang was obsessed with rollback and engaged in a number of schemes designed to draw the US and the PRC into a conflict that would help him achieve this objective. Every international crisis or discouraging report from China caused his hopes to rise briefly and “such moments meant more to the Generalissimo than all the record breaking statistics of Taiwan’s booming economy.” He could not comprehend why countries such as the US sought to engage the PRC. As Chiang explained in 1964, “the only way to ensure stability and restore peace to Asia and the world is to exterminate the communist totalitarian regime on the Chinese mainland.”

To be sure, Chiang’s rigid adherence to his principles exacted a heavy price for Taiwan as it contributed enormously to the island’s international isolation and present predicaments. For example, although the Generalissimo purportedly agreed to American requests for dual-representation in the UN it is doubtful
whether he actually instructed his UN delegation to strive for it because ROC diplomats worked against US proposals to seat both Beijing and Taipei. Indeed, during the debate on the China representation issue in October 1971, the ROC delegation indicated that it was in “complete agreement” with Albania about the “indivisibility of the Chinese nation.”

Moreover, it appears that the ROC delegation had received no instructions from Taipei as to how it should respond to the US proposal for dual representation. As Chiang Ching-kuo observed, it was “principle” that prompted the ROC to withdraw from the UN.

During the 1950s, John Foster Dulles, then US Secretary of State, described Chiang Kai-shek as “a fanatic.” But this characterization is unfair. Chiang was a crusader who rigidly adhered to his principles in the face of adversity and repeated reversals. He saw himself as a Chinese patriot and his sole life ambition was to reunite his country (which he believed included both Taiwan and Outer Mongolia), rid the nation of foreign imperialists, implement gradually Sun Yat-sen’s Three Principles of the People and restore China’s rightful place in the world. Chiang would not compromise with the CCP as he believed that the communist government “was a regime that systematically negated China’s traditions—for example, those regarding family, respect for learning and private ownership of land.” Similarly Chiang would not countenance American schemes to divide China as “the separation of Taiwan from China was as deeply despised by Chiang Kai-shek as was indefinite perpetuation of communist rule over mainland China. Neither was acceptable.”

In the end, Chiang Kai-shek “with his courage and energy and his qualities of leadership, was not only a deeply flawed leader, but in the classical sense of the Greek tragedies, a tragic one.” Like Woodrow Wilson, “his personality collided with the conditions of his time… in his dream was his greatness, in his rigid personality his tragedy.”

Ironically, Chiang’s single-minded determination to employ only military means to crush the CCP contributed to Mao’s victories on the mainland and eventually undermined Taiwan’s position in the international community.

Chiang Ching-kuo was born in Chikow (Hsikou), Zhejiang (Chechiang) Province in 1910. The elder Chiang apparently determined that his sons would benefit from a foreign education. Consequently, Chiang Ching-kuo was sent to study at Moscow’s newly established Sun Yat-sen University of the Toilers of China (Sunovka) in 1925. Some years later, Chiang Wei-kuo, the Generalissimo’s adopted son, was dispatched to Nazi Germany for training.

According to friendly biographers, Chiang became a prisoner of Soviet authorities and “endured hardships unbearable to most human beings under Stalin’s brutal totalitarian rule.” More balanced accounts, however, paint a different picture of the 12 years that the Generalissimo’s son spent in the USSR.

When the young Chiang arrived in Moscow, the KMT–CCP alliance remained intact and he was full of enthusiasm for the socialist country. Students
at the university included many communists and Chiang even struck up a close personal friendship with Deng Xiaoping, the future leader of the PRC.52

Chiang Ching-kuo undoubtedly confronted some challenges and difficulties during his years in the Soviet Union. But he displayed an uncanny ability to adjust to changing circumstances. When KMT forces liquidated most of the CCP leadership during the 1927 purge, Chiang Ching-kuo delivered a public speech declaring that he now addressed his classmates “not as the son of Chiang Kai-shek, but as the son of the Chinese Komsonol [the Communist Youth League].”53 He even went so far as to denounce his father as “a traitor and a murderer.”54 Moreover, during his early years in Moscow, Chiang Ching-kuo was a staunch supporter of Leon Trotsky, Stalin’s arch-rival, who called for world revolution. But he abandoned all pro-Trotsky activities when it became clear that the movement was doomed to failure. According to one study, this episode represented the beginning of a life-long pattern of pragmatic political behavior:

This was the first important instance in his life in which instinctive pragmatism overcame his emotional and intellectual attraction to resounding ideals. The experience gave him an appreciation of the complexities and contingencies of life. It also began a life-long pattern in which empirical judgment would shape his pursuit of intuitive and visionary goals. Action would have to be justified by sound reason, not just emotional or political commitment.55

During his stay in the Soviet Union, Chiang Ching-kuo excelled in the various tasks to which he was assigned. He graduated from Leningrad’s Central Tolmatchev Military and Political Institute in May 1930 at the top of his class. After graduation, he accepted a position as a manual laborer at Moscow’s Dynamo Electric Plant without complaint and advanced rapidly within the factory after suggesting a number of technological innovations that would better the plant’s operation. In 1932, Chiang accepted an assignment as deputy supervisor of a large factory in Sverdlovsk where he overcame the initial skepticism (and prejudice) of the local Russian workers and proved himself to be both an excellent manager and lecturer on international affairs. As for Chiang’s brief stay in Siberia, there is no evidence that he was sent to a gulag as punishment. Rather, he probably was sent east “for his health—to get him out of the terrible pollution of Sverdlovsk so that he might better recover from a mysterious sickness.”56

After returning to China in 1937, Chiang reconciled with his father and accepted a number of administrative posts where he earned a reputation as a capable and honest official who had little tolerance for corruption or waste. When the government retreated to Taiwan in 1949, Chiang oversaw intelligence operations on the island and “his authority in the supervision and coordination of intelligence work extended to the party as well as to all other fields [emphasis added].”57 As an ardent opponent to the KMT regime explained during an interview with the author, Chiang Ching-kuo “was the head of the [ROC] Gestapo.”58 Although some arrested by the secret police were communist sympathizers, most were innocent.59 As the years passed, Chiang Ching-kuo occupied other positions
and the elder Chiang “relied more and more on his son, to be his right hand and also his eyes and ears.”

By the 1960s, Chiang Ching-kuo was playing an increasingly active role in Taiwan’s foreign relations. He developed strong bonds with American officials stationed in Taiwan (particularly those in the intelligence community) and became “the key behind-the-scenes negotiator with the US on sensitive international matters.”

In discussions with Americans, Chiang Ching-kuo revealed that he possessed a pragmatic attitude toward Taiwan’s relationship with China and the island’s increasingly complicated position in the international community. He conceded that the KMT regime had to keep the hopes alive for a return to the mainland in order to sustain the morale of the armed forces. But Chiang also revealed that “the key men of [my] generation realize that it may be a long time before a non-communist regime can be re-established in mainland China—perhaps not in their lifetimes.”

During conversations with Robert McNamara, then US Secretary of Defense, Chiang observed that any return to the mainland would depend upon winning over the hearts and minds of the Chinese people and the People’s Liberation Army. It is clear that Chiang Ching-kuo did not share his father’s missionary zeal for a military conquest of the mainland.

Chiang Ching-kuo was confirmed as ROC premier on May 26, 1972. As described in preceding chapters, this was a very challenging period for Taiwan. During the early 1970s, the island suffered numerous diplomatic setbacks as it was expelled from international organizations and dozens of countries switched diplomatic relations to the PRC. In the face of such adversity, Chiang surprised observers when he launched the first of Taiwan’s major economic initiatives—the Ten Major Development Projects—at a cost of billions of US dollars. Upon completion of this program, Chiang oversaw the Twelve Basic Projects and then the Fourteen Basic Projects. Chiang believed that these massive joint state–private ventures would help transform Taiwan into a global economic power and thereby help the island surmount its international difficulties.

When Chiang Kai-shek died in April 1975, Vice President Yen Chia-kan succeeded the Generalissimo as president of the ROC. For all practical purposes, however, Chiang Ching-kuo ruled Taiwan. After all, he was the leader of the KMT, had strong links with the military and intelligence communities, and was the Generalissimo’s designated successor. After Yen served out the remaining years of Chiang Kai-shek’s term, the National Assembly elected Chiang president in 1978 and then re-elected him in 1984.

As president, Chiang Ching-kuo’s leadership style was quite “different from his lean, aloof, austere and vigorous father.” He proved to be an unpretentious leader and “a man of common sense with a common touch.” He shared his father’s belief that Taiwan was a part of China and favored some sort of eventual unification (if only nominal). But he was never obsessed with unification or the use of military force to liberate the mainland.

Long before he became president, Chiang Ching-kuo had come to the realization that there was little or no hope of the KMT ever returning to the mainland.
He believed that “the only viable alternative… was to make the Taiwanese regime powerful and legitimate through greater Taiwanization, through accelerated democratization, and through abandonment of the openly hostile policies against the mainland.”

Chiang initiated a series of steps to achieve each of these objectives.

With respect to Taiwanization, Chiang promoted numerous Taiwanese within the KMT and the government. Unlike the officials appointed by his father, these individuals were not ideologues. Rather, Chiang Ching-kuo stacked “the upper echelons of the party with a new generation of pragmatists.” Perhaps most significant, Chiang designated Lee Teng-hui—a native Taiwanese technocrat—as his successor.

In addition to appointing more Taiwanese to positions of leadership, Chiang Ching-kuo put Taiwan on the road to democratization. Indeed, it would be “hard to imagine that political liberalization could have proceeded far in Taiwan if Chiang Ching-kuo had actively opposed it—or that political reforms could have followed their recent trajectory if he had not paved the way for them.”

When Chiang lifted martial law in 1987, he explained that the KMT “must adopt new ideas and measures to meet the needs of an ever-changing situation.”

When the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) was established before the ban on new parties was lifted, Chiang rejected demands by the Ministry for the Interior and hardline KMT officials for a crackdown. The president explained that “times are changing. The environment is changing, the tide is also changing.”

Overhauling the ROC’s relationship with the PRC was another hallmark of Chiang’s presidency. As Chiang explained, “to be more anti-communist, we will have to become less anti-communist.” Acting on this belief, Chiang lifted the ban on travel to the PRC. He hoped that a policy of engagement with the PRC might lead eventually to meaningful political and economic reforms on the mainland. The president also observed that “the people of the mainland had the right to decide whether they wanted the CCP, KMT or some other party to run the government” and instructed aides to stop using the term “bandits” to describe the CCP.

Chiang’s sober approach to domestic politics and cross-strait relations was matched only by his pragmatic attitude toward international affairs. Chiang began to prepare for the inevitable break in diplomatic relations with the US long before ties actually were severed. As premier, he had sought to boost American support for Taiwan. Buying missions were dispatched to the US to purchase products and Taipei began to actively court influential Americans including lawmakers, academics and leaders of the Chinese-American community. Clandestine intelligence operations and other covert activities within the US also accelerated.

As president, Chiang ordered the Foreign Ministry to prepare a series of studies outlining contingency plans and countermeasures that would help offset the ramifications of Washington’s recognition of the Beijing regime. After reviewing these studies, Chiang worked hard to convince US officials that, while the ROC opposed the normalization of relations between the US and the PRC, Taipei hoped for assurances that relations with Washington would continue essentially as
in the past. When President Jimmy Carter announced that Washington would switch recognition to Beijing in 1979, Chiang shrewdly turned down an invitation by Senator Robert Dole (R.-Kansas) to travel to America to confront the administration. He realized that “it would be a mistake to destroy relations with the Democratic Party. Taiwan would still need broad sympathy in the US.”

Chiang’s patience in the face of adversity yielded handsome dividends. As described, the US Congress passed the Taiwan Relations Act, a highly unusual piece of legislation that provides the ROC with an informal or “tacit” alliance with the US. Taipei was also permitted to retain a significant diplomatic presence in the US, albeit technically “unofficial.” These moves represented a political triumph for Chiang and eventually led him to conclude that the US–ROC relationship during the post-normalization period actually was closer than ever before.

Chiang Ching-kuo’s measured and practical response to the break in diplomatic relations with the US—undoubtedly Taipei’s greatest international crisis since 1950—was symptomatic of his approach to international affairs. For example, although Ronald Reagan had called for a resumption of diplomatic ties with Taipei during his 1980 presidential campaign, Chiang did not press the issue after Reagan’s election. Chiang realized that a restoration of relations could lead to a perilous deterioration in US–PRC relations that would destabilize the western Pacific and jeopardize Taiwan’s security. Moreover, when the US and PRC signed the US–China Joint Communiqué of 1982, a document that seemed to mandate a reduction in US arms sales to Taiwan, Chiang was satisfied with private US assurances that the agreement would not actually jeopardize the island’s security or defense. Perhaps equally significant, Chiang began to explore creative ways that would enable both Taipei and Beijing to participate in the international community. Taiwan’s acceptance of the so-called “Olympic formula” that enables both states to participate in the Olympic games was one of his first moves in this direction.

Chiang Ching-kuo died in office on January 13, 1988. From his days in Moscow until his final days as president of the ROC, Chiang proved to be an outstanding illustration of a pragmatist. Indeed, a sensible view of the changing world and an unassuming personal style guided Chiang throughout his life. As president, these personal characteristics influenced his government’s domestic politics, mainland policy and foreign policy behavior. By the time Lee Teng-hui, Chiang’s hand-picked successor, was sworn in as president of the ROC, Taiwan had experienced a revolutionary metamorphosis.

Lee Teng-hui

Lee Teng-hui was born near Tamsui, Taiwan on January 15, 1923. At the time, the island remained a Japanese colony. As Lee explained many years later, he considered himself Japanese during this period in his life. During World War II, his brother died in action while serving in the Japanese Imperial Army. Although Lee did not serve in the Japanese military, he participated in pro-Japanese activities
and attended Kyoto Imperial University in the early 1940s. Throughout his life, Lee “never concealed his love and admiration for Japan.”

Following Japan’s defeat in 1945, Lee returned to Taiwan to continue his studies at National Taiwan University. He did not welcome the Chinese forces that took over administration of the island as liberators. Rather, Lee considered the newly installed KMT government as an “alien regime.” Like many other students, he was appalled by the February 28, 1947 incident, a massacre in which thousands of Taiwanese (including most of the island’s political elite) were killed by forces dispatched to Taiwan by Chiang Kai-shek.

KMT repression and mismanagement probably contributed to Lee’s decision to join the CCP in 1946. According to CCP sources, Lee actually joined the party twice—in September 1946 and again in October or November 1947. In both instances, he retained his party membership only for a matter of months. Interestingly, the ROC government long denied that Lee had belonged to the CCP and described such reports as “groundless.” In 2002, however, Lee finally confirmed that he had joined the communists “out of a young man’s naïve vision for his country.”

Following his brief flirtation with communism, Lee Teng-hui chose a prudent course and steered clear of politics. In 1953, he earned a master’s degree in economics at Iowa State University and returned to Taiwan to work on matters related to land issues. In 1965, Lee enrolled in Cornell University and earned a PhD in agricultural economics three years later.

After returning to Taiwan in 1968, Lee Teng-hui became “a major force in establishing farmer’s associations and irrigation systems.” His work soon caught the attention of Chiang Ching-kuo, who was searching for young, competent technocrats to help in the planning and implementation of the Ten Major Development Projects and other economic initiatives. Lee joined the KMT in 1971—a move that helped launch his meteoritic rise in Taiwanese politics:

As mayor of Taipei, Lee joined the cabinet in 1972 and carried out such projects as the construction of freeways and reservoirs and the modernization of sewage disposal. As governor of Taiwan (1981–84), he not only introduced regional planning and agricultural reforms, but also contributed to the renovation of rural villages and the construction of irrigation systems.

Lee Teng-hui was elected vice president of the ROC by the National Assembly in 1984. Following Chiang Ching-kuo’s death in 1988, he succeeded him as president and acting chairman of the KMT. Some assumed that Lee would serve the remaining two years of Chiang’s presidency as an interim leader (much like Yen Chia-kan) and step down at the end of his term in 1990. Factors against him reportedly included “his native Taiwanese background, his lack of a significant power base, and his relative isolation from the [KMT] party machine.” But Lee surprised and outwitted his opposition and served as ROC president for 12 years.

Shortly before leaving office in 2000, Lee revealed that he had three goals when he assumed the office of the presidency in 1988. First, he hoped to
democratize Taiwan. Second, he sought to localize the island’s politics. Third, he planned to strengthen Taiwan’s international status.

Lee enjoyed his greatest successes when seeking to democratize and localize Taiwanese politics. Chiang Ching-kuo had put Taiwan on the road to democratization in the mid-1980s. When Lee became president, however, there were still no direct presidential elections, cross-strait relations continued to be characterized as a state of war, and the “one China principle” (meaning both China and Taiwan are parts of one China) remained firmly intact. Moreover, numerous restrictions on civil liberties remained and a sizable portion of the parliament was still frozen in office. Indeed, as Lee explained during an interview with the author, “the right wing of the KMT was very strong.”

In order to push Taiwan’s democratization process forward without sparking violence, turmoil or a coup d’état, Lee initially embraced the “one China” principle, opposed independence and enthusiastically promoted the reunification of China. For example, on May 20, 1990, Lee declared that “reunification, prosperity and strength for China are the common hopes of all Chinese people.” These orthodox positions helped Lee and his “mainstream” faction within the KMT (primarily Taiwanese) outmaneuver and defeat the “non-mainstream” faction (primarily mainlanders) that sought to replace Lee as the KMT candidate in the 1990 presidential election and remove him as KMT chairman. As President Lee explained, “otherwise it would have been difficult to sustain my position.”

After solidifying his power base, Lee moved cautiously forward. In April 1991, he unilaterally declared an end to the Chinese civil war and terminated “The Period of National Mobilization for the Suppression of the Communist Rebellion.” At roughly the same time, the National Assembly abolished the “Temporary Provisions Effective During the Period of the Communist Rebellion.” A series of constitutional amendments followed these steps. Throughout this process, Lee argued that such reforms would “surely provide a firmer basis for future national reunification.” These and other measures helped Taiwan to transform itself from a repressive, authoritarian state into a full-fledged democracy.

By the mid-1990s, for all practical purposes a new and democratic ROC government had been established in Taiwan. The island held elections to elect a new National Assembly and a new Legislative Yuan. Direct elections also were held to select the provincial governor and the mayors of Taipei and Kaoshiung. Other moves included the deregulation of the print media and the legalization of cable television. Perhaps most significant, however, on March 23, 1996, Taiwan held its first-ever direct presidential election. In an electoral contest that included four major candidates, Lee Teng-hui won roughly 54 percent of the popular vote.

Dramatic changes in Taiwan’s domestic politics were paralleled by significant transformations in the island’s approach to international politics. Like Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo, Lee Teng-hui “interpreted the [ROC] constitution quite liberally, insisting that he was in charge of national defense, foreign affairs and mainland affairs.” As described in Chapter 1, Lee sought to put his mark on Taiwan’s foreign relations by pursuing a policy of pragmatic diplomacy. Pragmatic diplomacy calls for (1) the advancement and reinforcement of formal diplomatic
ties; (2) the development of substantive relations with countries that do not main-
tain formal relations with Taiwan; and (3) admission or readmission to
international organizations and activities vital to the country’s national interests.

Lee’s foreign policy record proved to be a mixed one. With respect to formal
relations, the number of Taiwan’s diplomatic allies increased to roughly 30 coun-
tries during his tenure as president. In part, these successes may be traced to
Taipei’s willingness to provide its small friends with generous grants and low-
interest loans. However, the island’s only remaining diplomatic partners of any
importance (Saudi Arabia, South Korea and South Africa) switched recognition to
the PRC during Lee’s presidency.

Lee Teng-hui enjoyed his greatest foreign policy successes when seeking to
upgrade Taipei’s “substantive” or “unofficial” relations with foreign governments.
Due largely to initiatives launched during Lee’s presidency, Taipei’s informal diplo-
matic network now spans the globe. Unofficial ties with important
countries—including the US—were upgraded and new bonds were forged with
countries that had no relations (official or otherwise) with Taiwan. Lee also paved
the way for Taiwan’s leaders to travel abroad in order to strengthen links with foreign
governments and expand Taiwan’s international “living space.” Under the clever
guise of “vacation,” “visit” or “holiday” diplomacy, Lee journeyed to numerous
countries including the Philippines, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, the United Arab
Emirates and Jordan. In 1995, he became the first Taiwanese president ever to visit
the United States. As Lee explained, “opportunities came up and I took them.”95

Like the campaign to establish formal diplomatic relations with foreign gov-
ernments, the drive to join (or rejoin) the world’s major international
organizations met with limited success. Although Taipei indicated that it was will-
ing to bypass the sensitive China issue by using titles other than its official
designation—the ROC—it gained admission only to international organizations
with an economic focus. These included the Asian Development Bank (Taiwan
resumed participation under the name “Taipei, China”) and the Asia Pacific
Economic Cooperation forum (Taiwan joined under the title, “Chinese, Taipei”).
Beijing blocked Taipei’s efforts to rejoin all other international bodies and was
especially irked by Lee’s move to engineer the island’s return to the UN.

President Lee’s foreign policy achievements came with a price tag. Like his
predecessor, Chiang Ching-kuo, Lee reportedly acquired a taste for international
intrigue and covert operations. In addition to spending millions of US dollars to
hire professional lobbyists in Washington (most notably Cassidy and Associates)
and bribe small countries to switch diplomatic relations to Taipei, the president set
up a special “slush fund” to influence lawmakers and public opinion in Japan and
the US. Indeed, in an effort to bolster American support, secret funds from the so-
called “Te-Ming Project” were reportedly channeled to think tanks, media outlets,
friendly scholars and prominent former officials who might be expected to return
to positions of influence in government.96 Support also was provided to covert
intelligence operations in China.97 When news reports of these clandestine opera-
tions broke in 2002, they proved to be a major embarrassment to Taipei and
tarnished Lee’s image as “Mr. Democracy.”
Much more damaging than the revelations about Taiwan’s intelligence operations were the problems that pragmatic diplomacy generated for cross-strait relations. When Lee became president in 1988, PRC officials were initially optimistic about the new leader. Chinese leaders observed hopefully that, unlike Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo, “he had no historical burden left over from the Chinese civil wars between the CCP and the KMT.” Lee’s pragmatic diplomacy, however, became one of several considerations that contributed to a sharp deterioration in cross-strait relations and led him eventually to become “China’s nemesis.”

By the late 1990s, PRC authorities could cite a long list of incidents—particularly interviews with the foreign media—as evidence that Lee Teng-hui favored Taiwan’s separation from China. Perhaps foremost among these was his 1994 interview with Ryotaro Shiba, a Japanese journalist. As one study observed, it was at this time that Beijing “began to lose hope in Lee.” During the interview, the president described the KMT as an “alien” regime, claimed that talking about unification was like talking in his sleep, compared himself to Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt, and spoke of “the grief of being born a Taiwanese.” In this and other later discussions, Lee suggested that the meaning of the term, “China,” was ambiguous and/or that it was a “culture” rather than a country. In a 1997 interview with Western journalists, he even went so far as to claim that “Taiwan is an independent country, like Britain or France.”

Lee Teng-hui’s 1995 visit to Cornell University served as a major milestone in shaping PRC perceptions of the Taiwanese president and contributed to China’s decision to stage a series of provocative missile tests off Taiwan’s coastline in 1995 and 1996. Officials scoffed at Lee’s insistence that the journey was a private visit to his alma matter. The trip was described by Beijing as evidence that Lee was attempting to present his island as a “sovereign state” to the international community. It was at this time that Lee began to be characterized routinely as an individual with a propensity toward treason:

Li Teng-hui joined the Chinese Communist Party in his early years which he later betrayed. He had for many years followed Chiang Ching-kuo who did not favor “Taiwan independence” but has now betrayed him. Having now embarked on the road of “Taiwan independence,” he has betrayed the great reunification cause of the Chinese people including the Taiwan compatriots.

Lee also was accused of betraying “the aims and principles on which Sun Yat-sen founded the Nationalist Party,” intentionally restructuring the KMT “into a mess” and being in “total complicity with the Democratic Progressive Party and their independent Taiwan policy.”

In July 1999, Lee Teng-hui infuriated the PRC with his bold declaration that relations between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait should be considered as “state-to-state” relations. Throughout most of the 1990s, official ROC policy had held that both sides of the Taiwan Strait should be considered as “political entities” and that, while relations between the ROC and PRC were not those between...
two separate countries, neither were they purely domestic in nature. In fact, Taipei still claimed to adhere to some semblance of the “one-China principle” despite the fact that officials never could seem to agree on the meaning of the term (other than to say it did not mean the PRC). However, the president jettisoned this vague terminology and declared instead that “the relationship between Taiwan and mainland China are state-to-state relations or at least special state-to-state relations.” Responding to Lee’s move to redefine relations across the Strait, *The People’s Daily*, the PRC’s leading newspaper, claimed that “this time Lee Teng-hui has shed his mask and let his separatism show clearly.” The PLA’s newspaper, *Liberation Army Daily*, was even more direct. It speculated that “he will certainly be reduced to a criminal of the nation who will leave a stink for a thousand years … he will certainly be spat on by all Chinese, including Taiwan compatriots.”

It didn’t help matters that Lee’s proclamation of his “state-to-state” theory came only weeks after the publication of his book, *Taiwan’s Viewpoint*. In a review of Lee’s book, *The China Daily* claimed that “Lee thoroughly vents his hatred of the Chinese nation in this book” and that “it looks as if only the elimination of China from the planet could satisfy him.” The reviewer was especially irked by Lee’s suggestion that China should be divided into several autonomous regions and speculated that “he published this book in haste to instruct Taiwan people to vote for pro-independence candidates …[and] to win military support from the US and Japan for Taiwan independence.”

By the late 1990s, the PRC described pragmatic diplomacy variously as “black market diplomacy,” “money diplomacy” and “gimmick diplomacy.” It claimed that “the true meaning behind their use of the word ‘pragmatic’ is an independent Taiwan.” Key elements of pragmatic diplomacy—particularly Taipei’s acceptance of dual recognition and the campaign to return to the UN—were viewed as evidence that Lee had completely abandoned the “one China principle” and was now attempting to split the motherland. During an interview with the author in 1998, Xu Shiquan, then President of the Institute of Taiwan Studies at China’s Academy of Social Sciences, outlined Beijing’s reasoning:

> If you look at what happened across the Taiwan Strait during the rule of Mr. Chiang Kai-shek and Mr. Chiang Ching-kuo, there would be no problem. Mr. Chiang Kai-shek said that there was only one China and this one China was the ROC and then diplomatically tried to win recognition. The mainland side said nothing. We just tried our best to win recognition and we had no problem over one China. Both sides recognized that there was only one China. The problem appeared after the death of Mr. Chiang Ching-kuo. Why? Because they are no longer pursuing the policy of one China. They said ROC in Taiwan and its sovereignty and administrative limits are only in Taiwan. And so obviously there are two Chinas. And they also accept double recognition.

President Lee defends the changes that he engineered in Taiwan’s diplomatic relations by claiming that his government would have made no progress in foreign
affairs and have “no room for international development” if he had not opted to practice pragmatic diplomacy. Moreover, during an interview with the author, Lee explained that the Taiwanese people “were losing confidence and felt isolated.” But PRC officials dispute Lee’s insistence he had no choice other than to adopt a new approach to global affairs in order to survive. Authorities claim that “we squeezed Mr. Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo harder” and point out that since adopting pragmatic diplomacy Taiwan had lost the diplomatic recognition of all important countries.

Xu Shiquan predicted that “if they continue their policy of so-called pragmatic diplomacy, I expect they are going to lose more … we have to take up the challenge and respond.”

Lee’s pragmatic diplomacy was one of the factors that contributed to a sharp downturn in cross-strait relations during the 1990s. But it also contributed to troubles in US–Taiwan relations. When the PRC initiated its “missiles tests” off Taiwan’s coastline in 1996, President Bill Clinton deployed two US aircraft carrier battle groups to the region. Following the missile crisis, US–PRC relations continued to deteriorate. As part of an effort to repair the relationship, President Clinton journeyed to Shanghai in 1998 and outlined the “three no’s.” The president reaffirmed that it was US policy that Washington would not support “two Chinas” or “one China, one Taiwan,” “Taiwan independence,” or Taiwan’s membership in international organizations for which statehood was a prerequisite. Moreover, rather than remain silent when the Taiwan representation issue was raised at the UN, the US delegation began to support Beijing’s position and actually vote against Taiwan’s membership. In other words, the Clinton administration was attempting to remind Taipei that there were limits to US support for Taiwan’s provocative international initiatives. As one study concluded, Lee’s “pragmatic diplomacy made the US wary about Taiwan’s blatant, careless attempt to have its own way without taking the US interest in China into consideration. The US feared being unnecessarily dragged into a messy situation not of its own making.”

During discussions with the author, Lee Teng-hui was asked if he considered himself a crusader or a pragmatist during his presidency. The former president replied that “I have a vision” and “I have long range plans.” But he also added, “I am very practical,” and speculated that this personality trait might be traced to the fact that “I am trained as an agricultural economist rather than a politician.” All things considered, Lee proved to be “much more of a pragmatic figure than Chiang Kai-shek or Chiang Ching-kuo.” Unlike his predecessors, he had no sentimental identification with China and no ideological commitments to liberate or otherwise unify with it. In all likelihood, Lee had long nourished a desire to promote Taiwan’s independence from China. As president, however, Lee was extremely cautious and patient in his approach to both domestic politics and international affairs. In fact, public opinion polls conducted in the mid-1990s revealed that a majority of Taiwan’s population still could not determine whether the president supported independence or unification:

According to polls carried out by the DPP in 1995 and 1996, roughly one-quarter of the people believed Lee supported Taiwanese independence,
Lee took great care to solidify his power base in Taiwan before pushing his separatist agenda. Initially, he claimed to support reunification with China and even established the National Unification Guidelines (NUG) and the National Unification Council (NUC). As Lee explained to the author years later, however, these were “strategic moves” designed to “help consolidate my position.” Moreover, he claims that he realized fully that Beijing would never accept Taipei’s terms for unification, which included calls for each side to treat each other equally as “political entities” and for China’s democratization. In other words, the establishment of the NUG and NUC was simply a clever political ploy to outwit the old guard of the KMT.

After consolidating his position and outmaneuvering the opposition, Lee began to slowly promote Taiwan’s independence by employing what some Taiwanese political analysts have described as “salami” tactics (along with an occasional “bombshell”). As part of his strategy to create a new Taiwanese nation, Lee developed a new approach to foreign policy—an approach aptly described as “pragmatic diplomacy.” Regardless of whether one loves or detests him, it is clear that Lee “is the real architect of having placed Taiwan on a new perceptual direction—a direction that represented an independent destiny for the island.”

Chen Shui-bian

Chen Shui-bian was born in Tainan County, southern Taiwan, in 1950. As his impoverished family did not register his birth with the government until the following year, however, his identification certificate indicates that he was born on February 18, 1951.

When Chen enrolled in elementary school he could not speak Mandarin Chinese, the only language permitted in the ROC school system at the time. Students who spoke Taiwanese, or other dialects, were often punished or fined. With the help of his teachers, however, Chen overcame the language barrier and graduated at the top of his class.

It is probable that Chen’s political beliefs began to take shape during his years in middle school. Yang Hung-kai, one of his teachers, has been described as the “most influential” educator in Chen’s life. The teacher was “an ardent Taiwanese nationalist” who despised Chiang Kai-shek and the KMT government. Despite the threat of arrest, Yang taught his students about the February 28 incident, the White Terror, and similar acts of government oppression. He also discussed other topics with the students including the ROC government’s “disastrous diplomatic policies regarding Britain, France and the US.”
Despite his early political socialization, Chen generally steered clear of politics as a youth. At one point during high school, however, he delivered an impassioned public speech denouncing a candidate for a local office who had been hand-picked by the KMT to replace the incumbent. Adults criticized the young student for his recklessness. After the incumbent won re-election, however, Chen claimed that he had learned an important lesson:

I saw how narrow minded people were. But my action worked—the incumbent was re-elected. I still was able to hold onto what was right, even though my action could have interfered with my examinations. So this lesson was important: If I stick to my beliefs, I will succeed. My conclusion was that it is okay to take chances.[emphasis added].129

After graduating at the top of his high school class, Chen enrolled in Taiwan’s prestigious National Taiwan University in 1969. His interests eventually turned to law. During his junior year Chen earned the top score in the examination for becoming an attorney and was the first student in Taiwan to secure a license to practice law before graduation.130 Despite this remarkable achievement, however, the event that most moved Chen during his university years was the arrest of Yang Hung-kei, his former middle school teacher. Following Yang’s incarceration, Chen vowed that “I will never become a member of the KMT.”131

In 1975, Chen began to practice law and married Wu Shu-jen, a young woman with a keen interest in politics.132 As Wu explained later, she liked to imagine herself as a “young heroine” or a “woman warrior who fights injustice.”133 Wu was convinced that Taiwan’s independence from China was a necessity and began to take her husband to anti-KMT meetings.

Chen’s foray into politics began after a human rights rally in Kaohsiung turned violent in 1979 (the “Kaohsiung incident”). Acting against the advice of friends, family and colleagues at his law firm, Chen followed his wife’s counsel and agreed to serve as a defense attorney for some of the defendants who had been arrested for sedition. The trial and subsequent sentencing (all defendants were found guilty) had a profound impact on Chen and his political beliefs:

I realized that this experience was not just a legal issue. I came to accept the defendants’ political ideals and arguments. I became a believer. We should have two separate countries across the Taiwan Straits—one country on each side of the Straits. Taiwan is an independent sovereign nation. I reoriented myself away from my law practice and decided to seek the goal of abrogating Taiwan’s martial law decrees.134

In 1981, Chen won a seat on Taipei’s City Council as a “dangwai” (outside party) candidate. During this and subsequent electoral contests, Chen was careful to steer clear of the sensitive independence issue and opted instead to attack the KMT for its misrule and corruption. Despite these precautions, however, Chen was arrested for libel in 1984 and sentenced to a year in prison. While seeking to
appeal his conviction, an assassination attempt was made on his wife (she was run over by a small truck three times) and the attack left her paralyzed from the chest down.\textsuperscript{135}

Like the arrest of Yang Hung-kei, Wu Shu-jen’s “accident” had a lasting impact on Chen. The young politician had been warned repeatedly to steer clear of politics and the assassination attempt filled him with a sense of guilt:

If you want to know my greatest failure, it is my failure to protect my wife. In some ways, I am an accomplice. I chose to be in politics. In Taiwan this is a very dangerous occupation. During the 1970s and 1980s many people were injured and killed in such accidents.\textsuperscript{136}

Following the botched murder attempt, Chen devoted all of his energies to ending the KMT’s grip on power. At the time, a psychiatrist warned that Chen “is pushing himself to levels of exertion that are unhealthy.”\textsuperscript{137} As a KMT supporter explained during an interview with the author, “Chen’s battle against the KMT became personal after the attempt on his wife’s life.”\textsuperscript{138}

In 1986, Chen lost his appeal and was incarcerated in Taiwan’s Tucheng Penitentiary for roughly eight months. Following his release, Chen purposely waited until February 28, 1987 to register as a member of the newly established DPP.

In 1989, Chen won a seat in the legislature where he earned a reputation as a tough lawmaker opposed to the remaining restrictions on civil liberties and corruption in the armed services. In 1994, he took advantage of a split within the KMT to win election as mayor of Taipei. Once again, Chen carefully avoided the independence issue and focused instead on local issues—particularly Taipei’s horrendous problems with traffic control and garbage collection.

As mayor, Chen sought to fulfill promises related to the city’s “bread and butter” issues. But he also attempted to overhaul and reform city government. Political surveillance of city employees was terminated and bureaucrats were no longer allowed to use city property for political meetings. Land that had been occupied illegally by military personnel—including an estate occupied by Chiang Wei-kuo—was returned to the city. The new mayor also declared a “cultural war” on the KMT and mainlanders who dominated the city’s arts and educational institutions. Perhaps the most symbolic battle was Chen’s fight to rename the street in front of the presidential palace to Kaitegalan Boulevard in honor of one of the island’s earliest aborigine tribes. As the street had previously honored Chiang Kai-shek, the new title “was a huge slap in the face of the KMT and a marvelous nod of recognition for the Taiwanese.”\textsuperscript{139}

Chen lost his bid for re-election as mayor of Taipei in 1998. However, the defeat freed him to run for ROC president in 2000. Once again, Chen distanced himself from the independence issue.\textsuperscript{140} Moreover, like the 1994 mayoral race, the KMT was split. After the votes were counted on March 18, 2000, Chen had received 39.3 percent of the votes, while his two opponents had received 36.8 percent and 23 percent respectively.
For many Taiwanese, the promise of Chen’s 2000 victory turned to disappointment. The economy went into a tailspin and unemployment surged to record levels. Moreover, according to most calculations the stock market lost almost fifty percent of its value after Chen took office. Furthermore, the president made little progress in relations with China. Despite an explosion in cross-strait economic and cultural exchanges, Chen did not live up to his 2000 pledge to somehow “stabilize” ties with the PRC. On the contrary, his 2002 description of bilateral relations as “one country on each side” of the Taiwan Strait infuriated the PRC and the call for a popular referendum to coincide with the 2004 presidential election probably contributed to Beijing’s decision to pass an “anti-secession law” designed to provide it with some sort of legal framework to start a war with Taiwan. Finally, the president exacerbated ethnic tensions on the island during his desperate bid to win re-election in 2004.

Some contend that one of the few bright spots in President Chen’s presidency are his successes in foreign policy. Indeed, the president’s supporters claimed that he made “impressive progress in foreign affairs.” But what did Chen accomplish?

Since 2000, when Chen Shui-bian became the first opposition candidate to win the office of the presidency in the history of Taiwan, the island has been involved in a tumultuous process of internal transformation. Yet, in many ways, as Taiwan moves further away from the KMT-era, the island’s foreign policy continues to look like the foreign policy of Lee Teng-hui because pragmatic diplomacy remains the cornerstone of Taipei’s foreign policy. The PRC claims that President Chen has succeeded only in “creating another version of Lee Teng-hui’s diplomacy.” Indeed, when asked how Chen’s diplomacy differs from his approach to foreign policy, Lee conceded that, “I don’t know. It’s not very clear.” This represents a paradox: Taiwan’s domestic political landscape has changed dramatically, but its foreign policy has not.

Like Lee Teng-hui, President Chen’s record with respect to advancing or reinforcing formal diplomatic ties with foreign nations is a mixed one. Some of Taiwan’s “small friends,” including Nauru, Liberia and the Commonwealth of Dominica, switched recognition to China. But Taipei has managed to thwart Beijing’s efforts to lure Haiti, Panama and other Latin American countries into its diplomatic camp and it persuaded Nauru to return to Taiwan’s side in May 2005.

In addition to maintaining ties with most of its diplomatic allies, Taiwan succeeded in establishing formal diplomatic relations with a few tiny nations. This was no small feat as the Chen administration claims that it has put an end to the KMT’s long-standing practice of “dollar diplomacy”—a policy whereby Taiwan bribes small countries to remain loyal diplomatic allies. As an alternative to financial payoffs, President Chen stresses that Taiwan will provide foreign nations with missions that will promote economic development or improve public health.

Like the Lee presidency, the Chen administration enjoyed its greatest successes when seeking to advance and/or reinforce substantive or “informal” relations with governments that maintain diplomatic relations with the PRC. This
observation applies with special force to Taiwan’s relationship with its most important friend—the United States. During Chen’s first term as president, American offers to sell advanced weaponry escalated, high-level military contacts accelerated and America’s security commitment to Taiwan was bolstered when President Bush proclaimed that the US would do “whatever it took to help Taiwan defend themselves.” Perhaps equally important, bilateral political ties also were strengthened. President Chen and other high-ranking Taiwanese officials made several high-profile visits to the US. In some instances officials were granted transit visas. In other cases, however, the US was the final destination for the visitors.

With respect to the campaign to rejoin international organizations, the Chen administration persuaded the island’s allies to submit two Taiwan-related proposals to the UN in 2005. In addition to requesting that the General Assembly consider Taiwan’s participation in the world body, the representatives of 15 countries also asked the UN to play an active role in promoting peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. But both proposals went nowhere. Efforts to rejoin the World Health Organization (WHO) also accelerated during the Chen presidency. In 2003, the president even promised to launch a nation-wide referendum on the island’s participation in the WHO—a move that made both Beijing and Washington nervous as it could have foreshadowed an eventual referendum on the island’s relationship with China.149

President Chen ultimately scrapped his controversial proposal for a referendum related to Taiwan’s membership in the WHO. But the campaign to return to the global health institution did make some progress during his first term as president. American and Japanese support for Taiwan’s participation in the WHO grew more vocal during Chen’s presidency. Indeed, in 2004, the two countries cast unprecedented votes in favor of Taiwan’s bid to return to the WHO as a “health entity.”150

The discussion above outlines only the major foreign policy initiatives undertaken during President Chen’s first term in office. A more complete discussion would include other developments as well. As described in Chapter 3, President Chen has attempted to open the doors for many parts of the government to influence the foreign policy-making process. For example, the National Security Council has been revitalized and the decision-making process within the Ministry of National Defense (MND) has become more transparent, efficient and rational. The MND and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) also are more receptive to input from other governmental agencies when crafting policy. In keeping with calls to streamline, reorganize and reduce the size of the central government, President Chen pushed for the elimination of some actors involved in the foreign policy process. Finally, the Chen administration has sought to accelerate the use of a variety of unconventional diplomatic tactics that fall under the broad rubric of “people-to-people diplomacy;” to boost the island’s international profile, improve relations with foreign nations and circumvent the growing economic, political and military power of the PRC. Chen encouraged numerous elements within Taiwanese society, including parliamentarians, political parties, and NGOs, to get more involved in advancing the country’s foreign policy goals.
Given President Chen’s record thus far, should he be categorized as a crusader or a pragmatist? As described, these leadership styles must be considered ideal types on a continuum. Both of these personality traits are present to some extent in every leader, but one tends to predominate. With this caveat in mind, it comes as little surprise that some evidence suggests that President Chen’s behavior leans toward the crusader end of the spectrum.

It is noteworthy that Chen’s political personality was marked, first of all, by a strong distaste for Chinese (ROC) rule of Taiwan. Traumatic episodes including the arrest of Yang Hung-kai, the 1979 Kaohsiung incident, and the attempted murder of his wife (purportedly by pro-KMT elements) have reinforced Chen’s view that Taiwan must become a nation independent of China. It is not by accident that many of President Chen’s leading appointments in government are former activists in the Taiwan independence movement. It is also not surprising that, despite reassurances, the Chen administration has dropped a series of “bombshells” on the PRC and US. These “surprises” have included inflammatory statements about Taiwan independence, plans to rename Taiwan’s state-owned enterprises and overseas representative offices and controversial calls for island-wide referendums and a new constitution. In early 2006, Chen surprised domestic and international observers when he called for the scrapping of the NUG and the abolishment of the NUC. As Chen has little or no interest in unification, the NUC had remained dormant since the president’s election in 2000 with an annual budget of only US $31. The move was widely interpreted as a major provocation of Beijing.

President Chen prefers to describe himself as “a maker of history.” Political opponents describe him as an “impetuous maniac.” More balanced accounts, however, characterize Chen simply as a “risk acceptant leader.”

Risk acceptant leaders are individuals “who seek the same goals as other political actors, but are more willing than most others to expose their countries to the risk of high cost.” It should be recalled that Chen claimed that he learned early in life “that it is okay to take chances” after he denounced a KMT candidate for local office. As president, Chen has continued to “take chances” in his quest to push for Taiwan’s independence from China:

Despite wide-spread recognition on Taiwan on the danger of challenging the mainland’s interest in the one China principle, regardless of the strength of US–Taiwan cooperation, despite the caution of both the Taiwan electorate and senior DPP decision-makers on the issue of Taiwan independence, and despite the political costs of independence initiatives to politicians’ electoral popularity and to the political fortunes of political parties, and the corresponding opposition of DPP political advisers to such initiatives, under Chen’s leadership Taiwan has persistently pursued a provocative mainland policy that has repeatedly signaled Taiwan’s intent to establish de jure independence. Moreover, Chen has come to personify the Taiwan independence movement as he becomes Taiwan’s most outspoken proponent of Taiwan sovereignty.
Chen’s ideological fervor to promote Taiwanese independence has come with a price. By 2004, Taiwanese political analysts were complaining that “US–Taiwan relations are at their worst in the past 20 years.” American scholars concur that the relationship has “fallen like a rock... [and] declined further, faster than at any time in recent history.” US officials reportedly consider Chen’s moves irresponsible, provocative and destabilizing. Consequently, while meeting with Wen Jiabao, PRC Premier, in Washington, DC, on December 9, 2003, President Bush publicly warned that “the comments and actions by the leader of Taiwan indicate that he may be willing to make decisions unilaterally that change the status quo, which we oppose.” Indeed, by late 2004 the world press described President Chen as President Bush’s “least favorite democratically elected leader” and the Taiwanese media was rife with rumors that Bush had actually cursed Chen as a “son of a bitch.”

Despite the evidence cited above, many Taiwanese of all political persuasions quarrel with the assertion that President Chen Shui-bian should be categorized as a crusader. In fact, during an interview with the author, Michael Kau, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, cited Chen’s approach toward Taiwan’s participation in the WHO as evidence that the president is “extra pragmatic.” Moreover, Parris Chang, Deputy Secretary General of Taiwan National Security Council, claims that despite a popular misconception, “I think he [Chen] has been bending over backwards to accommodate the US. So, he is certainly not a troublemaker.”

For much of his political career, Chen has taken a pragmatic stance and sought to downplay his support for Taiwan independence. For example, Chen initially toned down his pro-independence rhetoric after the 2000 election. In his inaugural address on May 20, 2000, the new president referred to himself as the president of the Republic of China (not Taiwan or the Republic of Taiwan as some suspected he might) and outlined what has become known as the “Five No’s.” Chen proclaimed that, as long as the People’s Republic of China (PRC) did not use military force against Taiwan:

- He would not declare Taiwan independent of China;
- He would not support changing the national title of the Republic of China;
- He would not push for the inclusion of former President Lee Teng-hui’s “state-to-state” description of the ROC–PRC relationship in the ROC Constitution;
- He would not promote an island-wide referendum on the island’s status;
- He would not abolish the National Reunification Council or the National Reunification Guidelines (emphasis added).

Chen inaugural pledges and numerous other pragmatic initiatives—particularly the authorization of the three “mini-links” between the two offshore islands of Kinmen and Matsu and the Chinese mainland—led many to conclude that Chen is
a pragmatist. Moreover, unlike a crusader, the president is willing to quickly change direction if a foreign policy initiative proves controversial or unpopular. A case in point was the Chen administration’s willingness to shelve plans to “rectify” the names of the island’s state-owned corporations and overseas representative offices after Washington expressed opposition to the scheme. Another example is provided by Chen’s acquiescence to changes in the 2004 island-wide referendums. Hsieh Huai-Hui, Deputy Director of the DPP’s Department of International Affairs, explains: “He [Chen] was a lawyer—very pragmatic. He will raise an issue first to test how people will react. If the reaction is not so positive, then will kind of step back.”

Still another example is provided by the president’s move to mothball the NUG and the NUC in early 2006. Most suspected that Chen’s “bombshell” was nothing more than a domestic political ploy intended to boost his low ratings in the island’s public opinion polls (by early 2006 his approval rating had dropped by 10 to 16 percent) and garner a modicum of support from the hardcore pro-independence camp. In the end, the president declared that the provisions of the NUG would “cease to apply” and the NUC would “cease to function.” This ambiguous wording apparently was intended to mollify the US as it left open the possibility that the NUC and NUG might be revitalized sometime in the future. Even members of the president’s own party questioned the president’s motives, while others branded him as “an opportunist.”

Analysts concede that President Chen’s willingness to compromise or change course may have “cost a lot” in terms of domestic political support. Advocates of de jure independence—Taiwan’s “deep green” camp—are very disappointed with Chen. During an interview with the author, Dr. Yuzin Chiautong Ng, Chairman of the World United Formosans for Independence (WUFI), complained that the president is “completely a pragmatist.” In fact, Dr. Ng characterized Chen as “a real politician” who speaks out of both sides of his mouth:

When he speaks to his people, he speaks in his own honest way—no problem. In this case, he seems like a crusader. But he doesn’t hesitate to change that when he is managing the government or managing foreign policy. So for me, when classified in these two categories, I don’t hesitate to classify him as a pragmatist.

Antonio Chiang, former deputy secretary-general of the NSC and another supporter of independence, also has complained that Chen “has never been for independence for ideological purposes. He just played the issue for the election.” In sum, despite Chen’s calls for Taiwan’s de jure independence from China, the president’s flexibility and willingness to change direction in the face of adversity means that he must be classified as a pragmatist. As Dr. Ng explained, “he really supports the independence of Taiwan—he really supports that. But as a politician, he just waits.”
According to many realists, neo-realists and Marxists, the foreign policy behavior of a state is best explained by the structure of the international system. However, others prefer to focus on the internal organization and domestic political forces in a given state and contend that these variables are the primary determinates of a government’s foreign relations. Still others argue that a third set of influences, the personality and beliefs of a particular state’s leader, is the most critical factor. In other words, these analysts suggest that a state’s foreign policy can best be understood not as a result of the structure of the international system or domestic political forces, but because of the personality of a leader. This observation applies with special force to Taiwan.

With the exception of Yen Chia-kan, who served largely as an “acting president” between the Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo administrations, an examination of Taiwan’s presidents suggests that each of them may be described as a predominant leader. Every president has played a central role in dealing with Taiwan’s foreign policy problems. Moreover, for better or worse, each president has left a lasting imprint on Taiwan’s foreign relations. In this critical respect, Taiwan’s presidents share a common characteristic.

Chiang Kai-shek was a predominant leader. During his presidency, the Generalissimo ensured that virtually all of Taipei’s diplomacy was geared toward the goal of liberating China irrespective of transformations within Taiwan, the mainland and the international community. As head of the party, state and military, no one dared challenge his authority. Chiang Ching-kuo also was a predominant leader who easily overcame opposition to his surprising initiatives in cross-strait relations and domestic and international politics. Taiwan’s current approach to international relations, pragmatic diplomacy, may be traced to Lee Teng-hui, an individual who outwitted his opposition and slowly put Taiwan on the path to independence from China. Even Chen Shui-bian, an embattled president who presides over a divided government, behaves as if he is a predominant leader:

Even though the presidency of Chen Shui-bian symbolizes that Taiwan’s democracy has already demonstrated political party turn over, his style is still that of a ‘dominant president’ who involves himself in everything with his aggressive behavior. He does this even though his political party, the DPP, is still a minority party in Congress with less than half the seats.\textsuperscript{175}

Like his predecessors, Chen reportedly consults only with a small group of advisers and some decisions have been made “without consulting or notifying the ministers who were in charge.”\textsuperscript{176}

It is beyond the scope of this study to provide detailed analyses of the various hypotheses advanced to explain why all of Taiwan’s presidents have been predominant leaders, but they deserve brief mention. The authoritarian nature of the regime might help one understand this phenomenon during the Chiang era. But it
can’t explain why President Lee and President Chen may also be classified as predominant leaders. To be sure, the semi-presidential system enacted during the round of constitutional reforms of 1997 provides for a strong president, but it also gives lawmakers numerous powers and, unlike the French semi-presidential system, Taiwan’s president cannot dismiss the legislature on a proactive basis.177 Moreover, despite the long-standing and constant PRC threat to attack Taiwan, it is difficult to argue that “a crisis atmosphere” has led to a contraction of authority to the highest level of the government. In fact, Lee Teng-hui claims to have never taken the PRC’s threats seriously.178 Some might contend that it is the ROC constitution that gives the president sweeping foreign policy powers. For all practical purposes, however, the constitution was set aside for several decades and presidents did not abide by its provisions. Perhaps most compelling is the argument that “the expansion of presidential power [in Taiwan] is a phenomenon that is caused by the unavoidable dilemma of traditional [Chinese] culture.”179

If the tendency for Taiwan’s presidents to act as predominant leaders may be traced to traditional Chinese political culture, it is probable that this phenomenon will not change soon. Moreover, the cultural explanation significantly bolsters the proposition that the personality traits of Taiwan’s presidents—whether a president is a crusader or a pragmatist—will help one gain an appreciation of the variables that shaped the island’s past foreign policy and will shape its future foreign policy. Interestingly, similar arguments have been advanced when seeking to understand PRC policies. A recent study of Mao Zedong concluded that “there is little doubt that Mao dominated China’s policy process single-handedly. Therefore, the personality and leadership style of Mao are crucial to our understanding of recent Chinese history.”180

One can’t help but speculate about what Stoessinger describes as “the ‘ifs’ and ‘might have been’ of history.”181 If a pragmatic leader had ruled Taiwan during the 1950s, would he have embraced a “two China” policy and thereby helped Taipei avoid its present international predicament? Will a true crusader for Taiwanese independence eventually push the island into a conflict with China? These are among the many questions about Taiwan’s foreign policy that merit more intensive research in the future.
This chapter will draw some conclusions based on the evidence examined in the preceding pages. It is important to note, however, that this study is not intended to serve as a treatise that argues that there is one “grand” or “preeminent” theoretical approach or conceptual framework that best explains all foreign policy outcomes. Indeed, every level of analysis offers a different yet compelling version of why Taiwan behaves as it does in global affairs.

In addition to exploring the various causes and influences behind a particular state’s international behavior, most foreign policy analysts seek to link scholarly research to practical policy concerns. It is for this reason that this chapter concludes with a discussion of several major challenges that the Taiwanese government must confront in coming years. The author suggests that, while these problems are certainly formidable, they are not insurmountable.

I Alternative explanations

Like all other contemporary states in world politics, Taiwan faces many complex foreign policy challenges. Not surprisingly, decision making is often an extremely complicated process as various forces from both within and outside the island seek to play a role in shaping policy. These influences conspire to paint a diverse picture of the ways in which one might explain Taiwan’s conduct in international affairs.

How does one make sense of the complex and convoluted politics of Taiwan’s foreign policy? Which, if any, analytical framework or approach carries the most explanatory value when seeking to understand the island’s foreign policy behavior? The discussion below summarizes the evidence supporting the various explanations advanced in preceding chapters.

System-level analysis and Taiwan’s foreign policy

When one seeks to employ system-level analysis to explain the foreign policy conduct of a state, a scholar is essentially adopting a “top down” approach to the study of world politics. In recent years, much of the literature associated with this approach has focused on the structural characteristics of the anarchical international system. According to this perspective, the behavior of actors—which may
include states (the principal actors on the world stage), intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and even mass movements—is heavily influenced by external factors. These considerations most often include the degree of polarity in the international system (whether it is unipolar, bipolar or multipolar) and/or the stability of the system. But system-level analyses may also focus on other variables external to the state including the distribution of power in the system, the relative military and economic power of actors in the system and the level of interaction among actors in the system.

As noted in Chapter 3, Taiwan, like Korea, may be described as a shrimp between whales. For centuries, the island’s fate has been shaped largely by external pressures and outside influences.

Beginning in the 1500s, European imperialists sought to occupy Taiwan. 1 From 1683 until 1886, the island was loosely administered as a prefecture of Fujian province, and then became a province of its own. In 1895, following China’s defeat in the first Sino–Japanese War, Taiwan was formally ceded to Japan. Efforts by local inhabitants to resist the occupation and establish an independent republic were brutally crushed by Japanese imperial troops and received no support from the corrupt Chinese government or other external powers. As a consequence, the Japanese enslaved Taiwan’s population and no outside powers seemed to care about it.

In 1943, the Allies issued the Cairo Declaration that proclaimed, in part, that Taiwan should be returned to the Republic of China. Several years later, Chiang Kai-shek’s government, military and over a million refugees poured into Taiwan. Once again, the Taiwanese population was not consulted about these developments.

In 1950, it was widely anticipated that Taiwan would fall to the PRC. This catastrophe, however, was prevented by the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950. Strategic calculations prompted the US to order the Seventh Fleet to “neutralize” the Taiwan Strait. This move was not motivated by any desire to save the Chiang regime or the Taiwanese populace. Rather, a foreign conflict had saved Taiwan.

For several decades, the rigid bipolar system that characterized the Cold War (the “free world” versus the “communist bloc”) served to protect the Chiang regime and helped maintain the fiction that his government was the legitimate representative of all China. In the late 1960s, however, shifts in the international system prompted the US to “defect” from the alliance and patch up relations with China. President Richard M. Nixon made many concessions to Beijing. Henry Kissinger even went so far as to secretly assure Zhou Enlai, the PRC premier, that Taiwan’s “political evolution” was likely to be in a direction favored by the PRC. In other words, US officials conceded that the island would be absorbed by the PRC. Not surprisingly, Taiwan’s exalted position in the international community began to erode. Within years, Taiwan became an international outcast and a diplomatic orphan. Once again, the island’s government and population were not responsible for these developments.

Since the 1970s, external events beyond Taiwan’s control have continued to exercise an inordinate degree of influence over the island. The end of the Cold
War yielded some dividends. The US upgraded relations with Taiwan and other countries established “substantive” ties with it. But more recently, the war on terror and developments on the Korean peninsula have led Washington to move closer to Beijing.

In sum, the major powers of the world (particularly the US and China) have long conspired to limit Taiwan’s foreign policy options. Given the realities of international politics, one of the overarching foreign policy goals of many Taiwanese—the establishment of a new country that may operate as a “normal” state within the international community—appears highly improbable, perhaps even impossible. As Representative James A. Leach (R.-IA) observed, for the US or other major powers to assert any position other than the oft-stated stance that Taiwan is part of China, “would create an earthquake in world affairs.”

**State-level analysis and Taiwan’s foreign policy**

There is no such thing as a single or universal foreign policy decision-making process. The characteristics of the actors (usually states) that make foreign policy differ significantly and they may respond differently to changes in the international environment. For example, foreign policy making in a democratic government differs markedly from decision making in an authoritarian regime. As a government democratizes, the decision-making process becomes much more open and a wide variety of institutional actors including legislative bodies, ministries, agencies and councils seek to shape a state’s major foreign policy decisions and how it interacts with other states in the international community. In short, it is important to appreciate the intrinsic nature of the actors involved in the global system.

Since the 1980s, Taiwan has transformed itself from a staid, authoritarian state into one of the world’s liveliest democracies. It is clear that the changes wrought by democratization have led to wrenching changes in the island’s ability to conduct foreign affairs. With the demise of the Chiang regime’s top-down KMT decision-making process, Taiwan’s foreign policy appears to lack direction, focus and coordination. Moreover, some officials charged with the responsibility for developing and implementing policy now feel free to criticize or even undermine policies that they do not support. Premier Hau Pei-tsun’s refusal to obey President Lee Teng-hui’s presidential directives to investigate and pursue various options that might enable Taiwan to return to the UN is a case in point. Another illustration, albeit less dramatic, is provided by President Lee’s reported quarrels with Fredrick Chien, ROC Foreign Minister, over key elements in pragmatic diplomacy. Lee’s distrust of the foreign policy bureaucracy and KMT party stalwarts eventually led him to move much of the decision-making process into the Office of the President. If anything, these problems accelerated with the transfer of power to the DPP in 2000. According to some accounts, President Chen had to cancel a planned journey to Indonesia in 2002 because a department within the government sabotaged the visit. Suffice it to say that such flagrant bureaucratic resistance and subversion was inconceivable during the Chiang era.
The impact of the changes generated by Taiwan’s democratization is not limited solely to the Executive Yuan. Further complicating matters is the revitalization (or renaissance) of Taiwan’s legislature. It is now common practice for lawmakers to grill Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) officials and other relevant government authorities during combative legislative sessions. In fact, the Legislative Yuan is determined to hold the central government accountable for foreign policy outcomes and seems to delight in exposing foreign policy mishaps that have ranged from the “Te-Ming Project” spy scandal to payoffs to obscure diplomatic allies. Moreover, the legislature no longer serves as a “rubber stamp” for the executive branch’s foreign policy initiatives. By early 2006, the Legislative Yuan had defeated the special arms procurement bill designed to purchase three major weapons systems from the US (submarines, PAC-3 Patriot anti-missile batteries and P-3C patrol aircraft) almost fifty times and slashed the budget for a handful of agencies involved in Taiwan’s external affairs. With respect to the arms sales controversy, government officials complain that the legislature’s intransigence not only jeopardizes national security, but also has “a negative impact” on ties with the US.6

Societal influences and Taiwan’s foreign policy

Non-governmental actors are yet another set of influences that may help determine a state’s foreign policy outcomes. The efficacy of societal players such as political parties, interest groups, think-tanks, the mass media and public opinion are especially important in a robust democratic society like Taiwan.

As described in Chapter 5, a consensus exists among Taiwan’s major political parties with respect to most foreign policy issues:

Many of the differences between the major parties consist largely of emphasis and tone… In specific areas of foreign policy and defense policy, the bulk of Taiwan’s political elite apparently agree on a wide range of basic principles and policy positions, reflecting the overall pragmatism and growing moderation of Taiwan’s dominant political center.7

In other words, the island’s political parties appear to support the many and varied elements of pragmatic diplomacy and the Chen administration’s recent moves to employ people-to-people diplomacy and other unconventional tactics to achieve the nation’s foreign policy goals. But there is another side to this coin.

Taiwan’s political parties and their allies in the island’s party-affiliated think tanks and party-affiliated mass media engage in numerous battles related to international affairs. Ever since the controversial 2004 presidential election, the relationship between parties might best be described as poisonous. In fact, the opposition was still staging rallies protesting the election results in March 2006.8 As one scholar observed, “Taiwan’s society was torn in two parts due to the election disputes.”9 The opposition parties and their partners seek continuously to embarrass and sabotage the government’s foreign policy initiatives. For its part,
the ruling party and its supporters regularly make exaggerated claims contesting the loyalty of the opposition. During the island’s December 2005 local elections President Chen went so far as to proclaim that Taiwan would be “finished” if the opposition won the electoral contest:

If the opposition parties win [the December 2005 election], Taiwan is finished. They will pass the Taiwan version of the anti-secession law, or a surrender law. Taiwan will have to accept the one-China principle and become a part of China. It will become a local government, a special administrative district like Hong Kong and Macao.10

The constant partisan political bickering is taking a toll. Citizens are bewildered and confused. Public opinion polls reveal that, while most Taiwanese believe that their island does not suffer from “serious ethnic problems” an overwhelming majority agree that the island’s political parties and mass media are seeking to stir up ethnic conflict (see Tables 7.1 and 7.2).

President Chen blames his political opponents for many of Taiwan’s domestic and international difficulties. He charges that the opposition is “crippling” the government.”11 Others, however, contend that there is enough blame to go around and that all parties are responsible for Taiwan’s troubles. For example, in 2006, Lin Yi-hsiung, a former chairman of DPP, became the third former chairman to resign from his party. Lin explained that he quit the DPP because “malignant partisan fights have destabilized the country.”12

During his 2000 inaugural address, Chen Shui-bian declared that “the government must rule on the basis of majority public opinion [emphasis added].” Public opinion polls are cited routinely as a critical factor in determining policy toward China, defense issues, the overseas visits of ROC officials, the drive to return to international organizations and a host of other important issues. As described, the MOFA even sought to explain the decision to add the name “Taiwan” to the cover of passports by claiming that almost a dozen public opinion polls showed support for the move.13

To be sure, there are many problems associated with public opinion polls in Taiwan. Moreover, there is some question as to whether the mass public is familiar with the complexities of the government’s numerous and varied foreign policy

Table 7.1 Some people say, “Taiwan has serious ethnic problems.” Other people say “Ethnic problems are a manipulation by politicians and the media. Ethnicity is actually not that much of a problem.” Which opinion do you agree with?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan has a serious ethnic problem</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic problems are a manipulation by politicians and the media</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not know/No comment</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refuse to answer</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
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Understanding Taiwan’s foreign policy

problems. It is noteworthy, however, that scientific polls conducted by both public and private firms in Taiwan reveal that an increasing percentage of the population sees itself as a group distinct from the mainland Chinese. As outlined in Table 7.3 (below) a vast majority of the island’s residents now consider themselves exclusively as Taiwanese. This is a significant development.

A shift in what some scholars describe as a society’s “identity politics” can hold important implications for a state’s external relations.14 This is particularly true in Taiwan as shifting views about identity appear to be shared by both the island’s elite and the mass public. As a democratic polity, it is to be anticipated that an increasing number of Taiwanese politicians will seek to capitalize on the evolving sense of identity by drumming up popular support for the establishment of a state completely distinct from China. This development holds important foreign policy consequences for Taiwan as it could put the island on a collision course with both China and the US.

While public opinion appears to be pushing Taiwan away from China, the island’s most powerful economic interest groups seem to be pushing the island in an opposite direction. Taiwan’s conglomerates are demanding that the government ease restrictions on economic exchanges with the PRC. Some of President Chen’s most vocal critics may be found among the Taiwanese business community. But the Chen administration fears that increased dependence on the PRC economy will jeopardize Taiwan’s ability to function as a sovereign state in the international community.

Table 7.2 Some people say, “Political parties’ comments after the presidential election controversy have hurt ethnic harmony.” Do you agree?

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly agree</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not agree that much</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not agree at all</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not know/no comment</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refuse to answer</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 7.3 In Taiwan, some people consider themselves Taiwanese, others consider themselves Chinese. Do you consider yourself Taiwanese or Chinese?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taiwanese</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both Taiwanese and Chinese</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refuse to answer</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No comment</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Democratization holds numerous benefits both for a nation and the global community as a whole. As Strobe Talbott observed, “democracies are demonstrably more likely to maintain their international commitments, less likely to engage in terrorism or wreak environmental damage, and less likely to make war with each other.”

Democratization also holds the potential to “help countries modernize their economies, ameliorate social conditions, and integrate with the outside world.” Finally, democratic governments are “more inclined than their authoritarian or totalitarian predecessors to adopt policies that benefit their people ...[and] have an important source of legitimacy.”

With respect to foreign policy, democratization has generated a number of positive outcomes for Taiwan. The decision-making process is now much more transparent and open to public scrutiny than during the martial law era. Moreover, with the lifting of martial law in 1987, questions began to be raised about Taiwan’s foreign policy. Foreign policy issues are now subject to widespread discussion and debate and the island’s voters hold decision-makers accountable for their actions. Furthermore, many new actors have been brought into the policymaking process. In addition to new institutional or governmental actors, the actors in Taiwan’s foreign policy making process now include political parties, non-governmental organizations, interest groups, think tanks, the news media and an assortment of other agents. Finally, democratization has bolstered support at both the popular and elite levels for Taiwan among the US and many other western democracies. However, democratization also has complicated Taiwan’s foreign policy.

When discussing American society in the nineteenth century, Alexis de Tocqueville observed that “especially in their conduct of foreign relations, democracies appear to me decidedly inferior to other governments.” Democracies tend to “obey impulse rather than prudence,” display a tendency to “abandon a mature design for the gratification of a momentary passion,” and are deficient in many of the qualities demanded by effective foreign policy. To survive in an anarchic international system a state must often act with speed, secrecy and decisiveness in foreign policy. For the ROC, a state confronted by an increasingly powerful adversary, the difficulties posed by democratization are particularly acute. Briefly stated, it appears that some societal actors in Taiwan—particularly political parties, the media and public opinion—are complicating the ROC government’s already complex foreign policy predicament.

Individual influences and Taiwan’s foreign policy

In the classic study of the American presidency, Crusaders and Pragmatists, John G. Stoessinger argued that “a leader’s character may spell the difference between war and peace… a leader’s personality is a decisive element in the making of foreign policy.” In another important work, Why Nations Go to War, Stoessinger argued that the personalities of leaders have played a crucially important role in the outbreak of major wars. Indeed, many foreign policy analysts are now “convinced that leaders’ beliefs can be a powerful explanation of foreign policy,
particularly with regard to specific foreign policy choices and in crisis situations.”23 This observation applies with special force to those leaders who might be classified as “predominant leaders”—individuals who regularly play a central role in dealing with a state’s foreign policy problems.24

Each of Taiwan’s presidents (with the exception of Yen Chia-ken who served briefly as an “interim” president between Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo) could be characterized as a predominant leader. No one dared challenge Chiang Kai-shek’s authority or his rigid foreign policy positions. The Generalissimo’s successors—Chiang Ching-kuo and Lee Teng-hui—also dominated the decision-making process during their respective administrations and played a critical role shaping Taiwan’s foreign policy. Chen Shui-bian’s stunning election victory in 2000 signified a major political transformation in Taiwanese politics as it was the first time that a member of an opposition party had won the presidency. Interestingly, however, there has been little discernible change in leadership style. Even lawmakers in the president’s own political party routinely criticize his “one-man decision-making” and complain that Chen has “maintained a one-man decision-making mode for the past six years.”25

Given the fact that each of Taiwan’s leaders could be categorized as a predominant leader, it is probable that their personal characteristics have influenced the island’s foreign relations. Therefore, scholars must consider how each president’s perceptions, attitudes and other personal characteristics influence foreign policy decision making.

As described in Chapter 6, Stoessinger classified leaders as either crusaders or pragmatists. A crusader tends to make decisions based on preconceived ideas and principles and does not welcome compromise or criticism. Chiang Kai-shek was such a leader. Many, if not most, of Taiwan’s present foreign policy predicaments may be traced directly to the Generalissimo’s dogmatic and unbending principles. Throughout his decades in Taiwan, Chiang refused to compromise with the “communist bandits” on the mainland. He would not tolerate dual recognition by foreign governments, proposals for dual representation in international organizations or any schemes designed to promote a “two China” policy or a “one China, one Taiwan” policy. Countries were forced to choose between Beijing and Taipei. As time passed, an increasing number of states opted to recognize the PRC and abandon Taiwan.

Each of the Generalissimo’s successors may be described as a pragmatic leader, a decision-maker who is guided largely by facts rather than principle. Unlike a crusader, a pragmatist is often willing to compromise. For example, Chiang Ching-kuo shelved his father’s plans to retake the mainland and turned his attention toward transforming Taiwan into an economic powerhouse and a democracy. Chiang Ching-kuo’s hand-picked successor, Lee Teng-hui, consolidated Taiwan’s democracy and developed a new approach to foreign affairs—pragmatic diplomacy. Much to China’s surprise (and outrage), the president launched a series of bold initiatives designed to bolster Taiwan’s position in the international community. Chen Shui-bian embraced Lee’s pragmatic approach to foreign relations. But he has also employed a variety of unconventional diplomatic initiatives that fall
under the broad rubric of “people-to-people” diplomacy in an effort to help Taiwan become a “normal state.” Despite a series of controversial moves (including calls for a new constitution, referendums and scrapping the national unification council), Chen disappointed many hardcore independence activists by not pushing harder for Taiwan’s *de jure* independence from China.

In sum, each of Taiwan’s leaders has played a central role in crafting Taiwan’s foreign policy. For better or worse, each president’s personality has left a lasting imprint on the island’s external relations. Given past trends and what some analysts describe as a cultural propensity for Chinese (or Taiwanese) leaders to act as predominate leaders, it is probable that this phenomenon will not change soon.26

II Analysis

Over four decades ago, J. David Singer introduced the concept of levels of analysis to political science when he discussed two comprehensive levels of explanation for foreign policy behavior: the international system and the state. Employing a set of analogies, he suggested that both internal and external factors could influence foreign policy:

> In any area of scholarly inquiry, there are always several ways in which the phenomena under study may be sorted and arranged for purposes of systematic analysis. Whether in the physical or social sciences, the observer may choose to focus upon the parts or upon the whole, upon the components or upon the system. He may, for example, choose between the flowers or the garden, the rocks or the quarry, the trees or the forest, the houses or the neighborhood, the cars or the traffic jam, the delinquents or the gang, the legislators or the legislature, and so on.27

As noted in Chapter 1, other scholars found it more useful to elaborate upon Singer’s work and employed additional levels in their respective analyses. Some preferred three levels, others favored four levels and still others argued that the considerations capable of influencing a state’s foreign policy should be grouped into five or more major categories.

Extensive research has been conducted in an effort to determine the efficacy of the various approaches employed in the study of foreign policy behavior. In the 1950s and 1960s, scholars from the so-called “realist” school in international relations borrowed heavily from the work of Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) and argued that the *anarchic nature* of an international system composed of sovereign countries best explains state behavior in world politics.28 More recently, “neorealists” (or structural realists) like Kenneth Waltz focused on the *structure* of the anarchic international system when seeking to understand interactions among states.29 During the early 1970s, Graham Allison turned much of the academic community on its head when he suggested that America’s response to the 1962 Cuban missile crisis might best be explained by the dynamics of group behavior...
“in which decisions are produced by horse trading more than logic.” The work of Allison actually “reinforces the whole domestic politics approach, against the skepticism of realism, neo-realism and some forms of historicism.” His research helped generate numerous studies focusing on the relationship between foreign policy and variables ranging from the role of collective psychology in decision making to the key institutions (such as public opinion, interest groups and the media) that connect officials to wider society. Still others, however, prefer to focus on individual decision makers and contend that foreign policy behavior may most accurately be explained as a result of the personal characteristics of a leader.

Countless stimuli influence a state’s foreign policy behavior and there is no uniform model for the classification of variables that shape foreign policy outcomes. When seeking to identify the various forces that influence a state’s foreign policy behavior, an analyst must be cognizant of the fact that when “looking with hindsight at any past policy, assuming all of its antecedents are known, it is possible to see every act as fully determined by the totality of its antecedents.” Indeed, as Sidney Verba noted, “no model and no theorist, no matter how committed to holistic principles, can encompass the totality of a situation.” This fact led Charles Hermann and a number of other scholars to suggest that the explanation most applicable to any particular foreign policy decision might be largely dependent upon the nature of the issue at hand.

From the analyses provided in this study, it appears that external variables are particularly relevant when one seeks to explain Taiwan’s overall position in the international community. In fact, considerations such as the structure of the international system, the characteristics of global politics and the behavior of other states have long exercised an inordinate degree of influence over Taiwan’s foreign policy behavior. Not surprisingly, Taiwanese officials are cognizant of this fact. During an interview with the author, Mark Chen, then Taiwan’s foreign minister, acknowledged that “this is a constant historical problem that Taiwan has been facing unfortunately.” Parris Chang, Deputy Secretary General of the NSC, also has complained that “we are really subjected to almost excessive external pressures” and that the influence of outside forces such as the PRC and the US “makes it difficult for the government here in Taiwan to try to conduct foreign policy.”

Taiwan’s participation in international governmental organizations (IGOs) provides a case in point. The bipolar international system that characterized world politics during much of the Cold War enabled Taipei to hold onto its seat in the UN and most other major IGOs for over two decades following the KMT’s defeat in the Chinese civil war. As the years passed, Chiang Kai-shek’s stubborn insistence that his regime was the legitimate government of all China and his rigid adherence to the so-called “one China policy” undoubtedly contributed to Taiwan’s diplomatic difficulties. But it was the momentous shift in global alignments during the early 1970s, rather than the Generalissmo’s intransigence, which actually led to Taiwan’s expulsion from the world’s major IGOs.

In the late 1980s, President Lee Teng-hui began to promote a “pragmatic approach” to international relations in an effort to reverse Taiwan’s drift toward complete diplomatic isolation. Taiwanese officials acknowledge that domestic
political considerations—particularly public opinion—eventually propelled Lee to add Taiwan’s return to the UN to the government’s already overtaxed and ambitious foreign policy agenda. Under ordinary circumstances, any given state might simply hold a national referendum on UN membership and then receive a warm welcome into the global body after the initiative proved successful. For example, Swiss voters agreed to a proposal to join the UN in a national referendum conducted in 2002. Upon learning that 55 percent of the country’s voters approved the measure, Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary General, applauded the move and declared that “Switzerland is in many ways a vivid example of what the UN stands for—a tolerant, peaceful and multicultural society built on democratic values.” Might Taiwan expect a similar reception?

Like Switzerland, Taiwan is a tolerant, peaceful, multicultural and democratic society. In fact, the US Department of State now describes the island officially as a “multiparty democracy.” Again, like Switzerland, Taiwan threatens no other states in the global community. Switzerland is just slightly larger than Taiwan geographically, but in terms of population Taiwan is over three times as large with a population of 23 million as opposed to Switzerland’s 7.3 million. With respect to international trade, the World Trade Organization now ranks Taiwan as the world’s fifteenth largest importing and exporting state, while Switzerland is the world’s eighteenth largest importing nation and twenty-first largest exporting nation. Given such statistics, any objective observer might well wonder why Taiwan’s quest to return to the UN receives little or no encouragement from the global institution or other states. To solve this riddle, one must look outside Taiwan.

Bowing to pressure from Beijing, the General Committee of the UN’s General Assembly has consistently blocked all efforts by Taipei’s coterie of small diplomatic allies to place the island’s case on the General Assembly’s agenda ever since the issue was first raised in 1993. In other words, the question of Taiwan’s participation cannot even be discussed. Moreover, it is highly probable that any island-wide referendum on the matter would be branded “provocative” and “destabilizing” by the US, the PRC and much of the international community. Unlike Switzerland, Taiwan would not be welcomed into the UN with open arms following a referendum on membership in the world body.

The UN case is important because it is illustrative of an inexorable fact. Namely, Taipei’s foreign policy options are extraordinarily constrained by external forces. One need not look far to find other examples. Despite the 2003 SARS epidemic and the growing prospect of a global flu pandemic, Taiwan’s participation in the World Health Organization as a “non-state actor” with “observer” status has remained stalled ever since Taipei began to seek admission in 1997. Moreover, not even one of the world’s important countries is willing to maintain formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan and only the US has the courage and fortitude to sell armaments to it on a regular basis, while also providing the island with some sort of vague security guarantee. In short, despite Taiwan’s remarkable economic and political achievements, China’s actions along with a corresponding propensity for the international community to acquiesce to Beijing’s demands has turned Taiwan into a diplomatic outcast.
III Foreign policy challenges

Decision makers responsible for crafting Taiwan’s foreign policy realize that the island will encounter numerous challenges and opportunities in the future. It appears, however, that the island “is faced with more challenges than opportunities in [2004] post-election foreign affairs.” Given the evidence presented in this study, it should come as little surprise that Taiwan’s relations with external powers—particularly the PRC and the US—represent the most serious challenges to the island. The discussion below examines several major problems that Taiwan may confront when conducting foreign affairs.

Relations with China

The most pessimistic assessments about Taiwan’s external relations focus largely on the island’s ties with the PRC. Since the 1990s, cross-strait ties have become much more volatile. As Vice President Lu observed in August 2004, “cross-strait relations have already entered a state of quasi-war.” China is responsible for many, if not most, of the problems that plague cross-strait relations. By bullying Taiwan, the PRC has pushed the island away from the mainland. But some of the troubles must be traced to the fiery rhetoric of Taiwanese politicians and President Chen’s support for controversial initiatives. For example, on August 3, 2002, Chen proclaimed that “Taiwan and the nation on the other side of the Taiwan Strait, China, are two nations” and called for a referendum to determine the island’s future. During the 2004 presidential campaign, he declared that “we should be very confident in saying very loudly to the world that Taiwan is an independent, sovereign country. There is no need to be ambiguous.” Although President Chen softened his rhetoric on cross-strait issues following the 2004 election and even delivered a conciliatory inaugural address, he soon dropped his affable tone and proposed removing all the references to “China” in state-owned corporations in an effort to attract voters in the crucial December 2004 legislative elections. Since then, the president has junked the NUC and the NUG, proclaimed his intention to engineer his government’s return to the UN under the name “Taiwan” rather than “ROC,” and returned to his original stance that Taiwan must draft an entirely new constitution. Moreover, despite the defeat of the “peace referendum” in the 2004 presidential election, Chen supports the idea of holding additional referendums as a means to settle pressing political and social questions. He has long argued that referendums enable the Taiwanese populace to express its true opinion about important issues and that the government should refer to their results when crafting public policy. The president has suggested that Taiwan’s voters should go to the polls to approve a new constitution during a national referendum to be conducted in late 2007.

China claims that all of these moves—President Chen’s independence rhetoric, the plans to adopt a new constitution, the scrapping of the NUC and NUG and the proposals for more referendums—are steps toward a formal declaration of independence. As Professor Jia Qingguo, an international relations analyst at China’s
prestigious Beijing University, observed, the two sides of the Taiwan Strait are moving closer to war:

We are already in the red zone. The mainland has no trust in Chen. After four years of watching him, Beijing knows who Chen Shui-bian is. They have no false expectations. Any additional step from Taiwan to provoke independence would lead to unthinkable consequences.48

PRC preparations for conflict with Taiwan have accelerated. In August 2004, Cao Gangchuan, PRC Defense Minister, warned “if the Taiwan independence separatist forces obstinately persist on this course, the Chinese People’s Liberation Army has the determination and ability to resolutely smash any Taiwan independence separatist plot.”49 In March 2005, the PRC’s National People’s Congress passed an “anti-secession law” to provide Beijing with a legal framework to initiate hostilities with Taipei if the island inches too close to independence. In March 2006, Guo Boxiong, vice chair of China’s Central Military Commission, called on the People’s Liberation Army to accelerate training and ramp up its combat capability to ensure that it can “resolutely safeguard national security, reunification, and the integrity of China’s territory.”50

China’s bellicose warnings should not be dismissed as hollow threats. Beijing appears to be preparing a number of contingency plans that might be employed in a confrontation with Taipei. With respect to the military option, it is noteworthy that China’s military modernization continues unabated. According to the US Department of Defense’s (DOD) annual report, The Military Power of the People’s Republic of China, 2005, China “could pose a credible threat to other modern militaries in the region.”51 Moreover, in February 2006, the DOD’s Quadrennial Defense Review warned that “the pace and scope of China’s military build-up already put regional military balances at risk.”52 Indeed, the number of missiles aimed at Taiwan has jumped significantly. In March 2006, Colonel Chen Chang-hua, a spokesman for Taiwan’s Ministry of National Defense, revealed the PRC has now “deployed 784 ballistic missile with the entire island coming within their range, with the precision margin narrowing from 600 meters to 50 meters.”53 He added, “armed with the missiles, they can launch five waves of intensive bombings for 10 hours… targeting the island’s military commands, communications centers, airports and harbors.”54

Increased military pressure represents only one element in Beijing’s strategy. Economic warfare also is a possibility. Taiwanese firms have invested over US $100 billion in China and Taiwan’s trade surplus with China soared to US $23.56 billion in 2005. The island is now dependent upon China for its economic survival. As Hu An’gan, a prominent economist at Beijing’s prestigious Tsinghau University, explained, “without firing a bullet, China can force Taiwan to its knees in a week with a massive trade war… it will be fatal to Taiwan.”55 According to Hu, “going to war is our last card… trade is the biggest weapon in this period of economic globalization.”56
In addition to economic and military measures, China is employing its diplomatic leverage in a massive campaign to convince foreign nations to isolate Taiwan and oppose the island’s independence. For example, Hu Jintao, China’s president, has called on President Bush to join with Beijing “and work together to check the separatist activities of the Taiwan independence forces.” The strategy appears to be yielding some dividends. After President Chen announced his intention to mothball the NUC and NUG, China successfully persuaded the US, the EU, Russia, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Singapore and other nations to criticize the move. Indeed, Beijing now prefers to remain largely above the fray in order to “win the hearts and minds” of the Taiwanese populace, while working busily behind the scenes to convince foreign powers to isolate Taiwan and curb the island’s drift toward independence.

Relations with the US

China is not the only external power that seeks to influence the foreign policy behavior of Taiwan. Like Beijing, Washington has expressed doubts about Taipei’s plans for the future. US officials complain that some proposals, such as the call for a new constitution, are “not clear.” As Lin Cheng-yi, a prominent international relations specialist at Taiwan’s Academia Sinica, observed, the island’s referendum and constitutional proposals pose “a structural conflict of interests” with the US. Washington needs Beijing’s cooperation to cope with a wide range of pressing global problems—particularly the global war on terrorism and the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula. The Taiwanese government’s separatist agenda threatens to complicate and/or undermine America’s relations with the PRC.

The US has warned Taiwan repeatedly about provocative statements and moves guaranteed to infuriate Beijing. The White House apparently fears that Taiwan is moving too close to declaring itself independent of China—a development that could ignite a major conflict in East Asia at a time when US forces are tied down in the Middle East. In March 2006, Senator John Warner (R-Virginia), Chairman of the Senate Armed Forces Committee, pointedly warned “if a conflict with China were to be aided by inappropriate and wrongful politics generated by the Taiwanese elected officials, I am not entirely sure that this nation would come full force to their rescue.” The warning was especially significant as the senator is a long-time friend and supporter of Taiwan. But some prominent China specialists, including Chas Freeman, an adviser to the Bush administration, believe that repeated warnings don’t go far enough. Freeman contends that “it is becoming clear that words alone may not be enough to convince Taiwan authorities not to jeopardize the island’s future and our own: punitive actions may be required.”

In short, Taiwan’s steps toward independence hold the potential to put the island on a collision course with Beijing, while simultaneously jeopardizing its relationship with Washington. Such a development could jeopardize Taiwan’s overall foreign policy goal—its continued existence as a sovereign and independent state in the international system.
Advancement and reinforcement of formal diplomatic relations

In addition to the challenges posed by China and the US, Taiwan’s relations with other states in the global community have come to represent a major difficulty for decision makers. It must be remembered that formal diplomatic ties represent an important symbol of Taiwanese existence as a sovereign state. The island’s diplomatic allies also play a critical role in Taiwan’s efforts to rejoin the international community. In the future, however, the Taiwan government may have to face the question of whether the number of diplomatic allies is actually important. The Taiwan government claims to have moved beyond “dollar diplomacy,” but the facts show otherwise. Like the KMT regime, the DPP government has felt compelled to engage in this politically unpopular practice and “waste precious diplomatic resources buying off some ‘kid class’ states...[that] engage in diplomatic blackmail on both sides of the strait.”62

Taiwan’s need for diplomatic allies will continue to place the island in a vulnerable and awkward position. If left unchecked, both China and Taiwan invariably will employ bribery as a means to entice small countries to switch allegiances. As one Taiwanese scholar noted, Taiwan’s friends know that “though an aid provider, Taiwan actually relies more on aid recipients than the other way around for political reasons.”63 This means that Taipei will be vulnerable to blackmail from its small allies and, like China, it must continue to engage in “dollar diplomacy” to maintain their loyalty. Indeed, some countries such as Paraguay unabashedly pledge to recognize whichever government provides the most financial assistance.64 Others have switched allegiances several times.

Given China’s determination to employ its muscle and squander its resources to steal Taiwan’s few remaining diplomatic allies, Taipei may have to make some tough choices about whether maintaining ties with some of its “little friends” really matters. As Paris Chang, then a DPP lawmaker, observed, “the number of our allies is irrelevant to our diplomatic performance. If we want more allies, we can do it.”65 But any presidential administration (and political party) will have to be prepared to accept the domestic political fallout that will accompany a reduction in the number of countries that maintains formal relations with Taiwan. Ironically, although Taiwan’s press and opposition parties claim to oppose “dollar diplomacy,” they still employ the government’s number of diplomatic allies as a yardstick to measure its foreign policy performance.

Political partisanship, ethnic conflict and instability

In addition to external difficulties, Taiwan confronts serious domestic challenges that could undermine the stability and social fabric of the island. During the height of the Cold War, American officials often proclaimed that “politics stops at the nation’s shores.” Of course, US politicians may not have practiced a bipartisan approach toward all issues related to international affairs. But it was a fairly common practice when dealing with the nation’s chief adversary—the Soviet Union—during the era of intense superpower rivalry.
Like America during the 1950s, Taiwan confronts an increasingly powerful competitor. Taiwanese politics, however, is now plagued by intense partisan bickering and ethnic quarrels that extend to every facet of society—including foreign policy. As described in previous chapters, the spat over American arms acquisitions provides a case in point. DPP lawmakers who criticized the KMT government for purchasing expensive weapons systems from the US in the 1990s now endorse the practice. On the other hand, KMT politicians who lobbied Washington for decades to acquire submarines and other big-ticket armaments now criticize the government for wasteful spending. Such developments puzzle and confound American military planners who believe Taiwan should do more to provide for its self-defense. As William Fallon, commander of the US Pacific Command, confessed, “they’ve got me in a bit of a box here… I don’t understand their reluctance to move forward.”

In short, the continued political wrangling between Taiwan’s politicians and efforts to stir up ethnic divisions complicates Taiwan’s foreign policy environment and undermines the island’s security. For example, Thomas Gold, an authority on Taiwan from the University of California, Berkeley, cautions that “this place is too small and Taiwan’s international position too fragile and tenuous for Taiwan society to be split along these kinds of lines.” As John F. Copper, a leading authority on the island’s domestic politics, observed, it is “imperative that Taiwan deals functionally with this problem and that ethnic politics not play a core role in its future politics, as has been the case since 2000.” Indeed, a prominent Taiwanese defense analyst has argued that “the biggest battlefield that Taiwan must deal with is that which lies within Taiwan’s borders.”

Other challenges

The discussion above outlines only several of the foreign policy challenges that Taiwan will confront in coming years. Like any modern state, Taipei will confront a multitude of foreign policy problems. For example, the central government hopes to put Taiwan on the road toward a sustained financial recovery. But it is worried about the island’s growing economic reliance on China and the implications that these links hold for Taiwan’s future. The Chen administration reportedly hopes to reinvigorate the “go south” policy and convince Taiwan’s business community to invest in Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries. It is also seeking to establish lucrative free trade agreements with foreign governments. But given the allure of China, the effort to redirect trade and investment elsewhere represents a very formidable task.

Taiwan’s cautious and conservative foreign policy bureaucracy represents yet another challenge. For example, some of Taiwan’s seasoned diplomats view the administration’s calls for unconventional approaches to foreign policy problems—particularly “people-to-people” diplomacy—with skepticism. Others oppose administration policies, including the government’s plans for a new constitution and/or referendums, and will do little to advance understanding or support of the initiatives. Still others resist calls for coordination with other agencies and prefer to engage in endless bureaucratic squabbling and turf battles.
If the Taiwanese legislature remains under the thumb of an opposition alliance, it will likely play a larger, and more obstructionist, role in foreign policy making. But a ruling-party-controlled legislature is not a panacea for any president. As Taiwanese democracy expands, it is likely that any legislature will begin to demand a greater role in foreign policy. It is probable that public opinion, the media, interest groups and other actors also will have more influence in the making of foreign policy.

V Conclusion

As the structure of the international system and Taiwanese domestic politics continue to evolve in coming years, it is probable that Taiwan will confront numerous foreign policy challenges. Whether Taipei will be able to overcome these obstacles and increase its formal and informal linkages with the global community in the face of Beijing’s accelerating campaign to squeeze the island’s international space remains a matter of some speculation. But Taiwan’s troubles should not be exaggerated. Nor should they be attributed solely to one politician or political camp.

It is clear that US–Taiwan relations have experienced some strains in recent years. But just as global politics shaped the trajectory of US–Taiwan ties during the KMT era, many of the present problems in this special relationship may be traced to structural shifts in the global system that are beyond Taipei’s control. Furthermore, these difficulties should not be overstated. US economic, military and political ties with Taiwan remain robust.

The US is no longer Taiwan’s largest export outlet. However, America remains Taiwan’s second largest market and two-way trade totaled almost US $56 billion in 2005. Moreover, bilateral economic ties have grown closer as a result of joint-venture partnerships and technology transfers.

Despite PRC pressures, the US has no plans to reduce arms sales to Taiwan or reduce its security commitments as outlined in the TRA. President Bush has repeatedly told Chinese officials that “we expect there to be peace with Taiwan.” In June 2005, Randall G. Schriver, former US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, revealed that Washington had employed both private and public channels in an effort to dissuade Beijing from enacting its anti-secession law. It is also noteworthy that he emphasized that the president’s pledge to “do whatever it takes” to defend Taiwan has not changed. Perhaps equally significant, Washington and Tokyo have steadily boosted and strengthened their defense cooperation in an effort to deter possible PRC military operations in the Taiwan Strait. Moreover, after President Chen scrapped the NUC and NUG in March 2006, US military officials pointedly warned, “we retain our strong commitment to the defense of Taiwan should it be threatened by PRC military action.” In sum, Washington’s military relations with Taipei are closer than ever and now include arms sales, technology transfers, high-level negotiations, exchanges, visits, the deployment of military exercise observation teams and the return of active duty US military officers to Taiwan.
American support for Taiwan’s membership in the WHO continues to escalate. In 2004, President Bush signed legislation authorizing the Department of State to figure out how Taiwan might succeed in gaining observer status in the world body. In 2005, both the US and Japan began to study ways to modify WHO rules to help engineer Taiwan’s return to the institution as a non-state actor. As John Bolton explained during his confirmation hearing to become America’s UN ambassador in 2005, President Bush has “made it clear that the administration supports Taiwan as an observer in the WHO.”

Despite the shift in America’s foreign policy paradigm, US–PRC relations remain plagued by the “three UN’s” (the relationship is unpredictable, unstable and uncertain). Washington is troubled by China’s predatory trade practices, copyright piracy, currency manipulation, human rights violations, religious persecution and inactivity (or unwillingness) to convince North Korea to abandon its nuclear ambitions. In fact, some analysts predict that in the future “the US and China are likely to engage in an intense security competition with considerable potential for war.” For its part, Beijing is irked by a number of American actions. These include America’s unprecedented military buildup, continued support for Taiwan (and links to the island’s separatists), increasing defense ties with Japan (as exemplified by the move to revise the Japan–US Joint Declaration on Security), unilateral approach to world politics, “unwarranted” criticisms of China’s internal affairs and a host of other issues.

As described, Taipei’s relations with Beijing remain tense. Threats against the island have escalated. For example, Wang Zaixi, Vice-Minister of Beijing’s Taiwan Affairs Office, has stated that he “could not rule out the possibility” of cross-strait military conflict before 2008. Moreover, China is stepping up the campaign to isolate Taiwan diplomatically and there is a mounting threat of economic warfare as the island becomes increasingly dependent upon China. At the same time, however, some US officials (and Chinese academics) report that there is a growing split among the PRC leadership as to how Beijing ought to approach the Taiwan issue. As one US official explained, “there is a sense that they do not know what to do… they are still struggling to agree on a strategy for dealing with Taiwan’s president.”

The triangular relationship between Washington, Beijing and Taipei has been described as one of “the weirdest in the world.” The bilateral relationship that exists between China and Taiwan is even stranger, however, and it is fraught with contradictions. Although the two sides have moved closer together economically, they have moved further and further apart politically. This represents one contradiction. Moreover, it now appears that, while the Chen administration has in some ways provoked China and contributed to a sharp escalation in tensions, it has simultaneously caused China’s leadership to reassess policies designed to promote the peaceful unification of China. In other words, the prospects for cross-strait conflict and cross-strait peace seem to be rising simultaneously. This represents yet another contradiction.

China’s threats against Taiwan receive a lot of media attention. Unfortunately, Beijing’s olive branches and/or concessions often are overlooked. Increasingly,
China’s efforts are aimed at preserving the status quo in the Taiwan Strait (and preventing Taipei from declaring independence), rather than promoting the “one country, two systems” reunification scheme. Indeed, Hu Jintao, China’s president and Chairman of China’s Central Military Commission, seems to be in no particular hurry to achieve unification.

PRC academics who advise China’s leadership cohort report that Beijing might be finally getting the message that almost no one in Taiwan supports the “one country, two systems” formula and that it must be scrapped. They also find it most significant that there is no reference to the unification plan in the new anti-secession law. As Lin Cheng-yi observed, the law “shows that Beijing is against national separation and Taiwan independence, but is not really in a hurry to unify the country.” Perhaps equally important, Beijing has failed to mention the controversial legislation despite perceived provocations from Taipei. Alexander Neill, head of the Asia Program at Great Britain’s Royal United Services Institute for Defense and Security Studies, suggests that, “it’s a piece of legislation which is packed away inside a little box and left on a shelf… its there as a fallback.” Furthermore, the threat of economic warfare seems to be a hollow one. Chinese, Taiwanese and American analysts have conceded that economic sanctions would hurt the PRC as much as Taiwan. Sanctions might also inadvertently generate a “boomerang effect” and lead the Taiwanese to rally around their president and government.

Beijing appears to be more willing to compromise on some sensitive issues—including Taipei’s participation in IGOs—in an effort to win the hearts and minds of the Taiwanese people. In addition to the usual litany of threats that were included in China’s so-called May 17, 2004, statement, there was an indication that Beijing might be willing to resolve “appropriately the issue of international living space of the Taiwan region through negotiations.” During the astonishing KMT–CCP summit in China in 2005, PRC officials also indicated that they were exploring ways that Taiwan could return to the WHO. In short, as part of its drive to thwart the drift away from China and undermine independence elements, Beijing is making some meaningful concessions toward Taiwan and promoting the possibility of some sort of peaceful reconciliation between the two sides of the strait. As Professor Zhang Nianchi, director of the Shanghai Institute for Asian Studies, observed, Beijing seems finally to have grasped the fact that it must extend some olive branches to Taipei, while simultaneously seeking to avoid becoming ensnared in the island’s domestic politics:

China must continue with activities which are friendly to the Taiwanese people. We cannot give up on these activities and show that we are angry just because of Chen Shui-bian’s behavior. That would be a mistake. The Taiwanese public is different from Chen Shui-bian.

Finally, Taiwan remains polarized and ethnically divided. Analysts trace much of the island’s division to “the failure thus far to reach a consensus on national identity.” During an interview with the author, however, one Taiwanese who has
occupied positions in the top echelons of the ROC government during both the KMT and DPP eras suggested that this is an understatement. He claimed that, unlike the PRC, Taiwan has yet to achieve a consensus on any issue:

The PRC has gone through tremendous torments to gain one national consensus which is no chaos. That is shared by everybody—left to right and top down. We do not have one single consensus. That’s causing problems. Not on anything—not even on the transliteration of English.88

Despite these problems, however, many Taiwanese remain optimistic that social harmony and cohesion will return eventually. In fact, some claim that, while matters may get worse before they get better, the island’s present problems are similar to those experienced by many young democracies. The individual cited above suggested that conditions would improve by 2008.

All of these developments and contradictions point to an interesting time for Taiwan’s foreign policy. Cautiously, but firmly, Taiwan will continue to seek to expand its space internationally. However, the long-term prospects for Taiwan’s transformation into “a complete country” within the global system appear daunting. As President Lee Teng-hui conceded during an interview with the author, he was “more optimistic” about Taiwan’s chances to establish itself as an independent nation-state within the family of nations in past years than he is today.89
Appendix 1

Constitution of the Republic of China

(Adopted by the National Assembly on December 25, 1946, promulgated by the National Government on January 1, 1947, and effective from December 25, 1947.)

The National Assembly of the Republic of China, by virtue of the mandate received from the whole body of citizens, in accordance with the teachings bequeathed by Dr. Sun Yat-sen in founding the Republic of China, and in order to consolidate the authority of the State, safeguard the rights of the people, ensure social tranquility, and promote the welfare of the people, do hereby establish this Constitution, to be promulgated throughout the country for faithful and perpetual observance by all.

Chapter I. General provisions

Article 1 The Republic of China, founded on the Three Principles of the People, shall be a democratic republic of the people, to be governed by the people and for the people.

Article 2 The sovereignty of the Republic of China shall reside in the whole body of citizens.

Article 3 Persons possessing the nationality of the Republic of China shall be citizens of the Republic of China.

Article 4 The territory of the Republic of China according to its existing national boundaries shall not be altered except by resolution of the National Assembly.

Article 5 There shall be equality among the various racial groups in the Republic of China.

Article 6 The national flag of the Republic of China shall be of red ground with a blue sky and a white sun in the upper left corner.
Chapter II. Rights and duties of the people

Article 7 All citizens of the Republic of China, irrespective of sex, religion, race, class, or party affiliation, shall be equal before the law.

Article 8 Personal freedom shall be guaranteed to the people. Except in case of flagrante delicto as provided by law, no person shall be arrested or detained otherwise than by a judicial or a police organ in accordance with the procedure prescribed by law. No person shall be tried or punished otherwise than by a law court in accordance with the procedure prescribed by law. Any arrest, detention, trial, or punishment which is not in accordance with the procedure prescribed by law may be resisted.

When a person is arrested or detained on suspicion of having committed a crime, the organ making the arrest or detention shall in writing inform the said person, and his designated relative or friend, of the grounds for his arrest or detention, and shall, within 24 hours, turn him over to a competent court for trial. The said person, or any other person, may petition the competent court that a writ be served within 24 hours on the organ making the arrest for the surrender of the said person for trial.

The court shall not reject the petition mentioned in the preceding paragraph, nor shall it order the organ concerned to make an investigation and report first. The organ concerned shall not refuse to execute, or delay in executing, the writ of the court for the surrender of the said person for trial.

When a person is unlawfully arrested or detained by any organ, he or any other person may petition the court for an investigation. The court shall not reject such a petition, and shall, within 24 hours, investigate the action of the organ concerned and deal with the matter in accordance with law.

Article 9 Except those in active military service, no person shall be subject to trial by a military tribunal.

Article 10 The people shall have freedom of residence and of change of residence.

Article 11 The people shall have freedom of speech, teaching, writing and publication.

Article 12 The people shall have freedom of privacy of correspondence.

Article 13 The people shall have freedom of religious belief.

Article 14 The people shall have freedom of assembly and association.

Article 15 The right of existence, the right to work and the right of property shall be guaranteed to the people.
Article 16  The people shall have the right of presenting petitions, lodging complaints, or instituting legal proceedings.

Article 17  The people shall have the right of election, recall, initiative and referendum.

Article 18  The people shall have the right of taking public examinations and of holding public offices.

Article 19  The people shall have the duty of paying taxes in accordance with law.

Article 20  The people shall have the duty of performing military service in accordance with law.

Article 21  The people shall have the right and the duty of receiving citizens’ education.

Article 22  All other freedoms and rights of the people that are not detrimental to social order or public welfare shall be guaranteed under the Constitution.

Article 23  All the freedoms and rights enumerated in the preceding Articles shall not be restricted by law except such as may be necessary to prevent infringement upon the freedoms of other persons, to avert an imminent crisis, to maintain social order or to advance public welfare.

Article 24  Any public functionary who, in violation of law, infringes upon the freedom or right of any person shall, in addition to being subject to disciplinary measures in accordance with law, be held responsible under criminal and civil laws. The injured person may, in accordance with law, claim compensation from the State for damage sustained.

Chapter III. The national assembly

Article 25  The National Assembly shall, in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution, exercise political powers on behalf of the whole body of citizens.

Article 26  The National Assembly shall be composed of the following delegates:

1. One delegate shall be elected from each hsien, municipality, or area of equivalent status. In case its population exceeds 500,000, one additional delegate shall be elected for each additional 500,000. Areas equivalent to hsien or municipalities shall be prescribed by law;
2. Delegates to represent Mongolia shall be elected on the basis of four for each league and one for each Special banner;
3. The number of delegates to be elected from Tibet shall be prescribed by law;
4. The number of delegates to be elected by various racial groups in frontier regions shall be prescribed by law;
5. The number of delegates to be elected by Chinese citizens residing abroad shall be prescribed by law;
6. The number of delegates to be elected by occupational groups shall be prescribed by law;
7. The number of delegates to be elected by women’s organizations shall be prescribed by law.

Article 27
The function of the National Assembly shall be as follows:

1. To elect the President and the Vice President;
2. To recall the President and the Vice President;
3. To amend the Constitution; and
4. To vote on proposed Constitutional amendments submitted by the Legislative Yuan by way of referendum.

With respect to the rights of initiative and referendum, except as is provided in Items 3 and 4 of the preceding paragraph, the National Assembly shall make regulations pertaining thereto and put them into effect after the above-mentioned two political rights shall have been exercised in one half of the hsien and municipalities of the whole country.

Article 28
Delegates to the National Assembly shall be elected every six years.

The term of office of the delegates to each National Assembly shall terminate on the day on which the next National Assembly convenes.

No incumbent government official shall, in the electoral area where he holds office, be elected delegate to the National Assembly.

Article 29
The National Assembly shall be convoked by the President to meet 90 days prior to the date of expiration of each presidential term.

Article 30
An extraordinary session of the National Assembly shall be convoked in any one of the following circumstances:

1. When, in accordance with the provisions of Article 49 of this Constitution, a new President and a new Vice President are to be elected;
2. When, by resolution of the Control Yuan, an impeachment of the President or the Vice President is instituted;
3. When, by resolution of the Legislative Yuan, an amendment to the Constitution is proposed; and
4. When a meeting is requested by not less than two-fifths of the delegates to the National Assembly. When an extraordinary session is to be convoked in accordance with Item 1 or Item 2 of the preceding paragraph, the President of the Legislative Yuan shall issue the notice of convocation; when it is to be convoked in accordance with Item 3 or Item 4, it shall be convoked by the President of the Republic.

Article 31 The National Assembly shall meet at the seat of the Central Government.

Article 32 No delegate to the National Assembly shall be held responsible outside the Assembly for opinions expressed or votes cast at meetings of the Assembly.

Article 33 While the Assembly is in session, no delegate to the National Assembly shall, except in case of flagrante delicto, be arrested or detained without the permission of the National Assembly.

Article 34 The organization of the National Assembly, the election and recall of delegates to the National Assembly, and the procedure whereby the National Assembly is to carry out its functions, shall be prescribed by law.

Chapter IV. The President

Article 35 The President shall be the head of the State and shall represent the Republic of China in foreign relations.

Article 36 The President shall have supreme command of the land, sea and air forces of the whole country.

Article 37 The President shall, in accordance with law, promulgate laws and issue mandates with the counter-signature of the President of the Executive Yuan or with the counter-signatures of both the President of Executive Yuan and the Ministers or Chairmen of Commissions concerned.

Article 38 The President shall, in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution, exercise the powers of concluding treaties, declaring war and making peace.

Article 39 The President may, in accordance with law, declare martial law with the approval of, or subject to confirmation by, the Legislative Yuan. When the Legislative Yuan deems it necessary, it may by resolution request the President to terminate martial law.

Article 40 The President shall, in accordance with law, exercise the power of granting amnesties, pardons, remission of sentences and restitution of civil rights.
Article 41  The President shall, in accordance with law, appoint and remove civil and military officials.

Article 42  The President may, in accordance with law, confer honors and decorations.

Article 43  In case of a natural calamity, an epidemic, or a national financial or economic crisis that calls for emergency measures, the President, during the recess of the Legislative Yuan, may, by resolution of the Executive Yuan Council, and in accordance with the Law on Emergency Orders, issue emergency orders, proclaiming such measures as may be necessary to cope with the situation. Such orders shall, within one month after issuance, be presented to the Legislative Yuan for confirmation; in case the Legislative Yuan withholds confirmation, the said orders shall forthwith cease to be valid.

Article 44  In case of disputes between two or more Yuan other than those concerning which there are relevant provisions in this Constitution, the President may call a meeting of the Presidents of the Yuan concerned for consultation with a view to reaching a solution.

Article 45  Any citizen of the Republic of China who has attained the age of 40 years may be elected President or Vice President.

Article 46  The election of the President and the Vice President shall be prescribed by law.

Article 47  The President and the Vice President shall serve a term of six years. They may be re-elected for a second term.

Article 48  The President shall, at the time of assuming office, take the following oath:

“I do solemnly and sincerely swear before the people of the whole country that I will observe the Constitution, faithfully perform my duties, promote the welfare of the people, safeguard the security of the State, and will in no way betray the people’s trust. Should I break my oath, I shall be willing to submit myself to severe punishment by the State. This is my solemn oath.”

Article 49  In case the office of the President should become vacant, the Vice President shall succeed until the expiration of the original presidential term. In case the office of both the President and the Vice President should become vacant, the President of the Executive Yuan shall act for the President; and, in accordance with the provisions of Article 30 of this Constitution, an extraordinary session of the National Assembly shall be convoked for the election of a new President and a new Vice President, who shall hold office until the
completion of the term left unfinished by the preceding President. In case the President should be unable to attend to office due to any cause, the Vice President shall act for the President. In case both the President and the Vice President should be unable to attend to office, the President of the Executive Yuan shall act for the President.

Article 50 The President shall be relieved of his functions on the day on which his term of office expires. If by that time the succeeding President has not yet been elected, or if the President-elect and the Vice-President-elect have not yet assumed office, the President of the Executive Yuan shall act for the President.

Article 51 The period during which the President of the Executive Yuan may act for the President shall not exceed three months.

Article 52 The President shall not, without having been recalled, or having been relieved of his functions, be liable to criminal prosecution unless he is charged with having committed an act of rebellion or treason.

Chapter V. Administration

Article 53 The Executive Yuan shall be the highest administrative organ of the state.

Article 54 The Executive Yuan shall have a President, a Vice President, a certain number of Ministers and Chairmen of Commissions, and a certain number of Ministers without Portfolio.

Article 55 The President of the Executive Yuan shall be nominated and, with the consent of the Legislative Yuan, appointed by the President of the Republic.

If, during the recess of the Legislative Yuan, the President of the Executive Yuan should resign or if his office should become vacant, his functions shall be exercised by the Vice President of the Yuan, acting on his behalf, but the President of the Republic shall, within 40 days, request a meeting of the Legislative Yuan to confirm his nominee for the vacancy.

Pending such confirmation, the Vice President of the Executive Yuan shall temporarily exercise the functions of the President of the said Yuan.

Article 56 The Vice President of the Executive Yuan, Ministers and Chairmen of Commissions, and Ministers without Portfolio shall be appointed by the President of the Republic upon the recommendation of the President of the Executive Yuan.
Article 57 The Executive Yuan shall be responsible to the Legislative Yuan in accordance with the following provisions:

1. The Executive Yuan has the duty to present to the Legislative Yuan a statement of its administrative policies and a report on its administration. While the Legislative Yuan is in session, Members of the Legislative Yuan shall have the right to question the President and the Ministers and Chairmen of Commissions of the Executive Yuan;

2. If the Legislative Yuan does not concur in any important policy of the Executive Yuan, it may, by resolution, request the Executive Yuan to alter such a policy. With respect to such resolution, the Executive Yuan may, with the approval of the President of the Republic, request the Legislative Yuan for reconsideration. If, after reconsideration, two-thirds of the Members of the Legislative Yuan present at the meeting uphold the original resolution, the President of the Executive Yuan shall either abide by the same or resign from office;

3. If the Executive Yuan deems a resolution on a statutory, budgetary, or treaty bill passed by the Legislative Yuan difficult of execution, it may, with the approval of the President of the Republic and within ten days after its transmission to the Executive Yuan, request the Legislative Yuan to reconsider the said resolution. If after reconsideration, two-thirds of the Members of the Legislative Yuan present at the meeting uphold the original resolution, the President of the Executive Yuan shall either abide by the same or resign from office.

Article 58 The Executive Yuan shall have an Executive Yuan Council, to be composed of its President, Vice President, various Ministers and Chairmen of Commissions, and Ministers without Portfolio, with its President as Chairman.

Statutory or budgetary bills or bills concerning martial law, amnesty, declaration of war, conclusion of peace, treaties, and other important affairs, all of which are to be submitted to the Legislative Yuan, as well as matters that are of common concern to the various Ministries and Commissions, shall be presented by the President and various Ministers and Chairmen of Commissions of the Executive Yuan to the Executive Yuan Council for decision.

Article 59 The Executive Yuan shall, three months before the beginning of each fiscal year, present to the Legislative Yuan the budgetary bill for the following fiscal year.

Article 60 The Executive Yuan shall, within four months after the end of each fiscal year, present final accounts of revenues and expenditures to the Control Yuan.
Article 61  The organization of the Executive Yuan shall be prescribed by law.

Chapter VI. Legislation

Article 62  The Legislative Yuan shall be the highest legislative organ of the State, to be constituted of members elected by the people. It shall exercise legislative power on behalf of the people.

Article 63  The Legislative Yuan shall have the power to decide by resolution upon statutory or budgetary bills or bills concerning material law, amnesty, declaration of war, conclusion of peace or treaties, and other important affairs of the State.

Article 64  Members of the Legislative Yuan shall be elected in accordance with the following provisions:

1. Those to be elected from the provinces and by the municipalities under the direct jurisdiction of the Executive Yuan shall be five for each province or municipality with a population of not more than 3,000,000, one additional member shall be elected for each additional 1,000,000 in a province or municipality whose population is over 3,000,000;
2. Those to be elected from Mongolian Leagues and Banners;
3. Those to be elected from Tibet;
4. Those to be elected by various racial groups in frontier regions;
5. Those to be elected by Chinese citizens residing abroad; and
6. Those to be elected by occupational groups.
7. The election of Members of the Legislative Yuan and the number of those to be elected in accordance with Items 2 to 6 of the preceding paragraph shall be prescribed by law. The number of women to be elected under the various items enumerated in the first paragraph shall be prescribed by law.

Article 65  Members of the Legislative Yuan shall serve a term of three years, and shall be re-eligible. The election of Members of the Legislative Yuan shall be completed within three months prior to the expiration of each term.

Article 66  The Legislative Yuan shall have a President and a Vice President, who shall be elected by and from among its Members.

Article 67  The Legislative Yuan may set up various committees. Such committees may invite government officials and private persons concerned to be present at their meetings to answer questions.

Article 68  The Legislative Yuan shall hold two sessions each year, and shall convene of its own accord. The first session shall last from February to the end of May, and the second session from September to the end of December. Whenever necessary a session may be prolonged.
Article 69 In any of the following circumstances, the Legislative Yuan may hold an extraordinary session:

1. At the request of the President of the Republic;
2. Upon the request of not less than one-fourth of its members.

Article 70 The Legislative Yuan shall not make proposals for an increase in the expenditures in the budgetary bill presented by the Executive Yuan.

Article 71 At the meetings of the Legislative Yuan, the Presidents of the various Yuan concerned and the various Ministers and Chairmen of Commissions concerned may be present to give their views.

Article 72 Statutory bills passed by the Legislative Yuan shall be transmitted to the President of the Republic and to the Executive Yuan. The President shall, within ten days after receipt thereof, promulgate them; or he may deal with them in accordance with the provisions of Article 57 of this Constitution.

Article 73 No Member of the Legislative Yuan shall be held responsible outside the Yuan for opinions expressed or votes cast in the Yuan.

Article 74 No Member of the Legislative Yuan shall, except in case of flagrante delicto, be arrested or detained without the permission of the Legislative Yuan.

Article 75 No Member of the Legislative Yuan shall concurrently hold a government post.

Article 76 The organization of the Legislative Yuan shall be prescribed by law.

Chapter VII. Judiciary

Article 77 The Judicial Yuan shall be the highest judicial organ of the State and shall have charge of civil, criminal, and administrative cases, and over cases concerning disciplinary measures against public functionaries.

Article 78 The Judicial Yuan shall interpret the Constitution and shall have the power to unify the interpretation of laws and orders.

Article 79 The Judicial Yuan shall have a President and a Vice President, who shall be nominated and, with the consent of the Control Yuan, appointed by the President of the Republic.

The Judicial Yuan shall have a number of Grand Justices to take charge of matters specified in Article 78 of this Constitution, who shall be nominated and, with the consent of the Control Yuan, appointed by the President of the Republic.

Article 80 Judges shall be above partisanship and shall, in accordance with law, hold trials independently, free from any interference.
Article 81  Judges shall hold office for life. No judge shall be removed from office unless he has been guilty of a criminal offense or subjected to disciplinary measure, or declared to be under interdiction. No judge shall, except in accordance with law, be suspended or transferred or have his salary reduced.

Article 82  The organization of the Judicial Yuan and of law courts of various grades shall be prescribed by law.

Chapter VIII. Examination

Article 83  The Examination Yuan shall be the highest examination organ of the State and shall have charge of matters relating to examination, employment, registration, service rating, scales of salary, promotion and transfer, security of tenure, commendation, pecuniary aid in case of death, retirement and old age pension.

Article 84  The Examination Yuan shall have a President and a Vice President and a certain number of Members, all of whom shall be nominated and, with the consent the Control Yuan, appointed by the President of the Republic.

Article 85  In the selection of public functionaries, a system of open competitive examination shall be put into operation, and examination shall be held in different areas, with prescribed numbers of persons to be selected according to various provinces and areas. No person shall be appointed to a public office unless he is qualified through examination.

Article 86  The following qualifications shall be determined and registered through examination by the Examination Yuan in accordance with law:

1. Qualification for appointment as public functionaries; and
2. Qualification for practice in specialized professions or as technicians.

Article 87  The Examination Yuan may, with respect to matters under its charge, present statutory bills to the Legislative Yuan.

Article 88  Members of the Examination Yuan shall be above partisanship and shall independently exercise their functions in accordance with law.

Article 89  The organization of the Examination Yuan shall be prescribed by law.
Chapter IX. Control

Article 90  The Control Yuan shall be the highest control organ of the State and shall exercise the powers of consent, impeachment, censure, and auditing.

Article 91  The Control Yuan shall be composed of Members who shall be elected by Provincial and Municipal Councils, the local Councils of Mongolia and Tibet, and Chinese citizens residing abroad. Their numbers shall be determined in accordance with the following provisions:

1. Five Members for each Province;
2. Two Members for each municipality under the direct jurisdiction of the Executive Yuan;
3. Eight Members for the Mongolian Leagues and Banners;
4. Eight Members for Tibet; and
5. Eight Members for Chinese citizens residing abroad.

Article 92  The Control Yuan shall have a President and a Vice President, who shall be elected by and from among its Members.

Article 93  Members of the Control Yuan shall serve a term of six years and shall be re-eligible.

Article 94  When the Control Yual exercises the power of consent in accordance with this Constitution, it shall do so by resolution of a majority of the Members present at the meeting.

Article 95  The Control Yuan may, in the exercise of its power of control, request the Executive Yuan and its Ministries and Commissions to submit to it for perusal the original orders issued by them and all other relevant documents.

Article 96  The Control Yuan may, taking into account the work of the Executive Yuan and its various Ministries and Commissions, set up a certain number of committees to investigate their activities with a view to ascertaining whether or not they are guilty of violation of law or neglect of duty.

Article 97  The Control Yuan may, on the basis of the investigations and resolutions of its committees, propose corrective measures and forward them to the Executive Yuan and the Ministries and Commissions concerned, directing their attention to effecting improvements.

When the Control Yuan deems a public functionary in the Central Government or in a local government guilty of neglect of duty or violation of law, it may propose corrective measures or institute an impeachment. If it involves a criminal offense, the case shall be turned over to a law court.
Article 98  Impeachment by the Control Yuan of a public functionary in the Central Government or in a local government shall be instituted upon the proposal of one or more than one Member of the Control Yuan and the decision, after due consideration, by a committee composed of not less nine Members.

Article 99  In case of impeachment by the Control Yuan of the personnel of the Judicial Yuan or of the Examination Yuan for neglect of duty or violation of law, the provisions of Articles 95, 97, and 98 of this Constitution shall be applicable.

Article 100  Impeachment by the Control Yuan of the President or the Vice President shall be instituted upon the proposal of not less than one fourth of the whole body of Members of the Control Yuan and the resolution, after due consideration, by the majority of the whole body of members of the Control Yuan, and the same shall be presented to the National Assembly.

Article 101  No Member of the Control Yuan shall be held responsible outside the Yuan for opinions expressed or votes cast in the Yuan.

Article 102  No Member of the Control Yuan shall, except in case of flagrante delicto, be arrested or detained without the permission of the Control Yuan.

Article 103  No member of the Control Yuan shall concurrently hold a public office or engage in any profession.

Article 104  In the Control Yuan, there shall have an Auditor General who shall be nominated and, with the consent of the Legislative Yuan, appointed by the President of the Republic.

Article 105  The Auditor General shall, within three months after presentation by the Executive Yuan of the final accounts of revenues and expenditures, complete the auditing thereof in accordance with law and submit an auditing report to the Legislative Yuan.

Article 106  The organization of the Control Yuan shall be prescribed by law.

Chapter X. Powers of the central and local governments

Article 107  In the following matters, the Central Government shall have the power of legislation and administration:

1. Foreign affairs;
2. National defense and military affairs concerning national defense;
3. Nationality law and criminal, civil, and commercial law;
4. Judiciary system;
5. Aviation, national highways, state-owned railways, navigation, postal and telecommunication services;
6. Central Government finance and national revenues;
7. Demarcation of national, provincial, and hsien revenues;
8. State-operated economic enterprises;
9. Currency system and state banks;
10. Weights and measures;
11. Foreign trade policies;
12. Financial and economic matters affecting foreigners or foreign countries; and
13. Other matters relating to the Central Government as provided by this Constitution.

Article 108
In the following matters, the Central Government shall have the power of legislation and administration, but the Central Government may delegate the power of Administration to the provincial and hsien governments:

1. General principles of provincial and hsien self-government;
2. Division of administrative areas;
3. Forestry, industry, mining, and commerce;
4. Educational system;
5. Banking and exchange system;
6. Shipping and deep-sea fishery;
7. Public utilities;
8. Cooperative enterprises;
9. Water and land communication and transportation covering two or more provinces;
10. Water conservancy, waterways, agriculture and pastoral enterprises covering two or more provinces;
11. Registration, employment, supervision, and security of tenure of officials in Central and local governments;
12. Land legislation;
13. Labor legislation and other special legislation;
14. Eminent domain;
15. Census-taking and compilation of population statistics for the whole country;
16. Immigration and land reclamation;
17. Police system;
18. Public health;
19. Relief, pecuniary aid in case of death and aid in case of unemployment; and
20. Preservation of ancient books and articles and sites of cultural value.
21. With respect to the various items enumerated in the preceding paragraph, the provinces may enact separate rules and regulations, provided they are not in conflict with national laws.

**Article 109** In the following matters, the provinces shall have the power of legislation and administration, but the provinces may delegate the power of administration to the hsien:

1. Provincial education, public health, industries, and communications;
2. Management and disposal of provincial property;
3. Administration of municipalities under provincial jurisdiction;
4. Province-operated enterprises;
5. Provincial cooperative enterprises;
6. Provincial agriculture, forestry, water conservancy, fishery, animal husbandry, and public works;
7. Provincial finance and revenues;
8. Provincial debts;
9. Provincial banks;
10. Provincial police administration;
11. Provincial charitable and public welfare works; and
12. Other matters delegated to the provinces in accordance with national laws.
13. Except as otherwise provided by law, any of the matters enumerated in the various items of the preceding paragraph, in so far as it covers two or more provinces, may be undertaken jointly by the provinces concerned.
14. When any province, in undertaking matters listed in any of the items of the first paragraph, finds its funds insufficient, it may, by resolution of the Legislative Yuan, obtain subsidies from the National Treasury.

**Article 110** In the following matters, the hsien shall have the power of legislation and administration:

1. Hsien education, public health, industries and communications;
2. Management and disposal of hsien property;
3. Hsien-operated enterprises;
4. Hsien cooperative enterprises;
5. Hsien agriculture and forestry, water conservancy, fishery, animal husbandry and public works;
6. Hsien finance and revenues;
7. Hsien debts;
8. Hsien banks;
9. Administration of hsien police and defense;
10. Hsien charitable and public welfare works; and
11. Other matters delegated to the hsien in accordance with national laws and provincial Self-Government Regulations.

12. Except as otherwise provided by law, any of the matters enumerated in the various items of the preceding paragraph, in so far as it covers two or more hsien, may be undertaken jointly by the hsien concerned.

**Article 111** Any matter not enumerated in Articles 107, 108, 109, and 110 shall fall within the jurisdiction of the Central Government, if it is national in nature; of the province, if it is provincial in nature; and of the hsien, if it concerns the hsien. In case of dispute, it shall be settled by the Legislative Yuan.

### Chapter XI. System of local government

#### Section 1. The Province

**Article 112** A Province may convoke a Provincial Assembly to enact, in accordance with the General Principles of Provincial and Hsien Self-Government, regulations, provided the said regulations are not in conflict with the Constitution.

The organization of the provincial assembly and the election of the delegates shall be prescribed by law.

**Article 113** The Provincial Self-Government Regulations shall include the following provisions:

- In the province, there shall be a provincial council. Members of the Provincial council shall be elected by the people of the province.
- In the province, there shall be a provincial government with a Provincial Governor who be elected by the people of the Province.
- Relationship between the province and the hsien.
- The legislative power of the province shall be exercised by the Provincial Council.

**Article 114** The Provincial Self-Government Regulations shall, after enactment, be forthwith submitted to the Judicial Yuan. The Judicial Yuan, if it deems any part thereof unconstitutional, shall declare null and void the articles repugnant to the Constitution.

**Article 115** If, during the enforcement of Provincial Self-Government Regulations, there should arise any serious obstacle in the application of any of the articles contained therein, the Judicial Yuan shall first summon the various parties concerned to present their views; and thereupon the Presidents of the Executive Yuan, Legislative Yuan, Judicial Yuan, Examination Yuan and Control Yuan shall form a Committee, with the President of Judicial Yuan as Chairman, to propose a formula for solution.
Article 116 Provincial rules and regulations that are in conflict with national laws shall be null and void.

Article 117 When doubt arises as to whether or not there is a conflict between provincial rules or regulations and national laws, interpretation thereon shall be made by the Judicial Yuan.

Article 118 The self-government of municipalities under the direct jurisdiction of the Executive Yuan shall be prescribed by law.

Article 119 The local self-government of Mongolian Leagues and Banners shall be prescribed by law.

Article 120 The self-government system of Tibet shall be safeguarded.

Section 2. The Hsien

Article 121 The hsien shall enforce hsien self-government.

Article 122 A hsien may convene a hsien assembly to enact, in accordance with the General Principles of Provincial and Hsien Self-Government, hsien self-government regulations, provided the said regulations are not in conflict with the Constitution or with provincial self-government regulations.

Article 123 The people of the hsien shall, in accordance with law, exercise the rights of initiative and referendum in matters within the sphere of hsien self-government and shall, in accordance with law, exercise the rights of election and recall of the magistrate and other hsien self-government officials.

Article 124 In the hsien, there shall be a hsien council. Members of the hsien council shall be elected by the people of the hsien.

The legislative power of the hsien shall be exercised by the hsien council.

Article 125 Hsien rules and regulations that are in conflict with national laws, or with provincial rules and regulations, shall be null and void.

Article 126 In the hsien, there shall be a hsien government with hsien magistrate who shall be elected by the people of the hsien.

Article 127 The hsien magistrate shall have charge of hsien self-government and shall administer matters delegated to hsien by the central or provincial government.

Article 128 The provisions governing the hsien shall apply mutatis mutandis to the municipality.
Chapter XII. Election, recall, initiative and referendum

Article 129 The various kinds of elections prescribed in this Constitution, except as otherwise provided by this Constitution, shall be by universal, equal, and direct suffrage and by secret ballot.

Article 130 Any citizen of the Republic of China who has attained the age of 20 years shall have the right of election in accordance with law. Except as otherwise provided by this Constitution or by law, any citizen who has attained the age of 23 years shall have the right of being elected in accordance with law.

Article 131 All candidates in the various kinds of election prescribed in this Constitution shall openly campaign for their election.

Article 132 Intimidation or inducements shall be strictly forbidden in elections. Suits arising in connection with elections shall be tried by courts.

Article 133 A person elected may, in accordance with law, be recalled by his constituency.

Article 134 In the various kinds of election, quotas of successful candidates shall be assigned to women; methods of implementation shall be prescribed by law.

Article 135 The number of delegates to the National Assembly and the manner of their election from people in interior areas, who have their own conditions of living and habits, shall be prescribed by law.

Article 136 The exercise of the rights of initiative and referendum shall be prescribed by law.

Chapter XIII. Fundamental national policies

Section 1. National Defense

Article 137 The national defense of the Republic of China shall have as its objective the safeguarding of national security and the preservation of world peace.

The organization of national defense shall be prescribed by law.

Article 138 The land, sea, and air forces of the whole country shall be above personal, regional, and party affiliations, shall be loyal to the state and shall protect the people.

Article 139 No political party and no individual shall make use of armed forces as an instrument in the struggle for political powers.

Article 140 No military man in active service may concurrently hold a civil office.
Section 2. Foreign Policy

Article 141 The foreign policy of the Republic of China shall, in a spirit of independence and initiative and on the basis of the principles of equality and reciprocity, cultivate good-neighborliness with other nations, and respect treaties and the interests of Chinese citizens residing abroad, promote international cooperation, advance international justice and ensure world peace.

Section 3. National Economy

Article 142 National economy shall be based on the Principle of People’s Livelihood and shall seek to effect equalization of land ownership and restriction of private capital in order to attain a well-balanced sufficiency in national wealth and people’s livelihood.

Article 143 All land within the territory of the Republic of China shall belong to the whole body of citizens. Private ownership of land, acquired by the people in accordance with law, shall be protected and restricted by law. Privately-owned land shall be liable to taxation according to its value, and the Government may buy such land according to its value.

Mineral deposits which are embedded in the land, and natural power which may, for economic purpose, be utilized for public benefit shall belong to the State, regardless of the fact that private individuals may have acquired ownership over such land.

If the value of a piece of land has increased, not through the exertion of labor or the employment of capital, the State shall levy thereon an increment tax, the proceeds of which shall be enjoyed by the people in common.

In the distribution and readjustment of land, the State shall in principle assist self-farming land-owners and persons who make use of the land by themselves, and shall also regulate their appropriate areas of operation.

Article 144 Public utilities and other enterprises of a monopolistic nature shall, in principle, be under public operation. In cases permitted by law, they may be operated by private citizens.

Article 145 With respect to private wealth and privately operated enterprises, the State shall restrict them by law if they are deemed detrimental to a balanced development of national wealth and people’s livelihood.

Cooperative enterprises shall receive encouragement and assistance from the State.

Private citizens’ productive enterprises and foreign trade shall receive encouragement, guidance and protection from the State.
Article 146  The State shall, by the use of scientific techniques, develop water conservancy, increase the productivity of land, improve agricultural conditions, develop agricultural resources and hasten the industrialization of agriculture.

Article 147  The Central Government, in order to attain a balanced economic development among the provinces, shall give appropriate aid to poor or unproductive provinces.

The provinces, in order to attain a balanced economic development among the hsien, shall give appropriate aid to poor or unproductive hsien.

Article 148  Within the territory of the Republic of China, all goods shall be permitted to move freely from place to place.

Article 149  Financial institutions shall, in accordance with law, be subject to State control.

Article 150  The State shall extensively establish financial institutions for the common people, with a view to relieving unemployment.

Article 151  With respect to Chinese citizens residing abroad, the State shall foster and protect development of their economic enterprises.

Section 4. Social Security

Article 152  The State shall provide suitable opportunities for work to people who are able to work.

Article 153  The State, in order to improve the livelihood of laborers and farmers and to improve their productive skills, shall enact laws and carry out policies for their protection.

Women and children engaged in labor shall, according to their age and physical condition, be accorded special protection.

Article 154  Capital and labor shall, in accordance with the principles of harmony and cooperation, promote productive enterprises. Conciliation and arbitration of disputes between capital and labor shall be prescribed by law.

Article 155  The State, in order to promote social welfare, shall establish a social insurance system. To the aged and the infirm who are unable to earn a living, and to victims of unusual calamities, the State shall give appropriate assistance and relief.

Article 156  The State, in order to consolidate the foundation of national existence and development, shall protect motherhood and carry out a policy for the promoting of the welfare of women and children.
Article 157  The State, in order to improve national health, shall establish extensive services for sanitation and health protection, and a system of public medical service.

Section 5. Education and Culture

Article 158  Education and culture shall aim at the development among the citizens of the national spirit, the spirit of self-government, national morality, good physique, scientific knowledge and ability to earn a living.

Article 159  All citizens shall have an equal opportunity to receive an education.

Article 160  All children of school age from 6 to 12 years shall receive free primary education. Those from poor families shall be supplied with books by the Government.

All citizens above school age who have not received primary education shall receive supplementary education free of charge and shall also be supplied with books by the Government.

Article 161  The national, provincial, and local government shall extensively establish scholarships to assist students of good scholastic standing and exemplary conduct who lack the means to continue their school education.

Article 162  All public and private educational and cultural institutions in the country shall, in accordance with law, be subject to State supervision.

Article 163  The State shall pay due attention to the balanced development of education in different regions, and shall promote social education in order to raise the cultural standards of the citizens in general. Grants from the National Treasury shall be made to frontier regions and economically poor areas to help them meet their education and cultural expanse. The Central Government may either itself undertake the more important educational and cultural enterprises in such regions or give them financial assistance.

Article 164  Expenditures of educational programs, scientific studies and cultural service shall not be, in respect of the Central Government, not less than 15 per cent of the total national budget; in respect of each province, not less than 25 percent of the total provincial budget; and in respect of each municipality or hsien, less than 35 percent of the total municipal or hsien budget. Educational and cultural foundations established in accordance with law shall, together with their property, be protected.

Article 165  The State shall safeguard the livelihood of those who work in the field of education, sciences and arts, and shall, in accordance with the
development of national economy, increase their remuneration from
time to time.

Article 166 The State shall encourage scientific discoveries and inventions,
and shall protect ancient sites and articles of historical, cultural or
artistic value.

Article 167 The State shall give encouragement or subsidies to the following
enterprises or individuals:

1. Educational enterprises in the country which have been oper-
   ated with good record by private individuals;
2. Educational enterprises which have been operated with good
   record by Chinese citizens residing abroad;
3. Persons who have made discoveries or inventions in the field of
   learning and technology; and
4. Persons who have rendered long and meritorious services in the
   field of education.

Section 6. Frontier Regions

Article 168 The State shall accord to various racial groups in the frontier
regions legal protection of their status and shall give special assis-
tance to their local self-government undertakings.

Article 169 The State shall, in a positive manner, undertake and foster the
develop of education, culture, communications, water conservancy,
public health and other economic and social enterprises of the vari-
ous racial group in the frontier regions. With respect to the
utilization of land, the State shall, after taking into account the cli-
matic conditions, the nature of the soil, and the life and habits of the
people, adopt measures to protect the land and to assist in its devel-
opment.

Chapter XIV. Enforcement and Amendment of the Constitution

Article 170 The term “law” as used in this Constitution, shall denote any leg-
islative bill that have been passed by the Legislative Yuan and
promulgated by the President of the Republic.

Article 171 Laws that are in conflict with the Constitution shall be null and void.
When doubt arises as to whether or not a law is in conflict with the
Constitution, interpretation thereon shall be made by the Judicial
Yuan.

Article 172 Ordinance that are in conflict with the Constitution or with laws
shall be null and void.
Article 173  The Constitution shall be interpreted by the Judicial Yuan.

Article 174  Amendments to the Constitution shall be made in accordance with one of the following procedures:

1. Upon the proposal of one-fifth of the total number of delegates to the National Assembly and by a resolution of three-fourths of the delegates present at a meeting having a quorum of two-thirds of the entire Assembly, the Constitution may be amended.

2. Upon the proposal of one-fourth of the members of the Legislative Yuan and by a resolution of three-fourths of the members present at a meeting having a quorum three-fourths of the members of the Yuan, an amendment may be drawn up and submitted to the National Assembly by way of referendum. Such a proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be publicly announced half a year before the National Assembly convenes.

Article 175  Whenever necessary, enforcement procedures in regard to any matter prescribed in this Constitution shall be separately provided by law.

The preparatory procedures for the enforcement of this Constitution shall be decided upon by the same National Assembly which shall have adopted this Constitution.
Appendix II
The Additional Articles of the Constitution of the Republic of China

Adopted by the second extraordinary session of the First National Assembly on April 22, 1991, and promulgated by the president on May 1, 1991

Adopted by the extraordinary session of the Second National Assembly on May 27, 1992, and promulgated by the president on May 28, 1992

Adopted by the fourth extraordinary session of the Second National Assembly on July 28, 1994, and promulgated by the president on August 1, 1994

Adopted by the second session of the Third National Assembly on July 18, 1997, and promulgated by the president on July 21, 1997

Revised by the fourth session of the Third National Assembly on September 3, 1999, and promulgated by the president on September 15, 1999

The Council of Grand Justices, in its Constitutional Interpretation No. 499 on March 24, 2000, announced that the Additional Articles of the Constitution approved on September 15, 1999, were void, effective immediately. The revised Additional Articles promulgated on July 21, 1997 would remain in effect.

Revised by the fifth session of the Third National Assembly on April 24, 2000, and promulgated by the president on April 25, 2000.

Revisions to Articles 1, 2, 4, 5, and 8 of, and addition of Article 12 to, the Additional Articles of the Constitution of the Republic of China, proposed and announced by the Legislative Yuan on August 26, 2004, adopted by the Fourth National Assembly on June 7, 2005, and promulgated by the president on June 10, 2005.

To meet the requisites of the nation prior to national unification, the following articles of the ROC Constitution are added or amended to the ROC Constitution in accordance with Article 27, Paragraph 1, Item 3; and Article 174, Item 1:

**Article 1.** The electors of the free area of the Republic of China shall cast ballots at a referendum within three months of the expiration of a six-month period following the public announcement of a proposal passed by the Legislative Yuan on the amendment of the Constitution or alteration of the national territory. The provisions of Article 4 and Article 174 of the Constitution shall not apply.
The provisions of Articles 25 through 34 and Article 135 of the Constitution shall cease to apply.

Article 2. The president and the vice president shall be directly elected by the entire populace of the free area of the Republic of China. This shall be effective from the election for the ninth-term president and vice president in 1996. The presidential and the vice presidential candidates shall register jointly and be listed as a pair on the ballot. The pair that receives the highest number of votes shall be elected. Citizens of the free area of the Republic of China residing abroad may return to the ROC to exercise their electoral rights and this shall be stipulated by law.

Presidential orders to appoint or remove from office the president of the Executive Yuan or personnel appointed with the confirmation of the Legislative Yuan in accordance with the Constitution, and to dissolve the Legislative Yuan, shall not require the countersignature of the president of the Executive Yuan. The provisions of Article 37 of the Constitution shall not apply.

The president may, by resolution of the Executive Yuan Council, issue emergency decrees and take all necessary measures to avert imminent danger affecting the security of the State or of the people or to cope with any serious financial or economic crisis, the restrictions in Article 43 of the Constitution notwithstanding. However, such decrees shall, within ten days of issuance, be presented to the Legislative Yuan for ratification. Should the Legislative Yuan withhold ratification, the said emergency decrees shall forthwith cease to be valid.

To determine major policies for national security, the president may establish a national security council and a subsidiary national security bureau. The organization of the said organs shall be stipulated by law.

The president may, within ten days following passage by the Legislative Yuan of a no-confidence vote against the president of the Executive Yuan, declare the dissolution of the Legislative Yuan after consulting with its president. However, the president shall not dissolve the Legislative Yuan while martial law or an emergency decree is in effect. Following the dissolution of the Legislative Yuan, an election for legislators shall be held within 60 days. The new Legislative Yuan shall convene of its own accord within ten days after the results of the said election have been confirmed, and the term of the said Legislative Yuan shall be reckoned from that date.

The terms of office for both the president and the vice president shall be four years. The president and the vice president may only be re-elected to serve one consecutive term; and the provisions of Article 47 of the Constitution shall not apply.
Should the office of the vice president become vacant, the president shall nominate a candidate(s) within three months, and the Legislative Yuan shall elect a new vice president, who shall serve the remainder of the original term until its expiration.

Should the offices of both the president and the vice president become vacant, the president of the Executive Yuan shall exercise the official powers of the president and the vice president. A new president and a new vice president shall be elected in accordance with Paragraph 1 of this article and shall serve out each respective original term until its expiration. The pertinent provisions of Article 49 of the Constitution shall not apply.

Recall of the president or the vice president shall be initiated upon the proposal of one-fourth of all members of the Legislative Yuan, and also passed by two-thirds of all the members. The final recall must be passed by more than one-half of the valid ballots in a vote in which more than one-half of the electorate in the free area of the Republic of China takes part.

Should a motion to impeach the president or the vice president initiated by the Legislative Yuan and presented to the grand justices of the Judicial Yuan for adjudication be upheld by the Constitutional Court, the impeached person shall forthwith be relieved of his duties.

Article 3.

The president of the Executive Yuan shall be appointed by the president. Should the president of the Executive Yuan resign or the office become vacant, the vice president of the Executive Yuan shall temporarily act as the president of the Executive Yuan pending a new appointment by the president. The provisions of Article 55 of the Constitution shall cease to apply.

The Executive Yuan shall be responsible to the Legislative Yuan in accordance with the following provisions; the provisions of Article 57 of the Constitution shall cease to apply:

1. The Executive Yuan has the duty to present to the Legislative Yuan a statement on its administrative policies and a report on its administration. While the Legislative Yuan is in session, its members shall have the right to interpellate the president of the Executive Yuan and the heads of ministries and other organizations under the Executive Yuan.

2. Should the Executive Yuan deem a statutory, budgetary, or treaty bill passed by the Legislative Yuan difficult to execute, the Executive Yuan may, with the approval of the president of the Republic and within ten days of the bill’s submission to the Executive Yuan, request the Legislative Yuan to reconsider the bill. The Legislative Yuan shall reach a resolution on the returned bill within 15 days after it is received. Should the
Legislative Yuan be in recess, it shall convene of its own accord within seven days and reach a resolution within 15 days after the session begins. Should the Legislative Yuan not reach a resolution within the said period of time, the original bill shall become invalid. Should more than one-half of the total number of Legislative Yuan members uphold the original bill, the president of the Executive Yuan shall immediately accept the said bill.

3. With the signatures of more than one-third of the total number of Legislative Yuan members, the Legislative Yuan may propose a no-confidence vote against the president of the Executive Yuan. Seventy-two hours after the no-confidence motion is made, an open-ballot vote shall be taken within 48 hours. Should more than one-half of the total number of Legislative Yuan members approve the motion, the president of the Executive Yuan shall tender his resignation within ten days, and at the same time may request that the president dissolve the Legislative Yuan. Should the no-confidence motion fail, the Legislative Yuan may not initiate another no-confidence motion against the same president of the Executive Yuan within one year.

The powers, procedures of establishment, and total number of personnel of national organizations shall be subject to standards set forth by law.

The structure, system, and number of personnel of each organization shall be determined according to the policies or operations of each organization and in accordance with the law as referred to in the preceding paragraph.

**Article 4.** Beginning with the Seventh Legislative Yuan, the Legislative Yuan shall have 113 members, who shall serve a term of four years, which is renewable after re-election. The election of members of the Legislative Yuan shall be completed within three months prior to the expiration of each term, in accordance with the following provisions, the restrictions in Article 64 and Article 65 of the Constitution notwithstanding:

1. Seventy-three members shall be elected from the Special Municipalities, counties, and cities in the free area. At least one member shall be elected from each county and city.
2. Three members each shall be elected from among the lowland and highland aborigines in the free area.
3. A total of thirty-four members shall be elected from the nationwide constituency and among citizens residing abroad.
Members for the seats set forth in Subparagraph 1 of the preceding paragraph shall be elected in proportion to the population of each Special Municipality, county, or city, which shall be divided into electoral constituencies equal in number to the number of members to be elected. Members for the seats set forth in Subparagraph 3 shall be elected from the lists of political parties in proportion to the number of votes won by each party that obtains at least 5 percent of the total vote, and the number of elected female members on each party’s list shall not be less than one-half of the total number.

When the Legislative Yuan convenes each year, it may hear a report on the state of the nation by the president.

Following the dissolution of the Legislative Yuan by the president and prior to the inauguration of its new members, the Legislative Yuan shall be regarded as in recess.

The territory of the Republic of China, defined by its existing national boundaries, shall not be altered unless initiated upon the proposal of one-fourth of the total members of the Legislative Yuan, passed by at least three-fourths of the members present at a meeting attended by at least three-fourths of the total members of the Legislative Yuan, and sanctioned by electors in the free area of the Republic of China at a referendum held upon expiration of a six-month period of public announcement of the proposal, wherein the number of valid votes in favor exceeds one-half of the total number of electors.

Should the president issue an emergency decree after dissolving the Legislative Yuan, the Legislative Yuan shall convene of its own accord within three days to vote on the ratification of the decree within seven days after the session begins. However, should the emergency decree be issued after the election of new members of the Legislative Yuan, the new members shall vote on the ratification of the decree after their inauguration. Should the Legislative Yuan withhold ratification, the emergency decree shall forthwith be void.

Impeachment of the president or the vice president by the Legislative Yuan shall be initiated upon the proposal of more than one-half of the total members of the Legislative Yuan and passed by more than two-thirds of the total members of the Legislative Yuan, whereupon it shall be presented to the grand justices of the Judicial Yuan for adjudication. The provisions of Article 90 and Article 100 of the Constitution and Article 7, Paragraph 1 of the Additional Articles of the Constitution shall not apply.

No member of the Legislative Yuan may be arrested or detained without the permission of the Legislative Yuan, when that body is in session, except in case of flagrante delicto. The provisions of Article 74 of the Constitution shall cease to apply.
Article 5. The Judicial Yuan shall have 15 grand justices. The 15 grand justices, including a president and a vice president of the Judicial Yuan to be selected from amongst them, shall be nominated and, with the consent of the Legislative Yuan, appointed by the president of the Republic. This shall take effect from the year 2003, and the provisions of Article 79 of the Constitution shall not apply. The provisions of Article 81 of the Constitution and pertinent regulations on the lifetime holding of office and payment of salary do not apply to grand justices who did not transfer from the post of a judge.

Each grand justice of the Judicial Yuan shall serve a term of eight years, independent of the order of appointment to office, and shall not serve a consecutive term. The grand justices serving as president and vice president of the Judicial Yuan shall not enjoy the guarantee of an eight-year term.

Among the grand justices nominated by the president in the year 2003, eight members, including the president and the vice president of the Judicial Yuan, shall serve for four years. The remaining grand justices shall serve for eight years. The provisions of the preceding paragraph regarding term of office shall not apply.

The grand justices of the Judicial Yuan shall, in addition to discharging their duties in accordance with Article 78 of the Constitution, form a Constitutional Court to adjudicate matters relating to the impeachment of the president or the vice president, and the dissolution of unconstitutional political parties.

A political party shall be considered unconstitutional if its goals or activities endanger the existence of the Republic of China or the nation’s free and democratic constitutional order.

The proposed budget submitted annually by the Judicial Yuan may not be eliminated or reduced by the Executive Yuan; however, the Executive Yuan may indicate its opinions on the budget and include it in the central government’s proposed budgetary bill for submission to the Legislative Yuan for deliberation.

Article 6. The Examination Yuan shall be the highest examination body of the State, and shall be responsible for the following matters; and the provisions of Article 83 of the Constitution shall not apply:

1. Holding of examinations;
2. Matters relating to the qualification screening, security of tenure, pecuniary aid in case of death, and retirement of civil servants; and
3. Legal matters relating to the employment, discharge, performance evaluation, scale of salaries, promotion, transfer, commendation and award of civil servants.
The Examination Yuan shall have a president, a vice president, and several members, all of whom shall be nominated and, with the consent of the Legislative Yuan, appointed by the president of the Republic; and the provisions of Article 84 of the Constitution shall not apply. The provisions of Article 85 of the Constitution concerning the holding of examinations in different areas, with prescribed numbers of persons to be selected according to various provinces and areas, shall cease to apply.

Article 7. The Control Yuan shall be the highest control body of the State and shall exercise the powers of impeachment, censure and audit; and the pertinent provisions of Article 90 and Article 94 of the Constitution concerning the exercise of the power of consent shall not apply.

The Control Yuan shall have 29 members, including a president and a vice president, all of whom shall serve a term of six years. All members shall be nominated and, with the consent of the Legislative Yuan, appointed by the president of the Republic. The provisions of Article 91 through Article 93 of the Constitution shall cease to apply.

Impeachment proceedings by the Control Yuan against a public functionary in the central government, or local governments, or against personnel of the Judicial Yuan or the Examination Yuan, shall be initiated by two or more members of the Control Yuan, and be investigated and voted upon by a committee of not less than nine of its members, the restrictions in Article 98 of the Constitution notwithstanding.

In the case of impeachment by the Control Yuan of Control Yuan personnel for dereliction of duty or violation of the law, the provisions of Article 95 and Article 97, Paragraph 2 of the Constitution, as well as the preceding paragraph, shall apply.

Members of the Control Yuan shall be beyond party affiliation and independently exercise their powers and discharge their responsibilities in accordance with the law.

The provisions of Article 101 and Article 102 of the Constitution shall cease to apply.

Article 8. The remuneration or pay of the members of the Legislative Yuan shall be prescribed by law. Except for general annual adjustments, individual provisions on increase of remuneration or pay shall take effect starting with the subsequent Legislative Yuan.

Article 9. The system of self-government in the provinces and counties shall include the following provisions, which shall be established by the
enactment of appropriate laws, the restrictions in Article 108, Paragraph 1, Item 1; Article 109; Article 112 through Article 115; and Article 122 of the Constitution notwithstanding:

1. A province shall have a provincial government of nine members, one of whom shall be the provincial governor. All members shall be nominated by the president of the Executive Yuan and appointed by the president of the Republic.

2. A province shall have a provincial advisory council made up of a number of members, who shall be nominated by the president of the Executive Yuan and appointed by the president of the Republic.

3. A county shall have a county council, members of which shall be elected by the people of the said county.

4. The legislative powers vested in a county shall be exercised by the county council of the said county.

5. A county shall have a county government headed by a county magistrate who shall be elected by the people of the said county.

6. The relationship between the central government and the provincial and county governments.

7. A province shall execute the orders of the Executive Yuan and supervise matters governed by the counties.

The modifications of the functions, operations, and organization of the Taiwan Provincial Government may be specified by law.

Article 10. The State shall encourage the development of and investment in science and technology, facilitate industrial upgrading, promote modernization of agriculture and fishery, emphasize exploitation and utilization of water resources, and strengthen international economic cooperation.

Environmental and ecological protection shall be given equal consideration with economic and technological development.

The State shall assist and protect the survival and development of private small and medium-sized enterprises.

The State shall manage government-run financial organizations, in accordance with the principles of business administration. The management, personnel, proposed budgets, final budgets, and audits of the said organizations may be specified by law.

The State shall promote universal health insurance and promote the research and development of both modern and traditional medicines.

The State shall protect the dignity of women, safeguard their personal safety, eliminate sexual discrimination, and further substantive gender equality.
The State shall guarantee insurance, medical care, obstacle-free environments, education and training, vocational guidance, and support and assistance in everyday life for physically and mentally handicapped persons, and shall also assist them to attain independence and to develop.

The State shall emphasize social relief and assistance, welfare services, employment for citizens, social insurance, medical and health care, and other social welfare services. Priority shall be given to funding social relief and assistance, and employment for citizens.

The State shall respect military servicemen for their contributions to society, and guarantee studies, employment, medical care, and livelihood for retired servicemen.

Priority shall be given to funding education, science, and culture, and in particular funding for compulsory education, the restrictions in Article 164 of the Constitution notwithstanding.

The State affirms cultural pluralism and shall actively preserve and foster the development of aboriginal languages and cultures.

The State shall, in accordance with the will of the ethnic groups, safeguard the status and political participation of the aborigines. The State shall also guarantee and provide assistance and encouragement for aboriginal education, culture, transportation, water conservation, health and medical care, economic activity, land, and social welfare, measures for which shall be established by law. The same protection and assistance shall be given to the people of the Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu areas.

The State shall accord to nationals of the Republic of China residing overseas protection of their rights of political participation.

Article 11. Rights and obligations between the people of the Chinese mainland area and those of the free area, and the disposition of other related affairs may be specified by law.

Article 12. Amendment of the Constitution shall be initiated upon the proposal of one-fourth of the total members of the Legislative Yuan, passed by at least three-fourths of the members present at a meeting attended by at least three-fourths of the total members of the Legislative Yuan, and sanctioned by electors in the free area of the Republic of China at a referendum held upon expiration of a six-month period of public announcement of the proposal, wherein the number of valid votes in favor exceeds one-half of the total number of electors. The provisions of Article 174 of the Constitution shall not apply.

Notes

1 Analyzing Taiwan’s foreign policy

3 Ibid., p. 3.
6 Ibid., p. 28.
9 See Mainland Affairs Council, Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (Taipei: Mainland Affairs Council, July 1994), p. 12.
16 Ibid., p. 172.
17 Hill (2003), p. 11.
18 See Michael D. Swaine and James C. Mulvenon, Taiwan’s Foreign and Defense Policies: Features and Determinants (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2001).
19 See ibid., p. x.

2 **Historical overview of Taiwan’s foreign policy**

1 John F. Copper employs this phrase to describe Taiwan’s position in international affairs. See, John F. Copper, *Taiwan: Nation-State or Province*, (4th edn) (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003), p. 185.

2 Truman administration officials had discussed a number of schemes that aimed at preventing Taiwan’s fall to the PRC including the idea of UN Trusteeship for Taiwan, Taiwan independence and even returning the island to Japan. But all these plans were considered impractical and abandoned.


8 Ibid., p. 615.

9 The treaty was initialled on November 23, 1954, signed on December 2, 1954 and ratified by the US Senate on February 8, 1955.

10 Steven M. Goldstein, *Taiwan Faces the Twenty-First Century: Continuing the ‘Miracle’* (Washington, DC: Foreign Policy Association, 1997), pp. 41–42.


14 See ibid., pp. 288–289.


20 See Bush (2004), p. 120.
21 During the debate on the China representation issue in October 1971, the ROC delegation indicated that it was in “complete agreement” with Albania about the “indivisibility of the Chinese nation.” Moreover, it appears that the ROC delegation had received no instructions from Taipei as to how it should respond to the US proposal for dual representation. See John W. Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance: Nationalist China and American Cold War Strategy in Asia*, pp. 256–257.
29 During an interview with the author, Lee Teng-hui explained that he coined the term, “pragmatic diplomacy.” Author’s interview with Lee Teng-hui, former president of the ROC, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC, November 25, 2005.
30 “Former President Lee Teng-hui says Hong Kong serves as mirror for Taiwan,” Central News Agency, August 17, 2003 in *BBC Monitoring International Reports*, August 17, 2003, in *LexisNexis*.
32 Author’s interview with Dr. Frederick Chien, Foreign Minister of the Republic of China, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China, July 14, 1992.
34 See “MOFA suggests Vanuatu to recognize Beijing and Taipei.”
36 In addition to bribing small countries, Taiwan purportedly has used secret funds for payments to foreign political parties, think-tanks and lobbying firms. See Jason Dean, “Taiwan: keep a secret?” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, April 11, 2002, on the world wide web at http://www.feer.com/.
38 Joe McDonald, “China–Taiwan rivalry pays off for poor countries,” Associated Press, November 18, 2004 in *LexisNexis*.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
42 See Sofia Wu, “MOFA to continue talks with foreign countries over name change,” Central News Agency, December 6, 2004 in *LexisNexis*.
43 During President Chen’s August, 2000, stopover in Los Angeles, “the Clinton administration put heavy pressure on the DPP-government to decline any requests by Congressmen to meet with President Chen.” See “Muzzled in LA,” *Taiwan Communiqué* (September 2000), 93, p. 4.
44 Kathrin Hille, “US Trip Bolsters President’s Poll Hopes,” *Financial Times*, November 8, 2003, p. 7, in *LexisNexis*. For more information, see Lin Fang-yen, “President

Ibid.


See ibid.


Author's interview with Lee Teng-hui, former president of the ROC, November 25, 2005, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC.


Harlan Jencks, “Taiwan in the international arms market,” Robert G. Sutter and William R. Johnson (eds), Taiwan in World Affairs, p. 74.

3 A shrimp between whales: the international system and Taiwan’s foreign policy

1 Some international relations theorists contend that it is only the structure of the international system that actually matters. For more information, see Kenneth Waltz, Theory of International Relations (New York: McGraw Hill, 1979). Others, however, adopt a broader view.


9 In his 2004 inaugural speech, President Chen Shui-bian noted that the Taiwanese public has not reached a consensus on whether the island should move toward permanent separation from China or seek eventual unification.


12 The Soviet Union approved the Cairo Declaration four days after it was issued at the Teheran Conference. On July 26, 1945, the leaders of the US ROC and UK declared
in the Potsdam Proclamation that “the terms of the Cairo Declaration shall be carried out.” The Soviet Union and France also indicated that they would adhere to the Potsdam Proclamation.


17 “The Chargé in China (Strong) to the Secretary of State, May 17, 1950” in Ibid., p. 340.

18 See “The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in China, May 19, 1950” in Ibid., p. 343.


20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., p. 28.

22 Ibid.


24 Recently declassified Soviet documents support this view. See John W. Garver, The Sino–American Alliance: Nationalist China and American Cold War Strategy in Asia, p. 27.


28 For more information, see Dennis Van Vranken Hickey, “United States policy and the international status of Taiwan,” Journal of East Asian Affairs, 7, 2 (Summer/Fall 1993), pp. 563–586.

29 Ibid.


36 Ibid., p. 84.
37 Ultimately, Chiang proclaimed that he would use primarily political means to retake the Chinese mainland.
42 Ibid., pp. 27–28.
47 See “US offered China concessions on Taiwan, Japan to facilitate Nixon trip,” Agence France Presse, May 28, 2002 in *LexisNexis*.
49 Ibid.
50 See Ching Cheong, “US Taiwan policy set 31 years ago,” *Straits Times*, December 20, 2003 in *LexisNexis*.
51 For more information, see Dennis Van Vranken Hickey, *Taiwan’s Security in the Changing International System* (Denver, CO: Lynne Rienner Press, 1997), p. 143.
54 For more information, see Dennis Van Vranken Hickey, “America’s military relations with the People’s Republic of China: the need for reassessment,” *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies*, 7, 3 (Fall 1988), pp. 29–41.
58 See “Senator Bentsen urges Bush to sell F-16s to ROC,” Central News Agency (Taipei), August 11, 1992 in *LexisNexis*.
66 According to the Pentagon, US military personnel are deployed to the island for the purpose of “observing and assessing” Taiwan’s armed forces so arms sales may be tailored to meet Taipei’s needs. See “US–Taiwan exercise,” *Washington Times*, January 10, 2002, in *Taiwan Security Research* on the world wide web at http://www.taiwansecurity.org/.
69 See David E. Sanger, “US would defend Taiwan, Bush says.”
70 Beijing insists that governments abide by the so-called “one China policy.” This means that they must choose to recognize either Beijing or Taipei. They cannot recognize both. For decades, this position also was followed by the ROC. In contrast to the one-China policy, the “one China principle” is generally interpreted to mean that there is only one China and mainland China, Tibet, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Xinjiang are all parts of China. As the terms “one China principle” and “one China policy” often are used interchangeably, the precise meanings of the terms have become blurred and are the subject of considerable discussion and debate. As Bob Yang, former president of the World United Formosans for Independence, observed, the meaning of America’s “one China policy” is “vague” and “imprecise.” See Bob In-yu Yang, “Coping with the One China policy—The Taiwanese–American response,” Paper prepared for Delivery at An International Symposium on Taiwan and the World: Taiwan’s External Relations in a Time of Transition, Missouri State University, Springfield, Missouri, April 1–2, 2006.
72 As in past years, Taipei successfully manipulates Washington. Perhaps the best example was American approval for President Lee Teng-hui’s controversial visit to Cornell University in 1995 which may be traced to “one of the most sophisticated operations to influence foreign policy in recent memory.” See Richard C. Bush, *At Cross Purposes: US–Taiwan Relations Since 1942* (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2004), p. 227.
73 The policy stated that the US would express no support for Taiwan independence, no support for a “two China policy” or a “one China, one Taiwan policy” and no support for Taiwan’s membership in any organization for which statehood is a requirement. See Jay Chen, “Bush administration likely to drop ‘Three No’ formulation on Taiwan,” Central News Agency, March 19, 2001, on the world wide web at http://www.cna.com.tw/eng/. Also see Jason Blatt, “US to scrap Taiwan Three No’s Policy,” *South China Morning Post*, January 14, 2002, in *LexisNexis*.
74 As Donald Snow observed, “during the period between the end of the Cold War and September 11, the forces of economic globalization—the spread of market

75 The concept of paradigms is borrowed from Thomas Kuhn, who employed them to describe advances in science. A paradigm may be defined as a basic assumption in a field of science. The acceptance of these assumptions is shared by practitioners in a given field and usually is not subject to widespread discussions or debate. Some scholars have suggested that the concept may be applied to the orientation of a nation and its population. A country’s foreign policy paradigm is shaped by crucial events. For example, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 or the onset of the Cold War led to a paradigm shift in American foreign policy.


81 “Powell stresses need to work with Beijing on tough issues,” *China Post*, February 7, 2002, in *LexisNexis*.

82 Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region covers over 1.6 million square kilometers, one-sixth of China’s total territory, making it China’s largest province. With a population of over 19 million, it is home to 47 ethnic groups including the Uygur, the major ethnic group in Xinjiang.


84 James Dao, “Closer ties with China may help US on Iraq.”


86 “Armitage discusses Taiwan with Chinese military official,” Agence France Presse, December 11, 2002, in *LexisNexis*.

87 In March 2004, President Chen Shui-bian explained that “in the past presidential elections, China tried to intervene and the results were just the opposite of what they wanted.” The president also boasted that “it is clear to everybody that China does not want me to get re-elected.” See “Taiwan president accuses China of interfering in election,” Agence France Presse, March 9, 2004 in *Taiwan Security Research* on the world wide web at http://www.taiwansecurity.org/.


91 Ibid.

92 For more information on the US security commitment to Taiwan, see Dennis Van Vranken Hickey, *United States-Taiwan Security Ties: From Cold War to Beyond Containment* (Praeger Publishers: Westport, CN, 1994).
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94 Taipei had hoped to drop the reference to “China” from its state-owned corporations and representative offices. For example, China Petroleum Corporation would become Taiwan Petroleum Corporation.


96 Jacky Hsu, “US tells Taiwan’s Chen to make his visit brief,” South China Morning Post, August 19, 2004, p. 4, in LexisNexis.

97 A series of unfortunate incidents and diplomatic gaffes precipitated Therese Shaheen’s “forced departure” as chairwoman of the AIT. For more information, see Frank Ching, “Fallen angel or devil in disguise?” South China Morning Post, April 13, 2004, p. 12, in LexisNexis.


100 The Tiananmen incident of June 4, 1989, also contributed enormously to strains in Sino–American relations.


104 See “Capitol Hill Hearing Testimony, Statement of Chairman James A Leach, Chairman, Committee on House International Relations Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, April 6, 2005,” in Federal Document Clearing House Congressional Testimony, April 6, 2005 in LexisNexis.


106 Author’s interview with Dr. Ding Juisong, Director, Division for North American Studies, China Institute of Contemporary International Relations, Beijing, PRC, October 9, 1998.

107 In an effort to lure Taiwan’s few remaining allies into its camp, China engages in “dollar diplomacy.” For example, in March, 2004, the tiny Caribbean nation of Dominica severed relations with Taiwan after reportedly accepting an offer of US $117 million in “assistance” from Beijing.

108 The Taiwan Question and Reunification of China, p. 1.


111 For an excellent analysis of Taiwanese attitudes toward independence or unification, see Emerson Niou, “Understanding Taiwan independence and its policy implications, Asian Survey XLIV, 4 (July/August 2004), pp. 555–567.

112 Edward Friedman, “Taiwan’s independence plot,” Paper delivered at the international conference, Taiwan and the World: Taiwan’s External Relations in a Time of Transition, Missouri State University, Springfield, Missouri, April 1, 2006, p. 8.

4 Governmental institutions and foreign policy decision-making in Taiwan


2 According to Kenneth Waltz, the three “images” of international politics are the individual, the state and the international system. Each level constitutes a separate level of causation in international relations. See Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).


4 President Chen’s problems with the KMT-dominated Legislative Yuan were a critical factor in Lee Teng-hui’s growing support and sympathy for the beleaguered president. Ultimately, Lee was expelled from the KMT and helped establish a new political party—the Taiwan Solidarity Union.

5 During a conference sponsored by Taiwan’s Research, Development and Evaluation Commission of the Executive Yuan, Tom Ginsburg, a law and political science professor at the University of Illinois Law School, suggested that “your current semi-presidential system is dysfunctional.” See Ko Shu-ling, “Experts Diverge on Political Reform, *Taipei Times*, October 30, 2005, p. 3.

6 As described in previous chapters, from a technical standpoint, Taiwan’s relations with the PRC cannot fall under the broad rubric of foreign policy. At the same time, however, Taiwanese insist that relations cannot be described as domestic policy. Relations between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait are often described simply as “something else.”


9 In addition to bribing small countries, Taiwan purportedly has used secret funds for payments to foreign political parties, think-tanks and lobbying firms. See Jason Dean, “Taiwan: keep a secret?” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, April 11, 2002, on the world wide web at http://www.feer.com/.


12 For example, during the Chen administration, ROC money was used to complete construction of a new Presidential Palace for Nicaragua and the ROC began building a new Foreign Affairs Ministry building for its impoverished diplomatic ally in 2001. See Dan Biers, “Can’t buy me love,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 28, 2001 on the world wide web at http://www.feer.com/. Perhaps most controversial, however, is a case involving a visit by Senegal’s soccer team to Taiwan in 2002. The “football diplomacy” reportedly degenerated into “call girl diplomacy.” See Lawrence Chang, “Football diplomacy becomes call-girl diplomacy,” *Straits Times* (Singapore), June 28, 2002, in LexisNexis.

13 “Lawmakers extol president’s record on foreign affairs,” p. 2.


16 Ibid., p. 17.

17 To compare the original proposal to the provisions outlined in this chapter, see “ Taiwanese cabinet agrees on proposal for government reorganization,” Central News Agency, April 24, 2002 in BBC Monitoring International Reports, April 25, 2002 in LexisNexis.

18 President Chen claims that the reorganization will “create a small, flexible government with strengthened policy integration and well-defined responsibilities and functions.” See Myra Lu, “Proposal details streamlined government,” Taipei Journal, April 12, 2002, p. 1.

19 For more information about the GIO and its role in Taiwan’s foreign policy, see Gary D. Rawnsley, Taiwan’s Informal Diplomacy and Propaganda (New York: Palgrave, 2000).


26 See Denny Roy, Taiwan: A Political History (Cornell University Press: Ithaca, NY, 2003), p. 188.


28 Author’s interview with Dr. Parris Chang, Deputy Secretary General of the ROC National Security Council, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC, December 22, 2004.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid.


35 “Taiwan foreign minister makes low profile stopover in New York,” Asia Pulse, June 29, 2005 in LexisNexis.


38 Swaine and Mulvenon (2001), p. 84.

39 Chih-heng Yang, “The evolution and adaptation of Taiwan’s military strategy,” in Martin Edmonds and Michael M. Tsai (eds), Defending Taiwan: The Future Vision of
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40 Author’s interview with Dr. Lin Chong-pin, Deputy Minister, Ministry of National Defense, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC, November 28, 2003.
42 The laws were passed in 2000, but didn’t go into effect until 2002. See Sofia Wu, “President presides over inauguration of restructured MND,” Central News Agency, March 1, 2002, in LexisNexis.
44 Ibid., p. 75.
50 Ibid.
52 Ibid., p. 527.
53 See Liao Ta-chi, “The transformation of the role of Taiwan’s legislative Yuan during the process of democratization,” Issues and Studies 41, 3 (September 2005), pp. 31–79.
58 Ibid.
59 Author’s interview with Dr. Parris Chang, Deputy Secretary General of the ROC National Security Council, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC, November 15, 2005.
60 Ibid.
63 For more information, see Mainland Affairs Council: An Introduction (Taipei: Mainland Affairs Council, 2003), pp. 1–35.
64 See “Head of Taiwan’s cross-strait body concludes US visit,” Central News Agency, December 8, 2005 in BBC Monitoring International Reports, December 8, 2005 in LexisNexis.
65 Author’s interview with Dr. Jaushieh (Joseph) Wu, Chairman, Mainland Affairs Council, ROC, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC, June 2, 2004.
66 Ibid.
67 Ibid.
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71 See “Lawmakers extol president’s record on foreign affairs,” p. 2.
73 Ibid.
78 Jie (July/August 2000), p. 20.
79 Ibid., p. 24.
80 Author’s interview with Hsieh Huai-Hui, Deputy Director, Department of International Affairs, Democratic Progressive Party, November 15, 2005.
81 For more information, see “Taiwan mission arrives in Bangkok for party diplomacy,” Central News Agency, December 10, 2002, in LexisNexis.
83 Hung Mao-hsiung, an International Relations Graduate Research Fellow at Taiwan’s prestigious National Chengchi University, made this observation. For more information, see ibid.
84 Author’s interview with Lee Teng-hui, former president of the ROC, November 25, 2005, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC.
89 Some speculate that a number of Taiwan’s NGOs might actually be “front organizations” for the ROC government. See Daniel C. Lynch, “Adapting to the network society: Taiwan’s transformation from a model country to a novel agent in international affairs,” p. 17. Paper presented at the Conference on China’s Rise and Taiwan’s Dilemmas, July 26–28, 2003, Osaka, Japan.
91 Author’s interview with Lai I-Chung, Director, Foreign Policy Studies, Taiwan Thinktank, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC, November 19, 2005.
92 Author’s interview with Lee Teng-hui, former president of the ROC, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC, November 25, 2005.
93 Author’s interview with Lai I-Chung, Director, Foreign Policy Studies, Taiwan Thinktank, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC, November 19, 2005.
94 Ibid.
95 See “Scholars propose inter-party diplomacy to break nation’s isolation.”
96 Author’s interview with Hsieh Huai-Hui, Deputy Director, Department of International Affairs, Democratic Progressive Party, November 15, 2005.
5 Societal influences of Taiwan’s foreign policy

2 Author’s interview with Hsieh Huai-Hui, Deputy Director, DPP Department of International Affairs, Taipei, Taiwan, November 15, 2005.
3 Ibid.
4 Author’s interview with Ms. Maysing Yang, Chairperson, Research and Planning Committee, ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China, November 11, 2005.
5 Ibid.
8 See Bruce M. Russett, Controlling the Sword (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), Chapter 4.
10 For a general discussion of referendums and foreign policy, see John T. Rourke, Richard P. Hiskes and Cyrus Ernesto Zirakzadeh, Direct Democracy and International Politics (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992) and Maija Setala, Referendums and Democratic Government (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).
12 Author’s interview with Chen Chien-jen, ROC Foreign Minister, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC, March 31, 2000.
13 Author’s interview with Shen Ssu-tsun, Director-General, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC, November 7, 2002.
15 Ibid.
17 Author’s interview with Ms. Maysing Yang, Chairperson, Research and Planning Committee, ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China, November 11, 2005.


23 Ibid., p. 7.

24 Author's interview with Lai I-Chung, Director, Foreign Policy Studies, Taiwan Thinktank, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC, November 19, 2005.

25 When asked for an overall assessment of the influence of Taiwanese think tanks in the policy making process, Lai replied that “to be frank with you, I don’t think our think tank is that influential.” Ibid.


27 Ibid.


31 Author's interview with Lai I-Chung, Director, Foreign Policy Studies, Taiwan Thinktank, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC, November 19, 2005.

32 Unlike Cassidy and Associates and roughly two dozen other pro-Taiwan lobbying firms that operate in the US, FAPA and WUFI are active in both Washington and Taipei.


34 “Independence stalwart departs from traditional line,” China Post, March 27, 2005 in LexisNexis.

35 For more information, see Kathrin Hille, “Taiwanese in China turn political at home presidential election,” Financial Times (Japan Edition), January 30, 2004, p. 2 in LexisNexis.


37 Author's interview with Ms. Maysing Yang, Chairperson, Research and Planning Committee, ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China, November 11, 2005.


6 Crusaders and pragmatists: Taiwan's presidents and foreign policy


2 See ibid., p. 57.

3 At one point in the negotiations, Stalin did ask Joachim von Ribbentrop, Germany’s foreign minister, “don’t you think we have to pay a little more attention to public opinion in our two countries? For many years now, we have been pouring buckets of shit over each other’s heads and our propaganda boys could not do enough in that direction. Now all of a sudden, are we to make our peoples believe all is forgotten and forgiven? Things don’t work so fast.” However, the Soviet leader quickly overcame any reservations and concluded the pact with his Nazi colleague the following day. See Simon Sebag Montefiore, Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), p. 331.


5 Ibid., p. 84.

6 Ibid., p. 84.


9 Ibid., p. iii.

10 Ibid.


16 Ibid., p. 97.


19 Ibid., p. 97.
22 As President Yen Chia-kan was a figure head who served the remaining years of President Chiang Kai-shek's presidency before Chiang Ching-kuo took office and could not be considered a predominate leader, his presidency will not be examined.
24 Ibid., p. 25.
25 During the 20th century, it was a common practice for communist party members to infiltrate labor unions, political parties and other organizations in an effort to seize control of them. For more information, see Peter Schweizer, *Reagan’s War: The Epic Story of His Forty-Year Struggle and Final Triumph Over Communism*, (New York: Anchor Books, 2003).
27 In keeping with his stubborn character, Chiang initially refused to negotiate with his captors informing them that “since I am in the hands of a rebel you had better shoot me dead. There is nothing else to say.” See ibid., p. 234.
28 Ibid., p. 161.
30 When the Japanese occupied Nanjing in World War II, Chiang had proclaimed that ‘wherever I go, there goes the government.” The same principle applied to his movements during the waning days of the Chinese civil war. For more information, see William Morwood (1980), p. 9.
33 Ibid., p. 489.
39 During the early years in Taiwan, the island’s population suffered as the KMT regime engaged in the “white terror.” According to one estimate, “10,000 people were interrogated in 1949 and over 1,000 executed.” See Richard Bush, *At Cross Purposes: US–Taiwan Relations Since 1942* (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2004), p. 50.
40 Ibid., p. 108.
41 Ibid., p. 87.
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People’s Anti-Communist League, Addresses and Messages of President CKS, ROC to Asian People’s Anti-Communist League, World Anti-Communist League and Asian Parliamentarians’ Union, p. 4.

48 Ibid., p. 294.
49 Crozier with Chou (1976), p. 399.
53 Ibid., p. 43.
54 Ibid.
55 Ibid., p. 45.
56 Ibid., p. 62.
58 Author’s interview with Dr. Yuzin Chiautong Ng, Chairman, World United Formosans for Independence, November 16, 2005, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC.
61 Ibid., p. 273.
62 Ibid.
63 For more information, see Liu, (October, 1992), p. 273.
64 Copper (2003), p. 121.
65 Liu (October, 1992), p. 256.
66 Ibid., p. 257.
73 Ibid., p. 364.
74 Ibid., p. 417.
75 Some of these operations proved counterproductive. For more information, see Richard C. Bush (2004), pp. 206–209.
77 Ibid., p. 341.
78 Ibid., p. 412.
79 Ibid., p. 363.
82 See “The grief of being born a Taiwanese.”
In each instance, Lee quit the party after less than a year as a member. See Maubo Chang, “Lee Teng-hui Admits he was once member of Chinese Communist Party,” Central News Agency, November 7, 2002 in LexisNexis.

See Oliver Lin, “Book claims Lee was communist,” Taipei Times, January 12, 2000, p. 3 on the world wide web at http://taipeitimes.com/.

According to the CCP agent who recruited Lee, however, he was “enthralled with communism.” See Maubo Chang, (November 7, 2002).


Ibid.


Ibid., p. 80.

Author’s interview with Lee Teng-hui, November 25, 2005.


Author’s interview with Lee Teng-hui, November 25, 2005.


Author’s interview with Lee Teng-hui, former president of the ROC, November 25, 2005, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC.


For more information, see Michael Bristow, “Slush scandal blows Taiwan spies’ Cover,” BBC News, March 26, 2002 on the world wide web at http://news.bbc.co.uk/ and Ibid.


See “Commentaries view Li, Taiwan independence,” Xinhua, July 24, 1995 in Foreign Broadcasting Information System, China (hereafter FBIS, China) November 7, 1995 on the world wide web at http://wnc.fedworld.gov/cgi-bin/retrieve/.

See ibid.


Some claimed that the expression, “one-China,” signified the ROC while others suggested that it “refers to China in the historical, geographical, social and cultural


114 Author’s interview with Dr. Xu Shiquan, President of the Institute of Taiwan Studies at China’s Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, China, October 8, 1998.

115 “Former President Lee Teng-hui says Hong Kong serves as mirror for Taiwan,” Central News Agency, August 17, 2003 in BBC Monitoring International Reports, August 17, 2003, in LexisNexis.

116 Author’s interview with Lee Teng-hui, former president of the ROC, November 25, 2005, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC.

117 Author’s interview with Dr. Xu Shiquan.

118 Ibid.

119 Wei-chin Lee, “Sayonara to the Lee Teng-hui era”, p. 16.

120 Author’s interview with Lee Teng-hui, former president of the ROC, November 25, 2005, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC.


122 See Lin and Tedards (Summer, 2002), p. 89.

123 Author’s interview with Lee Teng-hui, former president of the ROC, November 25, 2005, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC.

124 Ibid.


126 After the ROC occupied Taiwan in 1945, the government made Mandarin the official language and discouraged the use of all other dialects. For more information, see Copper (2003), pp. 77–78.


128 Ibid., p. 36.

129 Ibid., p. 37.

130 Ibid., p. 42.

131 Ibid., p. 49.

132 Wu’s father had studied medicine in Nanjing where he had witnessed the KMT’s corruption and brutality “and returned to Taiwan convinced that the Chinese are a dreadful people.” When Dr. Wu’s best friend was murdered during the February 28 incident, his low opinion of the KMT was reaffirmed. See ibid., p. 54.

133 Ibid., p. 56.

134 Ibid., pp. 80–81.

135 Ibid., p. 108.

136 Ibid., p. 110.

137 Ibid.

138 Author’s confidential interview with a KMT supporter with a military background, September 24, 2005.

139 Ibid., p. 225.

140 He was largely successful in this effort because the KMT and DPP appeared to have reached a consensus on the explosive issue in the late 1990s. Both parties claimed that there was no need for Taiwan to declare independence because the ROC already
existed as an independent, sovereign state. As Luo Wen-jia, then a top adviser to
Chen, observed, both parties had “moved to the center on the independence issue.”
141 Shortly after assuming office, President Chen boasted that he would “stabilize” cross-
straits relations. See Julian Baum and Maureen Pao, “Taking the lead,” Far Eastern
142 As Michael Chong, a noted political analyst, observed, Chen “will always be seen as
the one who split Taiwan by playing up ethnic divisions during the presidential
campaign… the problem will not go away even if President Chen wants to make
peace now.” See “Chen gets elbow room to push his agenda,” Straits Times
143 See “Chen’s foreign policy successes,” Taipei Times, August 23, 2003, in World
gov/.
144 “Ta Kung Pao: Taiwan’s ‘dollar diplomacy’ doomed to fail,” Ta Kung Pao, May 24,
145 Author’s interview with Lee Teng-hui, former president of the ROC, November 25,
2005, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC.
146 See Amber Wang, “MOFA watches Haiti, Panama ties,” China Post (International
147 In addition to bribing small countries, Taiwan purportedly has used secret funds for
payments to foreign political parties, think tanks and lobbying firms. See Jason Dean,
“Taiwan: keep a secret?” Far Eastern Economic Review, April 11, 2002, on the world
148 See Lin Fang-yan, “Health new diplomatic strategy,” Taipei Journal, September 13,
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149 Benjamin Yeh, “WHO snub hurt Taiwan: analysts,” China Post (International Airmail
150 Jane Rickards, “MOFA slams China for blocking WHO bid,” China Post
152 See Keith Bradsher, “Defiant leader of Taiwan scraps unification panel with China,”
New York Times, February 27, 2006 in Taiwan Security Research on the world wide
web at http://www.taiwansecurity.org/.
153 Michael Elliott, “100 leaders and revolutionaries: Chen Shui-bian—Taking it to the
brink,” Time 165, 16 (April 18, 2005), p. 58.
154 Lien Chan has used this description when criticizing Chen. See Denny Roy, Taiwan:
155 Robert S. Ross, “Explaining Taiwan’s revisionist diplomacy,” paper prepared for
delivery at the Third Annual International Symposium: US-China-Taiwan Relations
in the Second Bush and Chen Shui-bian Administrations, Center for China–US
Cooperation, University of Denver, May 13–14, 2005, p. 15. Quoted by permission.
156 Ibid.
160 Phillip Yang, Professor of Political Science at National Taiwan University made this
observation. See Allen T. Cheng, “Independence movement feels the heat,” South
161 See John F. Copper, “Taiwan’s relation with the US during the Chen administration:
things fall apart,” Paper delivered at the international symposium, Taiwan and the
World: Taiwan’s External Relations in a Time a Transition, Missouri State University,
Springfield, Missouri, April 1, 2006.
7 Understanding Taiwan’s foreign policy: Challenges and opportunities

1 For a contemporary account of Taiwan’s experiences under European rule, see Jonathan Manthorpe, Forbidden Nation: A History of Taiwan (New York: Palgrave MacMillan Publishers, 2002).

4 Chien reportedly believed that mainland policy was more important than foreign policy and opposed President Lee’s 1995 visit to America. Chien-min Chao, “The Republic of China’s foreign relations under President Lee Teng-hui: a balance sheet,” in *Assessing the Lee Teng-hui Legacy in Taiwan’s Politics: Democratic Consolidation and External Relations*, Bruce J. Dickson and Chien-min Chao, Editors, (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2002), p. 183.


16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 While it is true that democratization has not caused any important governments to re-establish diplomatic relations with Taipei, they are more willing to get closer to Taiwan. Moreover, threats by US lawmakers to curb or cease arms sales to the island ceased after martial law was lifted in 1987.


20 Ibid.


31 Ibid.
35 Author’s interview with Dr. Mark Chen, Minister of Foreign Affairs, November 17, 2005, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC.
36 Author's interview with Dr. Parris Chang, Deputy Secretary General of the ROC National Security Council, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC, November 15, 2005.
37 “Switzerland applies to join UN,” BBC News, July 18, 2002 on the world wide web at http://www.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/2135652.stm/.
40 Some points raised in this section of the chapter were borrowed from “President Chen and the Three Challenges: America, China and Taiwan,” paper delivered at the conference, The United States, China and Taiwan in the Second Bush and Chen Administrations, The Center for US–China Cooperation at the Graduate School of International Studies, University of Denver, Denver, Colorado, May 1–14, 2005.
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54 Ibid.


56 Ibid.


64 Paraguay’s president reportedly announced that he will pledge diplomatic allegiance to “the country which will help boost Paraguay’s employment rates.” Amber Wang, “MOFA watches Haiti, Panama ties,” *China Post* (International Airmail Edition), June 8, 2004, p. 4.


67 Ibid.


72 See Maubo Chang, “Bush’s commitment to Taiwan’s defense unchanged,” Central News Agency, June 3, 2005 in *LexisNexis*.
74 See “China objects to Bush drive for WHO status for Taiwan,” Agence France Presse, June 15, 2004 in *LexisNexis*.
76 Liu Xuecheng, Senior Fellow and Director of American Studies at the China Institute of International Studies coined this term and used it during his lecture, “China and the United States: partners or rivals,” which was presented at Missouri State University on April 7, 2005.
79 The official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, was traveling with Condoleezza Rice during her trip to China in 2004. See Joseph Kahn, “In US–China talks, a sharp and enduring focus on Taiwan,” *New York Times*, July 9, 2004, p. 3, in *LexisNexis*.
80 See Tom Plate, “Are you with us or with Taiwan, Mr. Bush,” *South China Morning Post*, January 11, 2005, p. 17 in *LexisNexis*.
82 Author’s conversation with a PRC academic who advises the Chinese government. This individual described the “one country, two systems” plan as a scheme developed by a dead leader and said that China does not have to continue to follow it blindly.
87 See Denny Roy, “Taiwan’s threat perceptions: the enemy within,” p. 3.
88 Author’s interview with former high ranking Taiwanese official who spoke on the condition of anonymity, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC, December 28, 2004.
89 Author’s interview with Lee Teng-hui, former president of the ROC, November 25, 2005, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC.
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