

# Security Council Background Guide: China-Taiwan Tensions & Colombian Civil War



*Figure 1 United States President Barack Obama chairs a United Nations Security Council meeting at U.N. Headquarters in New York, N.Y., Sept. 24, 2009.*

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# 1. Letter From Your Chairs

Hello esteemed delegates,

I am your Head Chair for the UNSC, Morris Shaye. I am a Mechanical Engineering student at the University of Sheffield. I first got into MUN in 2019 and travelled to many places whilst representing my school and now my university. MUN can look very scary at times and trust me we all do loads of mistakes, so feel free to reach out if you have any problems whatsoever.

And I am Lee Jun, a first year Economics Undergraduate at the University of Warwick. I started his MUN journey in 2019, after making a switch from parliamentary debate. my focus is on crisis committees. I hope for delegates to make the best out of their experience at WARMUN!

We hope to see you soon,

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## 2.Introduction To Security Council

The United Nations Security Council is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations. The Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It has 15 Members, and each Member has one vote. While standing committees are chaired by the President of the Council, rotating on a monthly basis, other committees and working groups are chaired or co-chaired by designated members of the Council who are announced on an annual basis by a Note of the President of the Security Council. Under the Charter of the United Nations, all Member States are obligated to comply with Council decisions.

The Security Council takes the lead in determining the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression. It calls upon the parties to a dispute to settle it by peaceful means and recommends methods of adjustment or terms of settlement. In some cases, the Security Council can resort to imposing sanctions or even authorize the use of force to maintain or restore international peace and security.



*Figure 2 Helmet Icon of United Nations Peacekeeping Logo.*

*Agenda 1:*

*Relieving The China-Taiwan Tensions to  
Prevent an Escalation of The Conflict*

## 3.China & Taiwan

### 3.1. Statement Of the Issue:

The cross-strait relations are border issues between China and Taiwan. This issue calls into question the term, “sovereign state”. International law defines sovereign states as having a permanent population, defined territory (see territorial disputes), one government, and the capacity to enter into relations with other sovereign states. The issue with unrecognized states is that if they remain unrecognized, they lack the capacity to enter into formal treaties with other states.



Figure 3 China's missile capabilities towards neighbouring waters.

### 3.2. Introduction To the Topic

The political status of Taiwan has long been debated and argued as a result of World War II, followed by phase two of the Chinese Civil War and the Cold War. Taiwan is geographically an archipelago consisting of four main islands: Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu, governed by the Republic of China (Taiwan). The



biggest issue concerning the ROC/Taiwan is its status of legitimacy as a sovereign state under international law.

Under the 1943 Cairo Declaration and the 1945 Potsdam Declaration, the allied powers agreed to have Japan restore “all the territories it took from China”, making Taiwan under the same entity as China under international law. Some argue that when Taiwan was returned, it was never formally returned to China under the Potsdam Declaration, and instead, returned to the people of Taiwan, making its political status ambiguous.

### **3.3. Historical Situation**

#### **The First United Front and Chinese Civil War – Phase 1 (1927-1945):**

As a result of the failure of the ROC to restore the monarchy in 1916, there was a massive power struggle in China. From 1916-1928, China was run by Warlords. The KMT (The Chinese Nationalist Party)-CCP (Chinese Communist Party) established the “First United Front” in order to end warlordism. A conflict of interest, with the KMT wanting to control communism from spreading and the CCP wanting to spread communism, resulted in the alliance breaking. This sparked the first phase of the Chinese Civil War between the KMT, led by Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek, and the CCP led by Mao Zedong, which continued until the second Sino-Japanese War, where the Second United Front was established to counter the Japanese.

#### **The Second World War and Chinese Civil War – Phase 2 (1945-1949):**

As a result of Japan’s victory in the first Sino-Japanese war in 1895, it took control of the Taiwan and Penghu islands from China. Post-World War Two, it was returned back to China. Phase 2 of the Chinese Civil War then resumed. In 1949, after the defeat of the KMT by Mao, Chiang Kai-Shek and 2 million troops retreated to Taiwan, called Formosa at the time. At the time, they expected Taiwan to be a temporary base for them to fortify, regroup and reconquer the mainland. Once they realized that plan was improbable, the new focus became on the economic development of Taiwan.

### **First, Second, Third, Taiwan Strait Crisis (1954-55):**

The first Taiwan Strait Crisis was a brief armed crisis between the Communist People's Republic of China (Mainland China) and the Nationalist Republic of China (Taiwan), that occurred in Taiwan. The focal point of the PRC's attacks was on a group of islands that were situated miles away from Mainland China. The Formosa resolution was later passed by the US Congress allowing the POTUS to protect the ROC's offshore islands.

In the second Taiwan Strait Crisis (1958), the Chinese Liberation Army under the PRC, began firing artillery at the Kinmen Islands, resulting in foreign aid by the U.S., at the time under the Eisenhower Administration.

The Third Taiwan Strait Crises (1995-1996) was less aggressive but were a series of missile tests conducted by the PRC, in the waters surrounding Taiwan. This was in response to the President elect Lee's decision to visit his alma mater Cornell University in the United States to give a speech on 'Taiwan's Democratization'.

## **3.4. Current Situation:**

Beijing asserts that there is only One-China, that is inclusive of Taiwan, so Taiwan is not a separate entity. People who live in Taiwan have different ideas, and it is difficult to find out what most people believe because slight changes in how polls are worded can change the results a lot. Japan returned Taiwan to mainland China since the end of WW2. Due to the defeat of Chinese Civil War, the Chinese Nationalist Party's refugee government escaped to Taiwan and despoiled the regime.

Still as of today, Taiwan government still does not possess any legal political power. China mainland is ruled by a communist government. The idea of freedom in communism is different than how people in a capitalism think freedom should be. A big part of people in Taiwan want to become part of Communist China. Some people in Taiwan want Taiwan to formally become the Republic of Taiwan, an independent country. Most of the people in Taiwan want to keep everything like it is now.



### **1992 Consensus:**

The 1992 consensus created a semi-official diplomatic basis for cross-strait exchanges to take place between the PRC. There is controversial disagreement as to whether or not a consensus was established, as the KMT interprets it as there being One China, but different interpretations of it, and the PRC interprets it as being One China.

### **US House Speaker visit to Taiwan:**

On 2nd August 2022, Nancy Pelosi, US House Speaker made a visit to Taiwan. She stated that her visit was a sign of the United States' 'unwavering commitment to Taiwan's democracy'. The visit was condemned by the PRC, who sent warnings through US diplomatic channels, as well as being discouraged by President Joe Biden.

### **Fourth Taiwan Strait Crisis:**

In retaliation to Pelosi's visit, the PRC began exercising its military power. The PLA began naval and air operations that flew into the air defense territory of the ROC. The Biden administration argued that the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) military exercises, including sending short-range ballistic missiles over Taiwan, was a "manufactured" crisis and an overreaction by Beijing to a normal congressional delegation. Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Colin Kahl remarked on Pelosi's trip during a press conference: "Nothing about the visit changed one iota of the U.S. government's policy toward Taiwan."

### **Implications of an Escalation of Conflict:**

In the immediate days succeeding the attack, there was slight anxiety and a light ripple in the financial markets, but the stability of the economy preceding the crises prevented any major downturns. A major worry is how this will disrupt the supply chain of the already shaky semiconductor industry.

Currently, President Xi is rumored to have installed a war cabinet, an action that has alerted U.S. officials, suggesting a potential further escalation. Their act of aggression towards the ROC was condemned by ASEAN, G7. In a speech opening the Communist Party's Congress, President Xi refused to rule out the use of force to unify with Taiwan, stating that "We will continue to strive for peaceful reunification with the greatest sincerity and the utmost effort, but we will never promise to renounce the use of force,"

### **3.5. Major Stances:**

#### **People's Republic of China:**

The People's Republic of China opposes treating the Republic of China (ROC) as a separate legitimate state and maintains a stance that the ROC is a rogue province and must eventually be returned to China. It maintains the idea that there is indivisible sovereignty between the two territories under the "One-China" policy.

PRC policy mandates that any country that wishes to establish formal diplomatic relations must first discontinue political ties with the ROC. As a result, many Afro-Caribbean nations have established and discontinued diplomatic relations with

#### **Taiwan/Republic of China:**

There is a division between the pan-blue and the pan-green coalitions in Taiwan on the political state of Taiwan.

#### **The United States:**

The United States has gathered substantial naval capabilities in East Asia. 59 out of the 114 naval ships that are deployed across are located along the Taiwan Strait. Some of them were planned and have been assigned to patrol the strait since 1950, but due to recent escalations, the number of ships has increased.

Furthermore, the recent passing of the CHIPS bill in improving the United States' competitiveness in the semiconductor market has led to a bipartisan support backing in Washington's confrontational approach to China.

### **United Nations:**

In 1970, the ROC rightfully lost its seat as China, and this title was passed to the PRC, under The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 (also known as the Resolution on Admitting Peking). The resolution, passed on 25 October 1971, recognized the People's Republic of China (PRC) as "the only legitimate representative of China to the United Nations" and removed "the representatives of Chiang Kai-shek" from the United Nations.

17 UN members, led by Albania, proclaimed that the ROC were unlawful authorities in the island of Taiwan which claimed to represent China, and they remained there only because of the permanent presence of United States Armed Forces.

In 2007, UN-Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon rejected Taiwan's bid to become a member state of the UN. Eventually, the administration under Ma Ying-Jeou dropped attempts to become a member state itself.

## **3.6. Possible Solutions/Focus Questions**

- How can we prevent a potential escalation into an armed military conflict of the two states?
- Is there a possibility to call for a peaceful negotiation of the political status of the ROC?
- Should each states' citizens be allowed a say in determining the political status of Taiwan/ROC?
- Should other countries interfere should there be a potential escalation into a military level conflict?

## *Agenda 2:*

*The Low-Intensity Asymmetric War Between  
The Colombian Government, Marxist  
Guerrillas, Far-Right Neo-Paramilitary Groups  
and Crime Syndicates.*

## 4. Colombian Conflict

### 4.1. Statement of The Issue

The turmoil Inside of Colombia has shapeshifted across the decades, but the violence and humanitarian violations do not go away. A formal cease-fire was signed on 2016 with one of the main militias, and a new hope was born. But as the years go by former guerrilla members are taking on weapons again, Cocaine hits record high production, cartels are fighting for land sovereignty, coal enterprises abuse locals etc. Faith in Colombia's democracy must be restored, and human right's abusers must be taken to court.

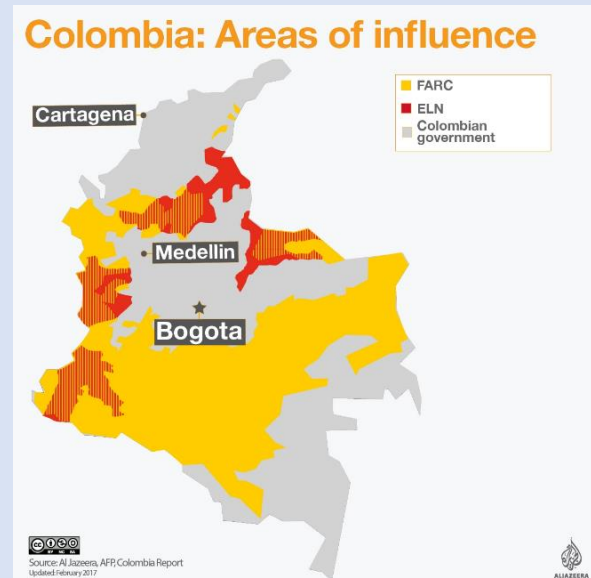


Figure 4 Colombian Conflict distribution of territories as of 2017.

### 4.2. Predecessors to the Modern Conflict



Figure 5 President Guillermo León Valencia

The predecessor of the Modern Columbian conflict is the Civil war known as *La Violencia*. It started in the 1930s due to several reasons as: the American influence (similarly to the Banana Republic), the suppression of public protests and the struggles between a corrupt conservative party and a corrupt liberal party. It culminated in a military dictatorship until 1960 that was only toppled by a united front from both parties. Once the conservative president Guillermo León Valencia rose to power in 1962, He started to combat rebelling territories, but all the violence and massacres promoted by the government only opened to a new civil war.

## 4.3. Colombian Civil War

### First part of the Conflict – National Front 1958-1974

From the moment the dictator was overthrown to 1974, Colombia was in an estate of exception (similar to a state of emergency/ martial law). The presidency was alternating between a representative of the conservative (right wing) and liberal (less right wing) parties. The candidates were decided by a bilateral agreement of the parties.

During this period, the most well-known far-left militias were formed. Among them: Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia FARC (1964), National Liberation Army ELN (1964), Popular Liberation Army EPL (1967). Although with similar objectives the militias had different roots. FARC originated from the violence and disregard the central government had with rural population. Most their members were farmers or sons of farmers. Their main objective was a land reform and better life for their families. However, as the countryside began to be more associated with the rebellious FARC, more violence from the government came down upon them and then more members would join the armed militia, thus a violence loop. ELN on the other hand, came from urban population. Mainly university students that were suppressed to express Marxist's views. The USA was involved in the counter-guerrilla efforts as a part of the Cold War. While the Soviet Union was supporting the rebellions.



Figure 8 ELN Flag

Figure 7 FARC Flag

Figure 6 EPL Flag

### Second part of the Conflict – Rise of The Narcotraffic 1975-1990

The next part of the war was marked by the boom of the Marijuana and Cocaine exportation. This increased the presence of violent cartels as well as corruption. Colombia's central bank was using of legal loopholes to knowingly launder the money brought from abroad. Together with the coffee boom, there was a high influx of Dollars



into the economy that led to an inflation. But since there was no increase in the common people's income, their purchasing power suddenly drop. That led to an increased militia activity rebelling against working conditions and drug lords. The militias started kidnapping cartel members and their families and, in response, death squads and paramilitary forces were assembled by the cartels to attack the militias.

With the increased militia activity, a state of siege was declared in early 1980s that resulted in the torture and extrajudicial killing of several far-left extremists. These are among some of the humanitarian crimes that increased in this period. There was an effort for a cease fire during 1982-85 with the urban militias. But due to alleged non-compliance from the government, it ended with the siege of the Supreme Court where over 100 people died, namely 12 of the judges. This marked the end of the peace efforts.

A positive outcome that came from the peace effort was the creation of the far-left parties *Unión Patriótica* (UP) and Columbian Communist Party (PCC). This served as the first legalized political group that could move the guerrillas cause without violence. However, due to discontent from opposing politicians and the help of the cartel's death squads, several of the UP and PCC's members were persecuted and murdered for being directly connected to FARC.

### **Third part – Intervention of Paramilitaries and Multinationals 1990-2002**

This part of the conflict started with a new constitution that increased the power and resources of the army and national police. It also allowed the subsequent legalization of paramilitary groups 1994. Paramilitary activity started much earlier on as a response from wealthy farmers against the Marxist guerrilla. However, during the 1990s they gained strength and expanded their services to coal miners, petroleum companies and even government officials. Some groups were made legal in 1994, but due to several human rights abuses they were outlawed in 1997. That marked the creation of the United Self-defense of Columbia (AUC). It sprouted from a combined twenty smaller groups and were responsible for almost 100.000 deaths until 2006.

The skirmishes between AUC and FARC/ELN were responsible for most displacements since 1990. They were used to intimidate and silence civilians, protect

drug routes (just like the FARC), and promote political interests. Notably coal companies used them to repress locals so they would not be condemned for blatant disregard to the working conditions and environmental malpractices. Bear in mind, the exportation of said coal goes 90% towards European countries. One of the few net positives from the AUC (and their former independent groups) presence was that several powerful cartels were weakened and fell in this period. Namely the Cartel Medellin (Pablo Escobar's). However, the Cartels were still influencing politics as seen by the alleged corruption in the 1994 election of Ernesto Samper Pizano.

From 1998 to 2002 there was significant effort of peace talks between the government and the guerrillas. FARC (that had gained significant more strength across the decade) was granted a safe zone the size of Switzerland in 1998 to further the talks. In 1999 the president meets with FARC high command for the first time. In 2000, The USA sends one billion dollars in anti-narcotics aid (military aid) in the so-called Plan Colombia. The peace talks do not continue well, on one side the government was negligent about paramilitary activity and on the other FARC continued to hijack military equipment and private assets. With American pressure due to 9/11, FARC, ELN and AUC are recognized as terrorist groups.



*Figure 9 President Pastrana, seen meeting a Farc rebel chief, presided over Plan Colombia, designed to fight drugs and left-wing rebels.*

## **4.4. Conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

### **Álvaro Uribe Vélez Presidency 2002–2010**

His government had several controversies, starting with an American Intelligence Service revealing that Uribe was allegedly a collaborator of Pablo Escobar. But there were also several improvements to Colombia's situation.

President Uribe managed to successfully dismantle AUC in relatively pacific manner. The cost was making sentences much lighter and offering extradition protection so perpetrators (mostly drug related) would not be judged by American standards. It was farther controversial when investigation showed several connections between his political alliances and paramilitaries. But as it stands AUC was fully dismantled between 2003 and 2008. This was enough reason for his reelection. During his government Ricardo Palmera, the longest serving FARC commander, was arrested, and sentenced to 35 years of jail.

Between 2007 and 2008 several hostage crises happened that led to the deterioration of diplomatic relations with neighbors Ecuador and Venezuela. Worst of both was Venezuela. In 2009 Colombia and the United States signed a deal giving access to Colombian bases in the interest of fighting the narcotraffic. But Venezuela saw this as a threat to its national sovereignty. This led to Venezuela mobilizing troops to the border of both countries. With claims that Venezuela was financing and providing weapons to FARC, diplomatic relations of the two countries were broken.

### **Juan Manuel Santos Presidency 2010-2018**

Santos was left leaning as opposed to Uribe. That made possible further peace talks with the far-left militias. After intense skirmishes between 2010-2012 that resulted in the death of several FARC leaders, peace talks commence after a cease-fire deal made in Cuba. In 2015 the ceasefire is renewed, and special courts are set up to judge crimes committed during the conflict and give amnesty when necessary. Peace talks also start with ELN.

In 2016 a definitive ceasefire disarmament pact is signed, the precursor to the definitive peace agreement that came later that year. But in a historic turn of events,

the peace treaty that had been signed in September is rejected by a public referendum in October. After over 50 years, a revised peace treaty is signed in November and in the next year FARC officially end their campaign... For now.

### **Ivan Duque Presidency 2018-2022**

Supported by the ex-president Uribe, the conservative Ivan Duque comes into power. He immediately starts to revise the peace agreement made with FARC and less than 2 years of their disarmament former leaders of the militia call to their ex-combatants to man arms again. The modern FARC segment is now known as FARC dissidents. Mr. Duque cuts ties with Venezuela again which was being instrumental to negotiate with ELN, therefore ceasing peace talks with ELN.

While ELN and the Gulf Cartel are crashing on the north of Colombia, FARC dissidents gain territory in the south. The population showing clear discontent go to the streets in protests and the government deals violently with them. There has been over two thousand casualties of social-leaderships and ex-combatants since the peace accords. However, under his presidency the Gulf Cartel's main leader was arrested in 2021 and extradited to the United States in 2022.

### **Gustavo Petro Presidency 2022-2026**

Petro has reopened talks with ELN and there is hope he will be able to regain peace with FARC dissidents, but as of now there are still conflicts in over 10 of Colombia's 32 regions.

## **4.5. Important Positions**

### **United states of America:**

The United States of America is dedicated to supporting and strengthening the Colombian government in their fight against criminal organizations involved with narcotrafficking. US support includes over \$1 billion within the last six years (the

largest contribution Colombia has received), as well as assistance with the eradication of over 130,000 hectares of coca, and work to redevelop affected lands.

The DEA was also **allegedly** involved in the arrest of a former FARC leader during the Ivan Duque government to incite FARC and jeopardize the agreement.

US-based and Swiss owned was found guilty in American court of financing paramilitaries that lead to civilians losing their families. (Disclaimer: this company is not associated with any government).



*Figure 10 Colin Powell, then the US Secretary of State, visiting Colombia as part of the United States' support of Plan Colombia*

### **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Island:**

The UK considers Colombia a Human Rights Priority Country and has taken efforts to support the implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement, including, but not limited to, £69 million. The UK chooses to work with organizations such as the Foundation for Freedom of the Press while supporting the Colombian government in the development of rural lands and advocating for the safety of former FARC members. UK also is an important partner of coal exports.

### **China:**

China is in support of Colombian efforts to advance the peace process and post-conflict restoration. As the second largest trade partner of Colombia, China aims to expand existing and explore additional areas of cooperation with Colombia. Whilst being against the attacks made against ELN in recent years.

### **Brazil:**

In 2012 there was an agreement made for military cooperation between both countries to reduce crimes along shared borders and Brazil has extradited several

guerrilla fighters back to Colombia. Brazil has also cooperated with military information regarding drug cartels and both countries fight side by side to combat illegal narcotraffic. The countries are close business and military partners.

## **4.6. Questions to be addressed:**

- How can the United Nations Security Council help the Colombian government make a lasting peace agreement?
- What are the implications of external interventions by cartels, foreign companies, and governments?
  - And how to ensure that Colombian democracy is not harmed.
- What human rights have been broken that the UN must supervise in the future?
- How will rural and Indigenous populations have their rights protected?



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