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RESTORATION OF THE LAWFUL RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF CHINA IN THE UNITED NATIONS

Letter dated 18 November 1968 from the Permanent Representative
of Belgium to the United Nations to the President of the General
Assembly

Draft resolution A/L.550, which Belgium, together with Chile, Iceland, Italy and Luxembourg, has the honour to submit to the Assembly for its consideration, provides for the establishment by the General Assembly of a committee to study the question of the representation of China in all its aspects.

My Government has requested me to inform you of the motives which prompted it to associate itself with this procedural proposal, and of its general views on the problem itself. As the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs said on 10 October 1968, in the course of the general debate,^{1/} we want the voluntary or imposed isolation of mainland China to come to an end. But does mainland China wish to participate in the work of the United Nations and observe its rules and principles? Furthermore, how can we ensure that the Republic of China (Taiwan), which for many years has demonstrated that it fulfils all the normal conditions for recognition as a State, will be able, if it so desires, to continue to participate as a full Member in the work of the United Nations?

The proposed study should be undertaken so that Member States may arrive at a decision in full knowledge of the facts. This proposal does not in any way prejudice possible solutions to the problem; it is merely a procedural proposal designed to throw light on the problems and difficulties involved.

* Reissued for technical reasons.

^{1/} A/PV.1689.

To avoid all ambiguity and to dispel any idea that the resolution we are co-sponsoring is intended to make it more difficult for the People's Republic of China to participate in our work, the Belgian Government wishes to make known its opinion on the substance of the problem. Should the reply of the People's Republic of China prove favourable, Belgium considers that that country should be recognized as entitled to the rights conferred by the Charter on the representative of China. The Republic of China (Taiwan) would retain the rights held by all States in our Organization that are not permanent members of the Security Council.

Draft resolution A/L.549 does not seem to us to satisfy these considerations, since it simplifies the question by prohibiting the Republic of China (Taiwan) from participating in our work from the moment when the People's Republic of China takes its seat.

The Belgian Government hopes, by its procedural proposal and by its attitude on the substance of the matter, to help in solving a question which has divided us for many years and which handicaps the efforts our Organization must make for peace.

I should be grateful if this letter could be circulated to Member States as a document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) C. SCHUURMANS
Permanent Representative of Belgium
to the United Nations
