

The ‘West’, not China, is ‘distorting history’ over Taiwan

The Anglo-American imperial propaganda machine is once again using lies and half-truths to whip up support for war against China over Taiwan. Pro-war interests are pushing the notion that so-called Western nations should not only destroy their relations with the People’s Republic of China (PRC) by recognising Taiwan as a *de facto* independent state in various international fora, but should also stand ready to go to war with the PRC in defence of “democracy” should it decide to “invade” the island province in response to a declaration of independence by its present separatist leaders. The latter is simply suicidal insanity. The pseudo-legal arguments advanced by various Western political leaders for the former, meanwhile, in fact only re-hash those by which the United States tried to drive a geopolitical wedge between Taiwan and the rest of China 50 years ago—but which were categorically rejected not only by the vast majority of United Nations member states, but by the then-leaders of Taiwan as well.



US Ambassador to the United Nations George Bush (right), who tried unsuccessfully to have both the PRC and ROC admitted as UN members, because Taiwan is not a sovereign country. Photo: UN Photo/Yutaka Nagata

The latest evidence of the PRC’s supposed aggression is that on 14 October, the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA) conducted an exercise “designed to simulate attacking Taiwan by land, sea and air”, Britain’s BBC News reported, “as ‘punishment’ for a speech given [on 10 October] by its president William Lai, when he vowed to ‘resist annexation’ or ‘encroachment upon our sovereignty [sic]’.” In the wake of the exercises, and following the lead of the Australian Senate in late August, on 23 October the European Parliament passed a so-called “Joint Motion for a Resolution on the misinterpretation of UN resolution 2758 by the People’s Republic of China and its continuous military provocations around Taiwan”. This motion was cooked up by the professional Sinophobes of the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China (IPAC), and purported to set the record straight as to what the member states of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) did and did not accept regarding Taiwan’s status on 25 October 1971. But whereas the Joint Motion’s authors accuse Beijing of “distort[ing] history” by misrepresenting res. 2758 as having established the PRC’s sovereignty over Taiwan, in reality the question of Taiwan’s status as part of sovereign Chinese territory had already been settled more than 25 years earlier; and what few historical facts the Joint Motion *does* put forward otherwise, are deliberately presented out of context so its authors can distort history themselves.

IPAC, a London-based, US government-funded forum founded in 2020 to coordinate anti-China political actions throughout the so-called “democratic” world, held its annual summit in Taiwan’s capital city Taipei on 28-30 July. At this all-expenses-paid junket courtesy of Taiwan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, IPAC’s Australian co-chairs Senators Deborah O’Neill (Labor, NSW) and David Fawcett (Liberal, SA) and pairs of legislators from 24 other countries comprising the Anglo-American empire and its assorted proxies, vassals and client states, resolved to return to their respective countries and pass motions in their Parliaments aimed at undermining UNGA res. 2758, which admitted the PRC to the UN in place of Taiwan’s dictator Chiang Kai Shek’s Republic of China (ROC). IPAC calls the project “Initiative 2758”.

Lies and straw men

Australia was first cab off the rank, its Senate on 21 August passing O’Neill and Fawcett’s motion stating “That [UNGA res. 2758] does not establish the People’s Republic of China’s sovereignty over Taiwan and does not determine the future status of Taiwan in the United Nations, nor Taiwanese participation in UN agencies or international organisations”.

Similarly, the European Parliament motion, likewise initiated by IPAC members (from 11 countries), claims among other things that “UN Resolution 2758 ... shifted the official recognition from the Republic of China (Taiwan) to the People’s Republic of China (PRC)”; that “today Taiwan, while not being a member of the United Nations, maintains diplomatic relations with 11 of the 193 United Nations member states, as well as with the Holy See”; and that res. 2758 “addresses the status of the PRC, but does not determine that the PRC enjoys sovereignty over Taiwan, nor does it make any judgement on the future inclusion of Taiwan in the UN or any other international organisation”. Therefore, it states, the European Parliament “opposes the PRC’s constant distortion of UN Resolution

2758 and its efforts to block Taiwan's participation in multilateral organisations; [and] calls for the EU and its Member States to support Taiwan's meaningful participation in relevant international organisations" including the World Health Organisation (WHO), the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), Interpol, and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It also asserts that "the status quo in the Taiwan Strait must not be unilaterally changed by the use or threat of force", and threatens that any attempt by the PRC to do so "will not be accepted and will be met with a decisive and firm reaction".

The last is obviously pure bluff and bluster, given Europe's well known military and economic decrepitude, the latter including its dependence upon China for critical manufactured goods.

Otherwise, as the *Australian Alert Service* reported regarding the Australian Senate motion, ¹ the assertion that res. 2758 does not establish China's sovereignty is factually correct, but misleading—while the accusation that the PRC is misrepresenting it as such is simply false. Because the fact, as PRC officials have *actually* stated, is that Taiwan had already been restored as part of the sovereign territory of China by Japan's instrument of surrender in 1945, before the advent of the PRC, and had been recognised as such in multiple international treaties. So when the UNGA recognised in res. 2758 that the PRC had superseded the former ROC (whose leaders under Chiang Kai-shek lost the Chinese civil war and fled to Taiwan in 1949) as the legitimate government of the whole of China, Taiwan was automatically included. The European motion's statement that 11 UN members and the Holy See (Vatican) maintain diplomatic relations with the ROC/Taiwan is also true—but they do so on the frankly farcical basis that it remains the legitimate government-in-exile of all China, not that it is a separate country.

The assertion in both the Australian and European motions that res. 2758 does not preclude Taiwan from participation in UN agencies and subordinate organisations, however, is simply false. In fact, the resolution explicitly states that the UNGA had decided "to restore all its rights to the People's Republic of China and to recognise the representatives of its Government as *the only legitimate representatives of China to the United Nations*, and to expel forthwith the representatives of Chiang Kai-shek from the place which they unlawfully occupy at the United Nations *and in all the organisations related to it.*" (Emphasis added.) Only a liar or a dupe would propose or vote for a Parliamentary motion claiming otherwise.

More interesting is that the reason res. 2758 is worded the way it is, is that the USA's UN delegation, led by then Ambassador and later President (in 1989-93) George H.W. Bush Sr, tried all the same arguments to "salami-slice" China's sovereignty by establishing dual PRC/ROC representation in those organisations, and even the UNGA. This was rebuffed even by many US allies, Britain and France among them, on the basis that to do so would undermine the integrity and indeed the very purpose of the UN—or to quote again from the resolution itself, that "the restoration of the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China is essential both for the protection of the Charter of the United Nations and for the cause that the United Nations must serve under the Charter".

Un-distorting history

The real story of UNGA res. 2758 is told in chapter eight of the 1971 edition of [The Yearbook of the United Nations](#). The question of the "Restoration of the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China", it recalls, was first placed on the UNGA's provisional agenda by a group of 17 member countries (which would later expand to 23), led by Albania and including many newly independent former British and French colonies in Africa and Asia, on 15 July 1971. "In an explanatory memorandum accompanying their request", the *Yearbook* recounts, "the 17 States observed that for years they had protested against the hostile and discriminatory policy followed by several Governments with regard to the lawful Government of China, the sole genuine representative of the Chinese people." The PRC's existence, they declared, "was a reality which could not be changed to suit the myth of a so-called 'Republic of China', fabricated out of a portion of Chinese territory. The unlawful authorities installed in the island of Taiwan, claiming to represent China, remained there only because of the permanent presence of United States armed forces."

"No important international problems, they added, could be solved without the participation" of the PRC; therefore, it was "in the fundamental interest" of the UN to "restore promptly to the [PRC] its seat in the organisation, thus putting an end to a grave injustice and to an unacceptable and dangerous situation which had been perpetuated in order to fulfil a policy increasingly repudiated"—that is, the USA's dream of overthrowing the PRC's Communist Party government, and restoring its puppet Chiang and his corrupt Kuomintang (Nationalist Party) clique to their previous dictatorial power. ²

The USA responded by proposing its own question, on "The representation of China in the United Nations", on 17 August. In an early foreshadowing of what is now termed the "rules-based order", wherein the USA substitutes "rules and norms" favourable to itself in place of actual international law, the USA argued that instead of honouring the post-WWII settlement, "in dealing with the problem of the representation of China, the United Nations should take cognisance of the existence of both the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China" and should reflect what it called "that incontestable reality in the manner in which it made provision for China's representation". The UN, it added, "should not be required to take a position on the respective conflicting claims" of the PRC and

ROC “pending a peaceful resolution of the matter as called for by the United Nations Charter.” As the representative of Algeria pointed out in response, however, the latter argument would only hold were Taiwan a separate country— as indeed Bush would go on to argue explicitly, by equating the draft resolution’s call to “expel” Chiang’s representatives with the expulsion of a member state. In the whole time the PRC had been “unjustly kept out” of the UN and the rump ROC allowed to speak for the Chinese people as a whole, the Algerian representative noted, “no one had ever claimed that there were two Chinese States”, and to recognise the PRC as China’s lawful representative government “did not therefore imply the eviction of a Member State but the eviction of the representatives of a dissident minority regime. The question of retaining Taiwan’s representatives in the United Nations must [therefore] be viewed as the admission of a new Member.... Yet the problem of Taiwan’s dissidence was a Chinese internal affair. The United Nations could not, without violating one of the fundamental principles of the Charter, embark upon a discussion of a subject which in fact bore on China’s territorial integrity and independence.” Or as the Cuban representative would later put it bluntly: “foreign intervention which had sought to segregate a province from the territory of China could never be a valid justification to accord to that territory, separated by force, any national character or any sovereignty.”

Ironically, in its own way Chiang’s KMT regime effectively agreed with the latter statement, in the course of arguing to keep China’s UN seat for itself—except that according to its representative, “[The ROC’s] legal status had not in any way changed, even though the communists had been in occupation of the Chinese mainland since 1949”, which he ridiculously equated with the Japanese occupation of large parts of China before and during WWII.

In the end not even the Conservative government of Britain would buy in to such nonsense; and after the UNGA rejected Bush’s last-ditch delaying tactic in the form of a motion to require a two-thirds majority to accept the PRC, the ROC saw the writing on the wall and announced it “had decided not to take part in any further proceedings of the General Assembly”, the *Yearbook* reports. “The Assembly then adopted the 23-power text, by a roll-call vote of 76 to 35, with 17 abstentions, as resolution 2758(XXVI).” Australia, however, under the woeful Liberal PM Sir William McMahon, stuck to the USA to the bitter last. And now, under equally abject US flunky PM Anthony Albanese, Australia—despite having more to lose than any other country from a rupture of relations with China—is first in line to rewrite history at the USA’s behest.

It remains to be seen how many European countries will be cowardly and/or stupid enough to follow suit.

Footnotes

[1. “Chinese interference in Australia’s Parliament??”](#), Citizens Party media release, 28 Aug. 2024.

[2. For background see the AAS series “The roots of the Taiwan conflict” at <https://citizensparty.org.au/australian-alert-service-feature-articles/strategic>](#)

By Richard Bardon, Australian Alert Service, 30 October 2024