

# Taiwan Deserves a Place in the United Nations

By *Pasuya Wen-chih Yao*

(NAPSA)—Universality of membership is a core principle of the United Nations' foundation. Following admission of East Timor and Switzerland, almost all countries of the world have become members of the United Nations. It is almost unimaginable that there is one country with a population greater than 140 of these U.N. member states, which is still barred from joining the United Nations.

A democratic country with 23 million people, Taiwan is the



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world's 17th largest economy and 15th largest trading nation.

Long committed to providing humanitarian relief and sharing its medical achievements, it

plays a positive and active role in the international community. If peace, inclusiveness and universality of membership are the U.N.'s founding objectives, then, without a doubt, Taiwan should be a member of the United Nations.

It is most regrettable that Taiwan's international status does not yet reasonably reflect its admirable political and economic achievements. At present, not only the United Nations but also its affiliated organizations adopt a discriminatory policy of segregation by shutting out Taiwan. Such "political apartheid" has not only compromised the basic human right of Taiwan's 23 million people to participate in the international community but, consequently, has also created significant loopholes in global networks of epidemic prevention, security, and international cooperation. This, in turn, causes further serious damage to the interests and benefits of all members of the global community.

The people of Taiwan aspire to have their own voice heard through

participation in the United Nations, as well as to contribute with responsible attitude to the international community. At this historical moment, as the United Nations celebrates the 60th anniversary of its founding, U.N. member states should re-examine without prejudice the issues of the right of Taiwan's 23 million people to representation at and equal participation in the United Nations, and should seek reasonable solutions. Furthermore, given that the peace of the Taiwan Strait is extremely important to the security and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region and even of the whole world, this situation deserves the international community's collective concern.

This is especially true after China passed an anti-separation law (so-called "anti-secession law"), which threatens to adopt non-peaceful means to resolve the cross-strait issue, thus introducing unpredictable factors into the region's security. According to Article 35 of the U.N. Charter, any member state or non-member state may bring any dispute or situation to the attention of the U.N. General Assembly.

The United Nations should not automatically shun its responsibility to safeguard the stability and peace of the Taiwan Strait merely because Taiwan has not yet become a U.N. member.

Instead, the United Nations should allow Taiwan to participate and should act as an important platform and a bridge for maintaining cross-strait peace. Long-term indifference to Taiwan's existence by the United Nations is not only unhelpful to solving cross-strait issues but could also sow seeds of conflict. For this, the world would have a higher price to pay.

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