



# Chen Shuibian and the Idea of Taiwan's Independence

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**Abstract.** Since 1949, People's Republic of China (PRC) and Republic of China (ROC) support the 'One China' policy, stated that there is only one state called 'China', but each side has their own interpretation. Chiang Kaishek (1949–1975) is pursuing unification under Republic of China. Chiang Chingkuo (1975–1988) made new adjustment to the policy such as using the name of 'Taipei, China'. Lee Tenghui (1988–1999) is the first native Taiwan president that formed the National Unification Council to actualize the unification under ROC. Both side keep adhere to the policy until the end of 1999. After Chen Shuibian and his Democratic Progressive Party's victory in Taiwan has created new problem to China–Taiwan's relationship and domestic politic development in each state. As a native, Chen Shuibian is different from the previous president. He did not acknowledge the 'One China' policy and bravely declared that Taiwan is an independent country. This has made China increased their military power near the Taiwan strait to prevent Chen Shuibian declares Taiwan's independence. After his inauguration, Chen decided to not declared Taiwan's independence and maintained the status quo as China's military power is much bigger than Taiwan's. Two years later, Chen Shuibian declared that 'One China' policy is an attempt to change Taiwan's status quo. He emphasized the status of Taiwan can only be changed by Taiwanese. The historical approach that used in this research has revealed some facts about Chen's idea or ambition of Taiwan's independence. Despite facing China's threat and refusal from the opposition party, Chen remained firm with his idea of 'Taiwan is an independent country'. Chen's regime ends with him being a suspect of corruption, but his efforts to pursue Taiwan's independence should be taken into account.

**Keywords:** One China Policy · Chen Shuibian · Taiwan · Taiwan's Independence

## 1 Introduction

The Nationalist Party of China (*Kuomintang* of China or KMT) was defeated in the civil war by the China Communist Party (CCP) in 1949. This defeat forced the KMT led by Chiang Kai-shek to retreat to Taiwan. He continued the government of the Republic of China in Taiwan, with Taipei as its capital city and the center of government. On this Island, Chiang aimed to achieve one main goal: to regain China from the communist

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“rebels.” Chiang did not acknowledge the communist regime in mainland China and vowed to reunite China under the government of the KMT. These events started the development of two governments in the one country of “China,” the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in mainland China and the Republic of Taiwan (ROC) in Taiwan. However, both the KMT and the CCP stated that there had only ever been One China and that Taiwan was a part of China. This principle would later be known as the “One China” principle.

Based on the principle of “One China,” the KMT government in Taiwan fought for the unification of mainland China and Taiwan. However, this effort for unification encountered resistance from Taiwan’s own people. The first obstacle to this effort for unification was that the native people of Taiwan did not feel any urgency to “save” the country. The residents of the Island of Taiwan had lived for 50 years under the Japanese colonial government, so they did not have any sense of Chinese nationalism. Therefore, Chiang imposed martial law to strengthen the position of the KMT in Taiwan and implemented Sinification to increase the sense of Chinese nationalism in Taiwan.

The efforts to increase the sense of Chinese nationalism were successfully implemented within two decades, but the unification effort then faced its largest obstacle when the ROC was forced to withdraw from the United Nations (UN) and was replaced by the PRC in 1971. This withdrawal happened after the Cultural Revolution when the PRC changed its foreign policy to be closer to the United States (US) and took ROC’s position in the UN [1]. Another impact of this withdrawal was that many countries recognized the PRC as the true China and broke their diplomatic relations with the KMT’s Republic of China. Such developments eventually led to Taiwan’s isolation from the international community.

Chiang Kai-shek passed away in 1975 and was succeeded by Chiang Chingkuo, who then made adjustments to the principle of “One China.” Among those adjustments was accepting the use of the name “Taipei, China” [2]. In addition, Chiang Chingkuo also performed various political reformations to maintain the position of the KMT in Taiwan. One of them was the repeal of martial law, which led to the emergence of new parties, such as the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which identified itself as the opposition of the KMT [3]. By the end of Chiang Chingkuo’s government in 1988, the unification effort of China under the KMT had still not been accomplished.

Chiang Chingkuo was succeeded as president in 1988 by Lee Tenghui, the first Taiwanese president who was born and raised in Taiwan. At the beginning of his reign, Lee promised to unify China under the rule of the KMT [4]. As the first step toward unification, Lee formed the National Unification Council and issued the Guidelines for National Unification. In addition, Lee also formed a semi-formal organization named the Strait Exchange Foundation (SEF, 海峡交流基金会) as a liaison with mainland China to discuss the cross-strait relations. Contrary to Lee’s effort, the people of Taiwan believe that they should be proud as Taiwanese (台灣人). After the repeal of the martial law, not just the topic of nationalism is being publicly discussed, but the topic of Taiwan’s independence as well. The rapid progress of democracy in Taiwan became one of the key factors of the rise of nationalism in Taiwan, more and more people, especially from the DPP, are opposing the “One China” policy. They consider that Taiwan is a sovereign and independent state, Taiwan should’ve been treated as a country, not only as an object

of politic. Facing the pressure from the people of Taiwan, Lee started to make some adjustments in his “One China” policy. In 1999, the unification effort again became a hot issue when Lee stated that the relationship between mainland China and Taiwan was a state-to-state relation. The statement, later known as the “two-state doctrine,” ultimately caused a decline in the cross-strait relations [5]. Beijing (the PRC/the CCP government in mainland China) considered Lee’s statement to be a major step toward Taiwan’s independence, which upset Beijing.

In the 2000 general election, Chen Shuibian, the presidential candidate from the DPP who proposed the idea of independence of Taiwan, was elected. Chen was born in Taiwan on February 18, 1951 and graduated from the National Taiwan University. He later worked as a lawyer, and his role as a counsel for the defense in the case of the Kaohsiung Incident in 1980 brought him into politics. Although Chen was lost in this case, he stated that he values the thought and ideals of the accused. Chen also decided to quit his career as a lawyer to pursue the abolition of martial law in Taiwan [6]. Chen joined the DPP in 1986, and he was elected Mayor of Taipei in 1994. The community satisfaction level with his performance as mayor reached more than 70% [6].

The election of Chen Shuibian became a significant problem, especially for the cross-strait relations. Before Chen was elected, Beijing had threatened to attack Taiwan if Chen declared the independence of Taiwan. Chen responded to the threat by claiming, “Taiwan is an independent sovereign state” [7]. Chen was the only presidential candidate who supported the doctrine of “two states” proposed by Lee Tenghui. After Chen was elected, Beijing stated that it was willing to discuss with Chen whether he recognized the “One China” principle. At the same time, Beijing maintained pressure on Taiwan without any military force. This happened because Beijing did not believe that Chen and the DPP would not pursue Taiwan’s independence.

Responding to Beijing’s demand, Chen refused to recognize the “One China” principle because accepting that principle would delegitimize Taiwan’s government [8]. Chen’s assertion to Beijing was significant in and of itself, but his position in the country was not yet stable. In the 2000 election, Chen only won 39.3% of the votes, revealing that he did not have the full confidence of the people of Taiwan. In addition, although the KMT lost the election, its influence continued to dominate the government in Taiwan.

Those various conditions constitute the starting point of this paper. The historical approach is used to reveal Chen’s efforts in trying to realize the idea and ideals of the independence of Taiwan, including some of the factors supporting and hindering such efforts during his presidency (2000–2008) and how those factors have affected the development of Taiwan. The results of this study are expected to illuminate Chen’s various efforts and achievements in achieving the independence of Taiwan and to be useful for ordinary people who want to understand Taiwan, especially regarding the issue of the “One China” principle.

## **2 Taiwan Under Chen Shuibian’s Regime: Taiwan as an Independent Country**

Chen Shuibian was elected president of Taiwan in the 2000 election after gaining 39.3% of the votes. An analysis of regional voting results shows that Chen only excelled in the south and southwest of Taiwan; 53.78% of his votes came from his native area, the

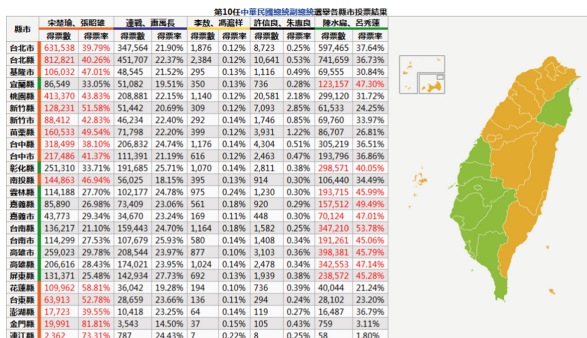


Fig. 1. The 10th Taiwan General Election Results (From Taiwan Election Database) [10]

Tainan District, and 45.79% was from another metropolitan city of Taiwan, Kaohsiung. According to the DPP consultant, Chen managed to secure the votes of the Taiwanese youths. In this election, there were 1.5 million new voters, the majority of whom voted for Chen. Among the presidential candidates, James Soong managed to gain many votes from women, the majority of votes from the minority tribes of Taiwan, the Taiwanese aborigines, and those from mainland China [9]. The 2000 general election results are shown in the Fig. 1.

In the early administration of Chen Shuibian, the cross-strait relations deteriorated and led Beijing to increase pressure in the Taiwan Strait. Faced with this situation, Chen expressed in his inauguration speech the “Four Noes-One Without” policy as the basis for the cross-strait relations policy, which would be implemented provided that Beijing not attack Taiwan [11]. The ‘Four Noes-One Without’ policy included the following:

- 1) 不会宣布独立, (Not declaring Taiwanese independence)
- 2) 不会更改国号, (Not changing the national title)
- 3) 不会推动两国论入宪, (Not including the “two-state” doctrine in its constitution)
- 4) 不会推动改变现状的统独公投, (Not promoting a referendum to change the status quo condition regarding the issue of unification and independence for the time being)
- 5) 也没废除国统纲领与国统会的问题 (Not questioning the abolition of the National Unification Council and the National Unification Guidelines)

Based on this policy, Chen decided not to immediately declare the independence of Taiwan because Beijing possessed a far more superior military force than Taiwan. Besides that, Lee Tenghui’s “two-state” doctrine had caused rising tension in the cross-strait relations, so Chen and his administration’s movement was highly monitored. Everything related to Taiwan’s status quo became extremely sensitive. Therefore, Chen confirmed that he would change Taiwan’s status if Beijing did not strike Taiwan using its armed forces. Even though Chen did not express his opinion on the “One China” principle, this policy was successful in reducing the tension in the cross-strait relations that had escalated since the proposal of the “two-state” doctrine by Lee Tenghui. This policy became the foundation of the cross-strait relations at the beginning of Chen’s administration.

One of the “Four Noes-One Without” policy stated that Chen will not include the “two-state” doctrine into its institution. Nevertheless, Chen did not oppose the doctrine. A member of Mainland Affairs Council (MAC, 行政院大陆委员会, a cabinet-level administration agency of the Republic of China that is responsible for the planning, development, and implementation of policies between PRC and ROC), stated that Chen’s decision to not include the doctrine into its constitution didn’t mean that the government omitted the theory, and didn’t change the fact that Mainland China and Taiwan are two different states. In the theory, Chen will not ‘questioning the abolition of National Unification Council and the National Unification Guidelines’, but it also didn’t mean Chen will using the National Unification Guidelines as the base of the cross-strait relations.

According to Chen, unification is not the only choice for the people of Taiwan. The problem of how and when unification will be achieved was done without involving the people of Taiwan. Therefore, the National Unification Guidelines can’t be used as the reference of what the people of Taiwan want, because it was the result of one man’s thinking, not the majority of people of Taiwan. Chen also refused the position of National Unification Council’s chairman (formerly chaired by Lee Tenghui) as a refusal of unification.

The “Four Noes-One Without” policy began to shift in 2001. In his commencement speech to the Congress of Taiwan given in Taipei, Chen declared himself to be the president of Taiwan. The Congress had assembled to propose a change of name from the Republic of China to the Republic of Taiwan. In fact, several participants rallied in the streets and yelled the slogan “Taiwan has to be an independent state.” In response to this demand, Chen and his administration vowed to fight to change the state’s official name and constitution. Chen’s actions were indicative of a change of attitudes of his administration that preferred to promote the nationalism of Taiwan. This attitude was clearly different from that of the regime of the KMT that had propagandized the doctrine of “Taiwan is a part of China, so Taiwan and mainland China must be unified again” [12].

In 2002, one year after the Congress of Taiwan, Chen attended the anniversary celebration of the Formosan Association for Public Affairs (FAPA, 台湾人工共事务会). This was an organization established in Washington to promote independence and democracy in Taiwan. In this celebration, Chen presented “the best gift” to FAPA by declaring his decision to add the name “Taiwan” to the passport issued by the ROC. Other attendees of the events responded to Chen’s declaration enthusiastically as they yelled out, “Keep going, A Bian!” (“A Bian” is Chen’s nickname). Chen also affirmed the following: “... as a democratic nation, Taiwan’s existence in the international community had encountered tremendous obstacles due to a number of factors, but the rights of the 23 million inhabitants of Taiwan to live as world citizens must be upheld,” [13]. Chen’s declaration infuriated Beijing, which considered it to be an act toward independence. The spokesperson of the Taiwan Affairs Office in Beijing stated that Chen’s actions were in fact intended to accomplish the independence of Taiwan. Aside from that, the members of the opposition parliament in Taiwan also stated that Chen’s declaration would only worsen the relations between Taiwan and mainland China [14].

Despite all the hindrances that he had to encounter, Chen never retracted the decision that he had made. In fact, Chen reaffirmed his rejection of the "One China" principle and reemphasized the significance of Taiwanese nationalism on August 3, 2002. He stated that the relations between Taiwan and mainland China were one country on each side (一边一国). Chen stated: "Taiwan is our country. Our country can't be bullied, dwarfed, marginalized and localized. Taiwan is not a part of others, not a local government, and not a province. Taiwan can't become the second Hongkong or Macau, because Taiwan is a sovereign independent country. In short, Taiwan and Mainland China are one country on each side, must be distinguished clearly. China has never given up its use of force against Taiwan and suppressed Taiwan in the international community. This has done great harm to the feelings of the people of Taiwan. The so-called "One China" or "One Country, Two Systems" policy that China stated is a change in the status quo of Taiwan, we can't accept it. No country, no government, no political party, no one can decide for us. Only the 23 million of the great Taiwanese have the right to make decisions on the future, destiny, and status quo of Taiwan." Chen emphasized that the "One China" principle and the idea of "One State, Two Systems" proposed by Beijing were China's efforts to change Taiwan's status quo. He also highlighted that the change in Taiwan's status quo should only be by the Taiwanese people and that the proper way to determine the future of Taiwan could only be done through a referendum.

The statement regarding one country on each side and the proposal for referendum by Chen garnered much criticism, especially from the opposition party. The leader of the KMT, Lien Chan, stated that Chen's declaration could bring calamity to Taiwan. At the same time, Beijing interpreted Chen's declaration as a threat to its national security. China's news portal such as Xinhua News Service and Renmin Ribao called Chen's statement as a separatist and provocation to his fellow countrymen on both sides. He also considered to have broken his promise to not pursue Taiwan's independence [8].

On the other hand, support for Chen was significant, especially from the Taiwanese aborigines, who had previously considered Chen to have been "too nice" to mainland China. Vice President Annette Lu stated that what President Chen had stated was all factual: the Republic of China was not a part of the People's Republic of China, and Chen had exposed Beijing's lies all that time [15]. National identity became the main issue in Taiwan after Chen's change of policy to be more aggressive toward Beijing. The declaration of "One Country on Each Side" and the referendum proposal by Chen show that he was trying to raise awareness toward Taiwan's nationalism [16]. Beijing, of course, had a negative reaction to Chen's changed attitude. As a result, Beijing attempted to thwart Taiwan's effort to join the WHO (World Health Organization) as an observer in 2003. China's representatives in the WHO even claimed that Taiwan did not deserve to join the WHO. Due to the PRC's pressure, the WHO eventually denied Taiwan's application to join the organization. Chen considered this denial to be a major insult to Taiwan and the Taiwanese people. Consequently, the referendum was considered to be highly necessary so that other countries would not underestimate the Taiwanese people and because voting is a basic right in a democracy. Because of Chen's position, strong rejection did not only come from Beijing but also from the KMT and even from the US, which eventually forced Chen to postpone his intention to hold a referendum by the end of the first term of his administration [12]. This strong reaction from the US became

Chen's primary focus because Taiwan could not deny the significance of the role of the US in Taiwan's struggle for independence. Under the pressure from both Beijing and US, Chen has failed to carry out a referendum, but this increased the Taiwanese sympathy towards Chen and the DPP.

### **3 Chen Shuibian's Second Regime: An Effort to Increase Taiwanese Nationalism**

In 2003, Chen re-run for the Taiwan 11th president against James Soong and Lien Chan. His campaign strategy was focused on the "Taiwan's Identity" issue. He had two reasons on why choosing this strategy. First, Chen firmly believed that the 2004 election was not only a democracy consolidation, but also a big improvement on the country's development. Second, majority of the voters will support and choose the political party that can bring the identity of Taiwan into reality. Chen stated as quoted by Wang in How Chen Shui-bian Won: The 2004 Taiwan Presidential Election and Its Implications: "Taiwan, although its name is the Republic of China according to the current constitution, does not belong to the People's Republic of China. Any alternation of this separate status must be decided by all the inhabitant in Taiwan through a referendum." Chen emphasized that the DPP is the first "Taiwanese" political party. The duties and responsibilities of DPP are for the people of Taiwan. As a proof, during the first period of his reign, the relations between Taiwan and Mainland China has been clearly distinguished as one country on each side, submission to hold a referendum and new constitution. By focusing to this two issues, Chen won with 50.1% votes [17].

Chen's second term as president focused on achieving two goals: constitutional reform and the development of Taiwanese nationalism. In his inaugural speech, Chen declared that he would reform the constitution of the ROC before his regime ended in 2008. The first step that he took was to propose a draft for a new constitution through a referendum in 2006. This constitutional reform was not an easy task because a constitution bill needed to be approved by three quarters of the legislative members [12]. Beijing was heavily opposed to the constitutional reform because it would be considered a declaration of Taiwanese independence. If Chen insisted on holding the referendum, Beijing would be forced to impose its military force on Taiwan. Meanwhile, Chen also intended to normalize the cross-strait relations and to open discussions in order to achieve peace. Based on the "One Country on Each Side" principle proposed by Chen in 2002, Taiwan's status was that of an independent and sovereign state which respects and honors freedom, human rights, and peace [17].

In an interview with Time Asia, Chen reiterated that Taiwan is an independent, sovereign country and said that he hopes to draft a new constitution to normalize cross-strait relations during his second term in office. Chen also said that he's a history maker and have two historic missions. First, he wants to hand over to the 23 million Chen also intended to normalize the cross-strait relations and to open discussions in order to achieve peace. Based on the "One Country on Each Side" principle proposed by Chen in 2002, Taiwan's status was that of an independent and sovereign state which respects and honors freedom, human rights, and peace. Chen pointed out that if Taiwan wasn't an independent country, it wouldn't hold direct presidential elections. Taiwan

also wouldn't exclude the possibility of establishing any kind of political relationship, so long as it has the consent of its 23 million people. About rewriting of the Constitution is a tantamount to a declaration of independence, Chen said it doesn't involve national sovereignty, national territory or the question of independence versus unification. Those who interpret constitutional reform as a declaration of independence are making a grave mistake. The constitutional reform is an issue of consolidating and deepening Taiwan's democracy, and Beijing's authorities distort Taiwan's process of democratization and call it a move toward formal independence [17].

As a sovereign country, Chen specifically emphasized that he and his party will be focus on how to unite the nation. He said, "Some people ask if the territory of our state includes Outer Mongolia or even the mainland of China. There is the People's Republic of China on the mainland of China and the Republic of Mongolia in Outer Mongolia, both of which are members of the United Nations. We will not naively and ignorantly make a fool of ourselves internationally by saying that our territory includes the Republic of Mongolia and the People's Republic of China" [8].

Chen did not issue any new or specific policy on the unification of Taiwan and the cross-strait relations. Even so, several of Chen's attitudes and policies reflected his consistency in developing Taiwan's nationalism. Among those was Chen's promise to use the name "Taiwan" more often than "the Republic of China" without changing the national title of the ROC and to remove the name "China" from every Taiwanese company. Besides that, Chen also declared that Sun Yat-sen, who was considered the "Father of the Chinese nations," had been a "foreigner" to Taiwan (even though the name Sun Yat-sen still appeared in the primary school books). The Taiwanese Ministry of Education also reduced the required Mandarin lessons from five sessions to four sessions a week [12].

In 2005, Chen's constantly changing policies and rhetoric forced Beijing to formulate a regulation with legal authority to restrict and prevent Chen or any individual attempting to declare the independence of Taiwan. This law would later be named as the Anti-Secession Law (反分裂国家法). With this law, Beijing reaffirmed its rejection of the independence of Taiwan and the importance of the "One China" principle [18]. Every movement that led to the secession of Taiwan, if necessary, would be dealt with military force. In response to Beijing's new policy, the chairperson of the Mainland Affairs Council, Joseph Wu, demanded that Beijing apologize to all the Taiwanese people because the Anti-Secession Law was an insult to them. However, Taipei decided to not hold a referendum and to maintain peaceful cross-strait relations [19]. Instead, one year later in 2006, Chen announced his decision to cease the function of the National Unification Council and National Unification Guidelines. Chen said that the existence of the National Unification Council had violated the ideology of democracy in Taiwan and that unification was not the only option for Taiwan. Therefore, he said that it was very crucial to cease the function of the National Unification Council and the National Unification Guidelines. From this statement, it became clear that Chen's earlier "Four Noes-One without" policy had considerably shifted in favor of Taiwanese independence or at least in favor of keeping Taiwan away from the shadow of China.



Chen's efforts to improve Taiwan's nationalism encountered a major challenge when he was implicated in a corruption case. Chen's credibility plummeted, and many demonstrations called for Chen to step down as president. When Chen started to lose public confidence, he once again issued a decision related to the future of Taiwan and encouraged Taiwan to become a member of the UN. In 2007, the DPP filed a proposal for a referendum on registering Taiwan in the UN under the name "Taiwan." There was an outpouring of support for the DPP in their effort to make Taiwan a member of the UN. The community of Taiwanese people in Europe also supported Taiwan's request to become a member of the UN. They also stated that the future of Taiwan should be determined by all the people of Taiwan, not by any party or individual [20]. However, the UN refused Taiwan's application to become a member of the UN because the UN abided by the "One China" principle and recognized the PRC as the true China. After the rejection of Taiwan's membership in the UN, Chen and the DPP became preoccupied with corruption, embezzlement, and other issues. In the end, Chen was arrested by the police in 2008 on the charges of corruption and money laundering.

## 4 Conclusion

At the beginning of his presidency, Chen demonstrated a good intention for improving the relationship between Beijing and Taipei by proposing the "Four Noes-One Without" policy. Beijing did not immediately accept the Chen administration, but this policy was at least successful in reducing the tension in the cross-strait relations. One year later, Chen displayed a completely different attitude, for example, by declaring himself the president of Taiwan instead of the president of the ROC. Chen's attitude received support from the Taiwanese people who wanted Taiwan to be an independent and sovereign country.

Upon increasing the use of the word "Taiwan" rather than "Republic of China," Chen also stated that the cross-strait relations were best described as two states located side by side. This statement not only angered Beijing but also the KMT. Chen was deemed to have neglected the "Four Noes-One Without" policy that he had created himself. In addition, Chen eventually proposed a referendum on the status quo of Taiwan. Chen insisted that only the people of Taiwan could determine the fate and the future of Taiwan, so it was imperative to conduct a referendum.

Various policies formulated by Chen did not improve the cross-strait relations. Beijing eventually issued the Anti-Secession Law to provoke Chen, whose policies continued to lead to the efforts for the independence of Taiwan. Beijing was concerned about the possibility of Chen declaring the independence of Taiwan. In response, Chen became even more confident of his proposed referendum. He felt that Taiwan and the Taiwanese people would continue to be underestimated by Beijing if Taiwan did not quickly become an independent state. Chen received much criticism for proposing this referendum. As a result, he eventually delayed the referendum and switched to raising the awareness of Taiwanese nationalism.

This Taiwanese nationalism was different from the Chinese nationalism propagated by the KMT regime. Chen re-entered the history of Taiwan into the curriculum and continued to use the word "Taiwan." In 2006, Chen finally decided to cease the function of the National Unification Council because it was inconsistent with the ideology of

democracy. Beijing considered this decision to be the greatest step toward Taiwan's independence. However, when Chen was focusing on achieving his aim of fostering nationalism in Taiwan, he and his family instead were implicated in corruption cases. These cases were also what kept him occupied and made him lose public's confidence.

Chen's failure in accomplishing his goals was due to two main factors. First, the threat of Beijing made Chen rarely discuss the "One China" principle which had previously been the guideline for the cross-strait relations. The direction of Chen's policies was viewed as an effort to advance the Taiwan's declaration of independence. This possibility upset Beijing, which eventually threatened Taiwan with its military force. Chen knew that Beijing had a far superior military force and stronger international position than Taiwan. Therefore, Chen halted his intention to actually conduct a referendum. The second factor was the dispute between the DPP and the KMT, which had persisted for two terms of Chen's administration. Although it did not pursue unification as it used to, the KMT disagreed with the policies made by Chen and the DPP because they were considered to be harmful to Taiwan.

At the end of his reign in 2008, Chen was officially a suspect in corruption and money laundering cases. Chen's administration did not end well, but his efforts to improve Taiwanese nationalism and to fight for Taiwan's identity deserve to be regarded as a special historical record. Chen was the first Taiwanese president who did not differentiate between the people of Taiwan and those from mainland China. Chen did not pursue a "One China" policy nor did he try to "save China." Chen and the DPP focused more on the unification of thought on the matter of Taiwan's nationalism and a sense of pride in Taiwan.

At the moment, the cross-strait relations are entering a new phase with the election of Tsai Ingwen, who won the presidential election in January 2016 by gaining 58.1% of the votes. Like Chen, Tsai was also nominated by the DPP to represent the image of a pro-independent Taiwan. Although Tsai has expressed her desire to maintain the status quo, Beijing still held large-scale military exercises on the beach across the Taiwan Strait on the eve of the inauguration of the president of Taiwan on May 20, 2016. This development has again worsened the relations between China and Taiwan because China believed that the DPP would further pursue the independence of Taiwan under Tsai [21].

It is still unclear how Taiwan will be under Tsai's regime, but the ideals of the independence of Taiwan have again become a controversial issue in the cross-strait relations, as they were under Chen's regime. If Tsai decides to declare Taiwan's independence, China certainly will not remain quiet. Currently, China's military force and international position are far superior to Taiwan's. Thus, it seems that the independence of Taiwan is still a very difficult goal to achieve.

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