

## **French Republic**

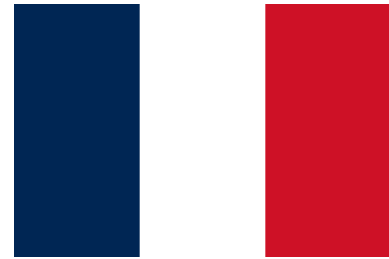
Government: Unitary Semi-Presidential Republic

Head of State: President Emmanuel Macron

Population: 65,750,000

Committee: UNSC - United Nations Security Council

Delegate: Helena Vukcevic



### ***Topic: Discussing territorial disputes over Taiwan and its surrounding regions***

#### **Background information**

The Nationalist (Kuomintang) administration, which had lost the Chinese Civil War, had departed the mainland and relocated to Taiwan in 1949, giving rise to the island's current disputed position. Although it has never ruled Taiwan, the People's Republic of China (PRC) insists that it is an integral part of China and that it should be "reunified" with the mainland. The PRC stated in a 2022 white paper that it is the Chinese Communist Party's "historic mission" and "indispensable for the accomplishment of China's rejuvenation" to find a solution to the Taiwan matter. Although the PRC has declared that it prefers to seek reunification through peaceful means, it does reserve the right to resort to force if necessary. The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and the Kuomintang (KMT), two of Taiwan's major political parties, have different opinions on Taiwan's relationship with mainland China. The "1992 Consensus," in which Taiwan and the PRC concurred that there is only one China—despite having different definitions of what "China" means—was championed by KMT President Ma Ying-jeou (2008–16). Cross-strait ties were able to develop and deepen as a result of this (non-consensus) consensus, but it was criticised in Taiwan since many people there were concerned that increasing interdependence would restrict Taiwan's future options. In recent years, military activity has increased dramatically close to Taiwan. Following the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, Taipei and Beijing reached a tacit understanding of a “median line,” also called the centre line, to guide rules of engagement and prevent miscalculation in the Taiwan Strait. The People's Liberation Army (PLA), China's equivalent of the US military, is expanding its military capabilities. FBI Director Christopher Wray cautioned that an invasion of Taiwan would "represent one of the most horrific business disruptions the world has ever seen" because potential sanctions against China would harm the global economy "at a much larger scale" than the sanctions in place as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

#### **Past international actions**

Tensions between China and the United States over Taiwan amount to a classic security dilemma: both are taking actions they view as defensive that the opposing side views as

escalatory. A potential conflict between China and Taiwan has significant implications for U.S. security interests, as the United States would need to balance its desire to support Taiwan against the risks of a broader war with China. The United States has objected to China's efforts to isolate Taiwan, which include blocking its participation in international organisations, interfering in its elections, pressuring Taiwanese firms to oppose independence, and sanctioning its industries. As the military balance in the Taiwan Strait has deteriorated, competition between the United States and China has intensified, and the prospect of China using force against Taiwan has risen. In an attempt to ensure Taiwan has the ability to defend itself and in response to a growing military gap, the Donald Trump administration sold more than \$18 billion in arms to Taiwan, and in 2020 the State Department eliminated long-standing restrictions on U.S. diplomatic engagement with Taiwanese officials. Moreover, the Wall Street Journal has reported that a U.S. special operations unit and a contingent of Marines have been secretly training Taiwan's forces for over a year. A potential conflict in the Taiwan Strait also has implications for the territorial dispute between China and Japan in the East China Sea. The PRC views the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands as a part of "Taiwan province" and may seek to take the islands during a conflict. If the PLA Navy were to occupy Taiwan, the Council on Foreign Relations' David Sacks argues that Japan would struggle to defend its westernmost islands, as well as the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, and even Okinawa.

### **Past actions taken by France**

Why does France care about the South China Sea? French territories in the southern Pacific and Indian Ocean have exclusive economic zones surrounding them. It has established strong security connections with nations in the area and places a high value on its interests there. In 2018, France launched its own version of an Indo-Pacific strategy after the US. It has consistently emphasised the need to protect freedom of passage in the South China Sea, a crucial route for international trade, along with other European nations. Based on its "nine-dash line," which extends as far as 2,000 km (1,243 miles) from the Chinese mainland, China asserts "historical maritime rights" over as much as 90% of the South China Sea. The Philippines disputed China's claims in 2016 before the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, saying that they went beyond what was allowed by the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea for maritime entitlements (Unclos). China disagreed with the court's decision that most of its allegations had any legal support. Based on its "nine-dash line," which extends up to 2,000 km (1,243 miles) from the Chinese mainland to within a few hundred km of the Philippines, Malaysia, and Vietnam, China asserts "historical maritime rights" over up to 90% of the South China Sea. The Philippines argued that China's claims went beyond what was allowed by the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea when it challenged China's claims in 2016 at the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague (Unclos).

### **Current policy and recommendations**

France "condemns any attempt to disrupt the status quo, any move likely to trigger an incident that might lead to an escalation," French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said in a recent interview with Nikkei, according to Taiwan News. The French Foreign Minister noted that France maintains military bases in its Pacific islands, including New Caledonia,

and stated that the stability of the strait is essential to the stability of the Indo-Pacific. He expressed alarm over aggressive measures in the region, however he did not specifically identify China, according to Taiwan News. France is "extremely keen," according to Le Drian, to avert a border confrontation. According to Taiwan News, the French Navy sent the support ship Seine and the nuclear submarine Emeraude to the South China Sea in February 2021 and the signals intelligence ship Dupuy de Lome via the strait in October.

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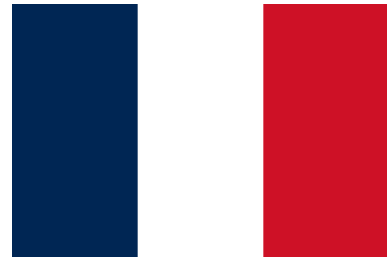
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### ***Topic: Representing the Global South : Discussing the issue on reforming the Security Council and Expanding the P5's***

#### **Background information**

Most frequently, "Security Council reform" refers to increasing the 15-member Council's size, comprising both elected and permanent members, and limiting the use of the veto. Since 1965, when the Security Council's membership was increased from 11 to 15, a number of reform attempts have been made in response to these difficult concerns during the previous few decades, but none have been successful. There have long been calls for a more representative Security Council, and there seems to be some consensus among the member States that change would increase the Council's legitimacy and, if not make it more effective, at least make it more representative. The road to reform, however, is paved with political and procedural obstacles. Expanding the Council will necessitate changing the U.N. Charter, which must be approved by two-thirds of the General Assembly and ratified by two-thirds of all U.N. members' legislatures, including the legislatures of all five permanent members of the Security Council, in order to proceed procedurally. Articles 23 and 27 must be updated in the event that the Security Council's composition changes. In its 77-year history, the Security Council's composition has only been altered once. The Charter was modified by General Assembly resolution 1991-XVIII (1963) to increase the number of non-permanent members of the Council from six to 10. Only one permanent member, China (at the time, Taiwan held the seat), voted in favor. The United States and the United Kingdom abstained, while France and the USSR cast no votes.

#### **Past international actions**

On September 21, U.S. President Joe Biden addressed the United Nations General Assembly, stating that the country supported adding more permanent and non-permanent members to the Security Council because the organization needed to "become more inclusive in order to better meet the needs of the modern world." He made it clear that this includes seats for countries in Africa, Central America, and the Caribbean as well as for those that the United States has long supported. In order to maintain the Council's credibility and effectiveness, Obama further pledged that the United States would reserve the use of its veto for "rare,

extraordinary instances." There have long been doubts about the UN Security Council's effectiveness, and the requests for reform are becoming more frequent. With his catchphrase, "the world is greater than five," Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been one of the loudest proponents for revamping the UN's highest decision-making body. The use—or rather abuse—of the veto power held by each of the five permanent Security Council members—the US, UK, France, China, and Russia—is at the center of the dispute. At some point, everyone of them has used that powerful vote to stop actions they felt threatened their interests, disregarding the broader good or larger public gain. The Security Council is now completely powerless and unable to carry out its stated mission of preserving world peace. The topic was raised at this week's 77th UN General Assembly by US President Joseph Biden and other leaders, including German Chancellor Olaf Scholz. Biden argued that countries from Africa, South America, and the Caribbean should be given permanent seats on the Security Council.

### **Past actions taken by France**

STATEMENT BY MR. BRICE FODDA, DEPUTY LEGAL ADVISOR OF FRANCE TO THE UNITED NATIONS: (*Security Council*., n.d.)

“Mr. President, With regard to the reform as such, France’s position is constant and well known. We would like the Council to take into account the emergence of new powers that are willing and able to assume the responsibility of a permanent presence in the Security Council and that are, in accordance with the UN Charter, in a position to make a significant contribution to the Council’s work. France is in favor of an expansion of the Council in both categories of membership. We support the candidacy of Germany, Brazil, India and Japan as permanent members. We also wish to see a stronger presence of African countries, among both permanent and non-permanent members. Thus, an enlarged Council could have up to 25 members. Such an expansion would make the Security Council more representative of today’s world and strengthen its authority, while preserving its executive and operational nature. As for the question of the veto, we know that this is a highly sensitive issue, and it is up to the States requesting a permanent seat to decide. In this reflection, the objective must remain twofold: on the one hand, to consolidate the legitimacy of the Security Council; on the other hand, to strengthen its capacity to fully assume its responsibilities in the maintenance of international peace and security. It is in this spirit that France proposed, several years ago, that the five permanent members of the Council voluntarily and collectively suspend the use of the veto in the event of mass atrocities. This voluntary approach does not require a revision of the Charter but a political commitment by the permanent members. Today, this initiative that we are carrying jointly with Mexico is supported by 105 countries. We call on all Member States that have not done so to support this initiative in order to quickly reach the symbolic bar of two-thirds of the General Assembly. We also reiterate our willingness to continue discussing this proposal with the other permanent members of the Council. Thank you, Mr. President.”

### **Current policy and recommendations**

Why does France want to restrict the use of the veto in the UN Security Council? The five permanent members of the Security Council would voluntarily and collectively resolve to refrain from exercising the veto in cases when a mass atrocity has been confirmed, according to a proposal made by the President of the Republic in 2013. According to a proposal made

by the President of the Republic in 2013, the five permanent members of the Security Council—China, the United States, France, the United Kingdom, and Russia—would collectively and voluntarily agree not to use their veto power in cases where a mass atrocity has been confirmed. France is resolved to keep working toward this legislation even though the permanent members have not yet reached a consensus on it. In this regard, President Macron announced on September 28, 2015, in front of the 70th United Nations General Assembly that France had unilaterally renounced the use of the veto against a credible draft resolution aiming to end mass atrocities. This announcement was made in an effort to set an example. President Macron set the target of getting two-thirds of UN members (129 countries), or 129 votes, to support limiting the right to veto in the event of mass crimes during the 73rd UN General Assembly on September 25, 2018. A 105th signature was added to the political statement proposed by France and Mexico in 2020, the United Nations' 75th anniversary year.

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