

Report Documentation Page

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

1. REPORT DATE 2007		2. REPORT TYPE final		3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2007 to 00-00-2007	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE How Taiwan's status is resolved will determine whether U.S.-China relations are cooperative or hostile				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Roger Cliff; David Shlapak				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) RAND Corporation, 1776 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA, 90401-3208				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER RAND/RB-226-AF	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Captain James Malcom, HQ USAF/A8XP, Room 4D1083, 1070 Air Force Pentagon, Washington, DC, 20330-1070				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES Online access: http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB226/ Summarizes RAND/MG-567-AF: U.S.-China relations after resolution of Taiwan's status					
14. ABSTRACT Depending on how Taiwan's status is resolved, U.S.-China relations could range from friendly cooperation to cold war. As China's military capabilities grow, it will be increasingly important-and increasingly difficult-for the United States to both prevent an attempt at violent reunification and maintain the capability to defeat it.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

How Taiwan's Status Is Resolved Will Determine Whether U.S.-China Relations Are Cooperative or Hostile

RAND RESEARCH AREAS

- THE ARTS
- CHILD POLICY
- CIVIL JUSTICE
- EDUCATION
- ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT
- HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE
- INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
- NATIONAL SECURITY
- POPULATION AND AGING
- PUBLIC SAFETY
- SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
- SUBSTANCE ABUSE
- TERRORISM AND HOMELAND SECURITY
- TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
- WORKFORCE AND WORKPLACE

At present, the most obvious and likely source of conflict between the United States and China is Taiwan. Although the United States has not had a formal defense treaty with Taiwan since 1979, it has an ongoing commitment to Taiwan's security and has been the island's principal protector against Chinese threats since 1950. Resolution of Taiwan's status, however, would not necessarily eliminate the possibility of tension or even conflict between Washington and Beijing. Indeed, the effect of an end to the cross-strait standoff on Sino-U.S. ties will be strongly conditioned by *what* that resolution is and *how* it came about.

A RAND Project AIR FORCE (PAF) study examines the ways in which Taiwan's status could be resolved and how the events surrounding that resolution would likely shape the subsequent U.S.-China relationship. There are, broadly speaking, ten different logical possibilities for trajectories that the cross-strait relationship could follow. Four of them are peaceful:

- continuation of the current unresolved status quo
- peaceful unification
- peaceful independence
- a compromise resolution.

Six involve Chinese use of force against Taiwan:

- violent unification with U.S. intervention
- violent unification without U.S. intervention
- violent independence with U.S. intervention
- violent independence without U.S. intervention
- violent irresolution with U.S. intervention
- violent irresolution without U.S. intervention.

Looking across all these cases reveals that simply assuming that the Taiwan situation has

Abstract

Depending on how Taiwan's status is resolved, U.S.-China relations could range from friendly cooperation to cold war. As China's military capabilities grow, it will be increasingly important—and increasingly difficult—for the United States to both prevent an attempt at violent reunification and maintain the capability to defeat it.

been “resolved” is hardly enough to understand the nature of the subsequent security relationship between China and the United States. Instead, the manner and mode in which the Taiwan question is decided will make a great deal of difference. To the extent one can generalize, the obvious appears to be true: The consequences of peaceful outcomes—including continued peaceful irresolution—are both more predictable and generally better for relations between Washington and Beijing.

In contrast, nonpeaceful resolutions of Taiwan's status could cause U.S.-China relations to fall anywhere from reasonable amity to a cold war–like confrontation, depending on the circumstances surrounding the conflict and its outcome. Only a fundamentally pragmatic Chinese government is likely to recognize Taiwan as an independent country, so if the resolution of Taiwan's status results in formal independence for Taiwan, subsequent U.S.-China relations will likely be cooperative. If the result is forcible unification for Taiwan, the United States and China will likely find themselves in a hostile cold war. A war over Taiwan that left its status unresolved would also be likely to result in a prolonged and severe deterioration of U.S.-China

This product is part of the RAND Corporation research brief series. RAND research briefs present policy-oriented summaries of published, peer-reviewed documents.

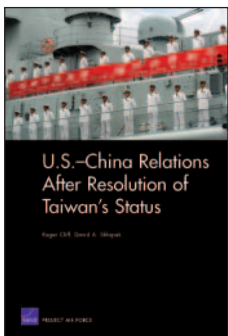
Corporate Headquarters
1776 Main Street
P.O. Box 2138
Santa Monica, California
90407-2138
TEL 310.393.0411
FAX 310.393.4818

© RAND 2007

relations, although this deterioration would not necessarily be as severe as if China had won the war and forced Taiwan to unify with the mainland.

For more than 25 years, U.S. policy has, above all else, sought to ensure that any resolution of Taiwan's status occurs peacefully. The implication of the findings of this study is

that, as China's power and confidence in its military capabilities grow and therefore the possibility of Beijing attempting to bring about unification through force increases, preventing such an attempt from occurring while maintaining the capability to defeat it will become increasingly important even as it becomes increasingly difficult. ■



This research brief describes work done for RAND Project AIR FORCE and documented in *U.S.-China Relations After Resolution of Taiwan's Status*, by Roger Cliff and David A. Shlapak, MG-567-AF (available at <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG567/>), 2007, 38 pp., ISBN: 978-0-8330-4036-7. The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit research organization providing objective analysis and effective solutions that address the challenges facing the public and private sectors around the world. RAND's publications do not necessarily reflect the opinions of its research clients and sponsors. **RAND**® is a registered trademark.

RAND Offices

Santa Monica, CA • Washington, DC • Pittsburgh, PA • Jackson, MS • Cambridge, UK • Doha, QA



PROJECT AIR FORCE

THE ARTS
CHILD POLICY
CIVIL JUSTICE
EDUCATION
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT
HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
NATIONAL SECURITY
POPULATION AND AGING
PUBLIC SAFETY
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
SUBSTANCE ABUSE
TERRORISM AND
HOMELAND SECURITY
TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE
WORKFORCE AND WORKPLACE

This PDF document was made available from www.rand.org as a public service of the RAND Corporation.

This product is part of the RAND Corporation research brief series. RAND research briefs present policy-oriented summaries of individual published, peer-reviewed documents or of a body of published work.

The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit research organization providing objective analysis and effective solutions that address the challenges facing the public and private sectors around the world.

Support RAND

[Browse Books & Publications](#)

[Make a charitable contribution](#)

For More Information

Visit RAND at www.rand.org

Explore [RAND Project AIR FORCE](#)

View [document details](#)

Limited Electronic Distribution Rights

This document and trademark(s) contained herein are protected by law as indicated in a notice appearing later in this work. This electronic representation of RAND intellectual property is provided for non-commercial use only. Permission is required from RAND to reproduce, or reuse in another form, any of our research documents for commercial use.