

Breaking the Wall of Separation through Active Participation in International Institution

Edward I-hsin Chen
Tamkang University

Since late the 1980s the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan has pursued a "pragmatic" foreign policy, which involves building substantive relations with developed countries through a variety of cooperation programs or establishing diplomatic ties with developing countries by means of foreign aid programs (Chen, 1990), while actively participating in as many international institutions as possible.¹

The ROC has been relatively isolated in the international community since 1971, the year it was forced to abandon its seat in the United Nations (UN). During the period 1971-90 forty-eight countries severed diplomatic ties with the country (Report of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, p. 233). It was expelled from many UN specialist agencies and related agencies to which it had previously belonged, and was also obliged to withdraw from many other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental.

It was not until 1988 that the ROC's external environment began to stabilize, when Taiwan, with the help of the United States and Japan, succeeded in regaining its membership of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) (Report of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, p. 228). Since then, the country has made a gradual comeback.

By applying what Robert O. Keohane called "neoliberal institutionalism," this author will discuss why the ROC, which was not accepted as a normal member of the international community when the country's economic power was not that impressive, is now entitled to be enrolled as a member of more and more international institutions. In short, the main argument of this essay is that the rise in the ROC's economic power is responsible for changes in the country's status in the international community.

The country's overall economic power will be measured by its gross domestic product (GDP), trade resources (exports plus imports as percentage of world trade), and monetary resources (reserves as percentage of world reserves). This author will also compare the economic power of

the ROC with that of the other "little dragons" (South Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore), the United States, the People's Republic of China (PRC), and Japan so as to provide an indication of the long-term trend.

Theoretical Assumption

The main thesis of this essay is that a decline or rise in a state's economic power is responsible for changes in its status in the international community, including intergovernmental organizations, cross-national nongovernmental organizations, international regimes, and conventions.²

According to what Robert Keohane called "neoliberal institutionalism," states are not always highly constrained by international institutions, and international agreements are not easy to make and to keep. Nor do states ignore the effects of their actions on the wealth or power of other states.

It is thus argued that state actions depend heavily upon international institutional arrangements, which in turn affect (1) the flow of information and opportunities to negotiate; (2) the ability of governments to monitor others' compliance and to implement their own commitments; and (3) expectations about the solidity of international agreements (Keohane, 1989, p. 2).

It is argued in this essay that states pay close attention to the effect on their own wealth or power of other states' actions and fluctuations in their economic power. In the same way, states are concerned about how a decline or rise in their economic power will affect their status in international institutions, particularly international economic institutions. When states find that a rise in their economic power is not correspondingly reflected in their status in the international community, they will make efforts to join international economic institutions. And when states find that their economic power is in decline, they will take action to prevent this decline from affecting their wealth, power, and status in the international community.

A state's chance of successfully attaining its desired status in the international community, in this author's opinion, is also closely associated with changes in the international system, such as the end of the Cold War. If a country's economic power rises within a loose or very loose bipolar system the rise will only bring about, at most, slight and incremental changes in its status in international institutions (Kaplan, 1957; 1969). This is clearly shown in the case of the PRC which took twenty-two years to replace the ROC in the UN.

What happened when a country failed to demonstrate that it was powerful enough in one way or another during the Cold War era? In these circumstances, it would find it increasingly difficult to maintain its

status in the international community, though the loss of status might take place gradually over a long period. This is clearly shown in the case of the ROC which maintained its seat in the UN for twenty two years after the Communist take over of mainland China. This is largely because the balance of power and a struggle for power were taken into consideration by the superpowers in the Cold War era.

However, a decline or rise in a country's economic power that takes place in a "unimultipolar" system would account for significant changes in its status in international institutions, and in international economic institutions in particular (Huntington, 1991, p. 6). And because countries which are economically strong but politically (and often militarily) weak depend upon the institutional arrangements of the international community much more than countries which are politically (and often militarily) strong but economically weak, such a thesis would be more applicable to most of the newly industrialized countries (NICs) than to any other category of countries.

Considerable Isolation in the International Community, 1971-1988

The heaviest blow to the ROC's diplomatic efforts to maintain its status in the international community took place in 1971 when the already isolated island country was obliged to abandon its seat in the UN.

In the absence of UN membership, the country automatically lost its membership in the various special bodies or functional commissions created by the General Assembly, Security Council, or the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN. Not only was it expelled from the UN specialized agencies and related organizations to which it had previously belonged, it was also obliged to gradually withdraw from many other international organizations as a result of political pressure from the PRC.

The UN specialized agencies—such as the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the International Labor Organization (ILO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Health Organization (WHO)—are channels through which states participate in international affairs and behave in the international community, though by no means all of them function efficiently. The same holds true for the UN related organizations—such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (Banks and Overstreet, 1980, pp. 606-626).

Lacking these channels for participation in international affairs, the ROC lost most of its contacts with the outside world. Those institutions of which it remained a member or which it was able to reenter often forced the ROC to change its title. For example, the ADB, of which the ROC is a founding member, accepted the PRC as a member in

March 1986 and arbitrarily changed the ROC's name into "Taipei, China" under political pressure from Peking. As a result, Taipei refused to send a delegation to the organization's 19th and 20th conferences in Manila.

It was not until 1988, when Taipei was assumed that its privileges in the organization and its status as a founding member would not be affected, that the country sent a group of eleven delegates to attend the 21st Conference, placing a signboard inscribed "under protest" on its table as an expression of dissatisfaction (ROC FAY, 1998, pp. 190-191). At that time, the ADB was extremely important to the ROC, allowing it to demonstrate its economic power and show willingness to fulfill its international obligations by contributing to ADB funds. It could not afford to lose its membership and privileges in this regional intergovernmental organization.

The country faced an even worse and more embarrassing situation in the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) when the intergovernmental police body accepted the application of the PRC in 1984 and, in accordance with a proposal from Peking, changed the ROC's title to "Taiwan, China" and deprived Taipei's leading delegate of the right to attend the annual INTERPOL conference or to vote at meetings in 1986. In substance, this amounted to loss of membership, and when its protests came to nothing, the ROC had to consider whether to withdraw altogether. However, since many of the organization's members were still interested in cooperating with Taipei in the area of crime prevention, the ROC decided to maintain a substantive, cooperative relationship with the international police organization despite these humiliating terms. (ROC FAY, 1993, p.757)

While the external environment does not allow the ROC pursue its rightful status in the international community, under the "pragmatic" foreign policy Taipei is willing to accept some humiliating conditions so long as its privileges and national dignity are not significantly damaged or lost.

Between 1972 and 1988 the ROC maintained its membership in ten or so intergovernmental institutions, though some of these memberships were in name alone (see table 1). For example, the country did not enjoy full privileges in ADB and it had neither full membership nor full privileges in INTEROPL. The ROC was replaced by the PRC in the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in 1972, in the International Union for the Publication of Customs Tariffs (IUPCT) in 1977, and in the International Committee of Military Medicine (ICMM) in 1988. Indeed, these years were the dark ages of the ROC's diplomatic history, though a new chapter began in the late 1980s.

Table 1. The ROC's Status in Intergovernmental Organizations, 1972-1988

IGO	Title	Membership	Privileges	Degree of Participation
1. ADB	Taipei, China	Complete	Incomplete	High
2. INTERPOL	Taiwan, China	Deemed Lost	Incomplete	Medium
3. ICMM	Taiwan	Deemed Lost	Incomplete	Low
4. ICAC	China (Taiwan)	Complete	Incomplete	High
5. OIE	Taipei China	Complete	Incomplete	High
6. APO	ROC	Complete	Compete	High
7. AARRO	ROC	Complete	Compete	High
8. FFTC/ ASPAC(a)	ROC	Complete	Compete	High
9. IUPCT		Deemed Lost	Incomplete	Low
10. PCA		Deemed Lost	Incomplete	Low

Sources: ROC Foreign Affairs Yearbook (Hereafter ROC FAY), 1988, 1989-1990, 1991, 1992 AND 1993 (Taipei: Cheng Chung Book Co., Ltd., 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, and 1993), pp. 190-193, 244-248, 265-268, 272-274 and 755-758 respectively (in Chinese). This author would like to express his gratitude to the International Organizations Department and East Asian & Pacific Affairs Department of the ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its material assistance.

Abbreviations: 1. ADB: Asian Development Bank, created in 1966
 2. INTERPOL: International Criminal Police Organization, created in 1923
 3. ICMM: International Committee of Military Medicine, created in 1921
 4. ICAC: International Cotton Advisory Committee, created in 1939
 5. OIE: International Office of Epizootics, created in 1924
 6. APO: Asian Productivity Organization, created 1961
 7. AARRO: Afro-Asian Rural Reconstruction Organization, created in 1962
 8. FFTC/ASPAC: Food and Fertilizer Technology Center for the Asian and Pacific Region/Asian and Pacific Council, created in 1966
 9. IUPCT: International Union for the Publication of Customs Tariffs, created in 1891.
 10. PCA: Permanent Court of Arbitration, created in 1899

Note: (a) The FFTC is the only active institution of four specialized agencies of ASPAC. ASPAC was established by the ROC, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, New Zealand, Australia, Malaysia, and South Vietnam in 1966. However, the council has existed in name alone since 1971.

Striving for Rightful Status in the International Community, 1989-1993

In the late 1980s, the ROC began an effort to regain its status in the international community. This initiative was based on a recognition that changes in the international system presented an opportunity for

the ROC, with its impressive economic strength, to make a new contribution.

The most successful move of the ROC so far in the post-Cold War era has been its participation in the third conference of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) organization held in Seoul in November 1991 with the assistance of the United States, Japan, Australia, and South Korea. Since then, it has become one of the most active members in the most important international institution in the Asia-Pacific region (ROC FAY, 1992, pp. 274-275; ROC FAY, 1993, pp. 295-296, 759).

The ROC also became a member of the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI) in November 1992 after it provided a substantial contribution to the Central American Economic and Social Development Fund (CAESDF) (ROC FAY, 1991, p. 269; ROC FAY, 1992, pp. 276-277; ROC FAY, 1993, p. 297). In addition, since 1991 the country has been attempting to join the South-East Asian Central Banks (SEACEN), the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA) and the Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center (AVRDC), and has sent observers to the annual conferences and various meetings of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) (ROC FAY, 1993, p. 756).

Moreover, since 1991 the ROC has established channels for informal dialogue with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), actively attending the annual conferences and meetings of the two intergovernmental economic organizations as well as participating in their various activities (ROC FAY, 1992, pp. 276-277; ROC FAY, 1993, pp. 297-298). The International Organization for Migration (IOM) even requested permission to set up a representative office in Taipei in 1990 so as to strengthen cooperation in the area of migration (ROC FAY, 1991, pp. 269-270). And in 1993 Taipei was for the first time invited to participate in the Post-Forum Conference.³

An even more promising development for the ROC would be admission to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Since 1990 the ROC has applied for GATT membership under the title, the "Special Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu," (ROC FAY, 1992, pp. 275-276; ROC FAY, 1993, pp. 758-759) and in 1992, the country was granted "observer" status in the organization after a working party was organized to review its case. Since then, Taipei has actively negotiated for full GATT membership. According to an agreement reached by its members during the Uruguay Round of talks in late 1993, GATT will soon transform itself into the World Trade Organization (WTO), which will probably be the most important intergovernmental

Table 2. The ROC's Status in Intergovernmental Organizations, 1989-1993

IGO	Title	Membership	Privileges	Degree of Participation
1. APEC	Chinese Taipei	Complete	Incomplete	High
2. CABI	ROC	Complete	Complete	High
3. SEACEN	Central Bank of China, Taipei	Complete	Complete	High
4. ISTA	Taiwan	Complete	Complete	High
5. AVRDC	ROC	Complete	Complete	High
6. ICCAT	Taiwan/ROC(a)	Observer	Incomplete	medium
7. IDB	?(b)	Observer	Incomplete	medium
8. OECD	DNME(c)	Participant	Incomplete	medium
9. EBRD	Taipei China	Participant	Incomplete	medium
10. Post-Forum Conference(d)	Taiwan/ROC	Dialogue Partner	Incomplete	medium
11. GATT	SCTTPKM(e)	Observer	Incomplete	High

Sources: ROC FAY, 1991, 1992 and 1993, pp. 269-270, 274-277, and 295-298, 756 respectively. This author would like to express his gratitude to the International Organizations Department and East Asian & Pacific Affairs Department of the ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its material assistance.

- Abbreviations: 1. APEC: Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, created in 1989
 2. CABI: Central American Bank for Economic Integration, created in 1961
 3. SEACEN: South-East Asian Central Banks, created in 1966
 4. ISTA: International Seed Testing Association, created in 1991
 5. AVRDC: Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center, created in 1971
 6. ICCAT: International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, created in 1969
 7. IDB: Inter-American Development Bank, created in 1959
 8. OECD: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, created in 1960
 9. EBRD: European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, created in 1990
 10. Post-Forum Conference/South Pacific Forum (SPF), SPF was created in 1971
 11. GATT: General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, created in 1947

Notes: (a) ICCAT uses "Taiwan" in its official correspondence with the ROC, whereas the ROC are, "ROC".

(b) ROC's is still under negotiation.

(c) The ROC was named a Dynamic Asian Economy (DAE) when the country was invited to attend the first informal seminar between the OECD and the Asian NICs held in Paris in January 1989. The ROC delegate proposed that such seminars be held more frequently. An more and more NICs outside Asia have been invited to attend the seminar, they are now called Dynamic Non-Member Economies (DNMEs).

(d) The Post-Forum Conference is a dialogue between South Pacific countries and other selected countries, held after the close of the annual conference of the South Pacific Forum. The dialogue partners of the Post-Forum Conference are the US, UK, Canada, Japan, and the PRC. The Conference accepted the ROC as a new dialogue partner in 1992 and invited the country to attend the Post-Forum Conference in 1993. Actually, the country dialogue partnership is an incomplete one as it has diplomatic ties with only four of the thirteen SPF member countries.

(e) "Special Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu" (SCTTPKM) is the name the ROC has used in its application for membership of GATT since 1990.

Table 3. Numerical Increase of ROC Involvement in Cross-national NGOs, 1988-1993

Year	1988	1989-1990	1991	1992	1993
Involvement in NGOs	728	747	766	778	795

Sources: ROC FAY, 1988, 1989-1990, 1991, 1992, and 1993, PP. 728, 747, 766, 773 and 795 respectively.

Table 4. Numerical Increase in Conventions between the ROC and Foreign Countries, 1927-1993

Period	1927-1948	1949-1971	1972-1988	1989-1993
1st Category of Conventions*	10	44	185	78
2nd Category of Conventions+	0	0	83	147
Subtotal	10	44	268	225

Sources: Calculated from Index of Conventions between the ROC and Foreign Countries, 1927-1992 (Taipei: Cheng Chung Book Co., Ltd., 1993) and Conventions between the ROC and Foreign Countries, 1986-1990, Vols. 5-8 (Taipei: Cheng Chung Book Co., Ltd., 1977, 1982, 1986 & 1993), both in Chinese; and ROC FAY, 1988, 1989-1990, 1991, 1992, and 1993, pp. 613-626, 835-856, 804-825, 778-790 and 739-754 respectively. This author would like to express his gratitude to the Treaty and Legal Affairs Department of the ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its material assistance.

Notes: Conventions include treaties, agreements, protocols, memoranda of understanding, exchanges of notes, agreed minutes, and rules of procedure, etc

* 1st category of conventions are those signed by the ROC and foreign countries with which it has formal diplomatic ties.

+2nd category of conventions are those signed by the ROC and foreign countries with which it has no formal ties as well as ROC organizations and their foreign counterparts.

Table 5. Numerical Increase of ROC Participation in International Conferences, 1988-1993

Year	1988	1989-1990	1991	1992	1993
Intergovernmental Conferences	13	44	28	38	66
Cross-national Non-Governmental Conferences	28	1570	1215	1436	1056

Sources: ROC FAY, 1988, 1989-1990, 1991, 1992, and 1993, pp. 630, 860, 829, 794 and 761 respectively.

trade institution in the world (Chen, 1994, pp. 80-91). It is no wonder, therefore, that the ROC is so eager to join.

The ROC has also made every effort to participate in crossnational non-governmental organizations (NGOs), something which it has found much easier to do since the end of the Cold War. In the economic arena, probably the two most important cross-national non-governmental organizations are the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) and the Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC) (ROC FAY, 1993, pp. 298-299). Politically, the Asian Pacific League for Freedom and Democracy (APLFD) and the World League for Freedom and Democracy (WLHD), both sponsored primarily by the ROC, have established channels through which the ROC government can make contacts with some political figures in countries with which it has no diplomatic ties.⁴

That the ROC'S status in the international community has risen since the end of the Cold War is reflected in the large number of conventions it has signed with foreign countries since 1989 (see table 4), and its increased participation in international conferences (see table 5).

Economic Power and International Status

While the transformation of international system from a very loose

Table 6. Overall Economic Resources Among US, Japan, PRC and Four Little Dragons, 1970-1992 (Gross Domestic Production in Billions of Current U.S. Dollars)

Year	US	Japan	PRC	ROC	South Korea	Hong Kong	Singapore
1970	988	203	—	18	8	3	2
1975	1538	498	—	29	20	8	5
1980	2708	1036	89	39	58	22	11
1985	4016	1343	239	59	92	33	17
1990	5522	3158	338	155	239	70	36
1991	5722	3600	371	182	272	82	42
1992	6038	3725	417	201	293	96	45

Sources: Calculated from International Financial Statistics (Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund), March 1994, pp. 164-165, 322-323, 334-335, 484-485 & 570-571; United Nations Statistical Yearbook, 1971, pp. 603-607, 1982, pp. 107-111 & 1991/1992, pp. 225-239; UN Monthly Bulletin of Statistics, January 1994, pp. 188-193 & 260-273; ROC Statistical Yearbook, 1992, PP. 337 & 752 (in Chinese); National Income Statistical Digest, December 1992, p.7 (in Chinese); and Quarterly National Economic Trends, February 1994, pp. 40-47 (in Chinese). The last two monthlies are published by the Directorate General of Budget, Accounting & Statistics, Executive Yuan, ROC.

Table 7. Trade Resources of the US, Japan, the PRC and the Four Little Dragons, 1970-1992 (exports plus imports as percentage of world trade)

Year	US	Japan	PRC	ROC	South Korea	Hong Kong	Singapor
1970	15.5	7.2	0.8	0.5	0.5	1.0	0.7
1980	11.7	6.6	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0
1986	14.1	7.7	1.7	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.1
1990	13.1	7.5	1.6	1.7	1.9	2.3	1.6
1991	13.4	7.9	1.9	2.0	2.2	2.8	1.8
1992	13.2	7.6	2.2	2.0	2.1	3.1	1.8

Sources: Calculated from United Nations Statistical Yearbook, 1991/1992, p. 856; ROC Statistical Yearbook, 1992, p. 522 (in Chinese); China's External Economy and Trade Yearbook, Ministry of External Economy and Trade, PRC, 1986, pp. 404-420; and 1993/1994, pp. 916 & 920 (in Chinese).

bipolar system into a unimultipolar system may partly account for changes in the ROC's status in the international community, this author argues that a rise in the country's economic power is responsible for changes in its status in international institutions.

Economically, the ROC is comfortably placed in comparison to the other "Little Dragons," as its gross domestic product (GDP) is second only to that of South Korea, even though South Korea seems to have undergone its "economic miracle" a little later than Taiwan. (see table 6).

Given the fact that the PRC is 250 times larger than the ROC in terms of territorial size and 55 times larger in terms of population, the latter's economic power as measured by GDP is particularly impressive. For example, Taiwan's GDP increased remarkably from about one fourth to almost one half of that of the PRC during the period 1990-1992.

Although the GDP of the ROC lags far behind those of the United States and Japan, Taiwan's economic performance has apparently impressed the two economic superpowers very much. Washington and Tokyo began to change their attitude toward the ROC in the late 1980s, and Taipei was encouraged by the United States and Japan to stay in the ADB in 1988 and to attend the Third APEC Conference in Seoul in 1991. The ROC has even received strong U.S. and Japanese support in its application for GATT membership.

While the ROC's GDP has made a good impression on the two economic giants, they are even more impressed by the country's trade resources. The ROC, as an export-oriented country, has performed quite well in trade since the 1960s, and its trade volume has grown year after year. Trade is one of the base of Taiwan's "economic miracle, and much

Table 8. Monetary Resources of the US, Japan, the PRC, the ROC, South Korea and Singapore, 1982-1992.

Year	US	Japan	PRC	ROC	South Korea	Singapo
1982	3.2	6.1	3.5	2.7	0.8	2.6
1985	3.3	5.8	3.1	5.9	0.7	3.3
1990	6.1	8.2	3.3	8.5	1.7	3.2
1991	5.1	6.9	4.7	9.2	1.4	3.7
1992	4.3	6.7	2.1	8.9	1.8	4.2

Sources: Calculated from International Financial Statistics (Washington: IMF), jUNE 1993, pp. 25-37 & March 1994, pp. 1162-163; United Nations Statistical Yearbook, 1991/1992, pp. 1023-1042; Financial Statistics (Taipei: The Central Bank of China, Taiwan District, ROC), January 1984, pp. 2-3 & January 1994, pp. 2-3 (in Chinese); and China's External Economy and Trade Yearbook, Ministry of External Economy and Trade, PRC, 1993/1994, pp. 912-913 (in Chinese).

of the credit for Taiwan's trade performance should go to its small and medium-sized companies.

With regard to trade, the performance of the ROC has been almost as good as that of South Korea since 1970, and over the long run, its has been no smaller than that of the PRC. The ROC's trade volume increased to one fourth of Japan's trade volume in 1991 and 1992, compared to one fifth in 1986, one seventh in 1980, and one fourteenth in 1970.

Even more impressive are the ROC's foreign exchange reserves, which have been almost unrivaled in the world since the late 1980s. Reserves stood at US\$73.9 billion in 1988, compared to US\$22.6 billion in 1985. In 1992, they jumped to US\$82.3 billion (Financial Statistics, 1994, pp. 2-3). The ROC's huge foreign exchange reserves have acted as a magnet for foreign governments eager for foreign aid and investment and other forms of cooperation.

In his book, *Beyond Peace*, the late Richard Nixon wrote, "Tiny Taiwan is an economic giant. It has the largest foreign exchange reserve in the world, is the fourteenth-largest trading country in the world, and has the twentieth-largest GNP in world—larger than the GNPs of three fourths of the nations in the U.N." (Nixon, 1994, p. 134) There remarks are by and large compatible with the figures given above.

A rise in a state's economic power is more or less reflected in its status in the international community. For example, it was South Korea's impressive overall economic power combined with the transformation of the international system which followed on the end of the Cold War, that prompted the United States, the Soviet Union, the PRC, and Japan to deal seriously with its application for UN membership after 1989 (Han, 1991). A steady rise in economic power has also given

Singapore a large say, disproportionate to its in the international community. Even thing Hong Kong has been promised a high degree of economic autonomy. after it returns to Chinese rule in 1997, chiefly on account of its economic power.

The ROC's impressive overall economic power, together with the end of the Cold War and the transformation of the international system, has made the international community as a whole more and more willing to accept Taiwan as a member, or at least to allow it to get more involved in international affairs. In these circumstances, it is no wonder that the United States and Japan insisted that the ROC maintain its membership and most of its privileges in the ADB in 1988. It was also not surprising that, in the face of objections from the PRC, the United States, Japan, South Korea, and Austria proposed that the ROC be enrolled as a member of APEC in 1991. The same factors help explain why the ROC is now on the brink of joining GATT.

Conclusion

The above discussion has shown that the main thesis of this essay holds largely true: that a decline or rise in a state's economic power is responsible for changes in its status in international institutions, as shown in the cases of the PRC, Hong Kong, and the NICs such as the ROC, South Korea, and Singapore.

The ROC must strive for a stronger position in the international community in order to ensure its continued progress and prosperity. In the wake of the Cold War, its impressive economic power has given the ROC a new impetus to develop substantive relationships with international institutions.

What would happen if the ROC's performance were not so good? In the absence of economic power, the end of the Cold War and the transformation of the international system would not allow the ROC to be recognized by the international community as it is today.

The ROC has been quite successful in its efforts to win its rightful status in intergovernmental organizations such as the ADB and the APEC, and has become involved in the affairs of international economic regimes such as GATT. The country has also signed an increasing number of international conventions with foreign countries. Nevertheless, it has long been deprived of its rights to join many other important international institutions. These include economic organizations such as the IMF, the OECD, and the World Bank; sensitive international military institutions such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the IAEA, the Non-nuclear Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR); political institution such as the UN and the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference (PMC). Since APEC, the ROC has turned its

attention to GATT. And after GATT, probably it would have to think of the unthinkable.

Notes

1. This author agrees with Robert O. Keohane that international institutions emerge in the following three forms: (1) Formal intergovernmental or cross-national nongovernmental organizations; (2) International Regimes; and (3) Conventions. See his *International Institutions and State Power* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, Inc., 1989), pp. 7-8.
2. This thesis is inspired by Robert O. Keohane, who argues that a decline in US economic power would be held responsible for changes in international economic regimes. See Keohane, *op. cit.*, 84-88. In this essay I argue that a decline or rise in states' economic power reflected in their status in international institutions, and particularly in international economic institutions.
3. Information supplied by the East Asian & Pacific Affairs Department of the ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
4. For example, Maxime Carlot, the Prime Minister of Vanuatu, happens to be the Chairman of the Vanuatu Chapter of the APLFD and the WLFD. Mr. Carlot sent his Foreign Minister Serge Vohorto to sign a joint communique of mutual recognition with ROC Foreign Minister Fredrick F. Chien in March 1992. See ROC FAY, 1993, pp. 113-114. As a matter of fact, many chairpersons of the two NGOs are either political dignitaries themselves or potential members of the political elite in their countries.

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