

From Recipient to Contributor:  
Nationalist China as a Member State in the League and UN

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- \* Paper for the Symposium, *The Role of the United Nations in International Politic - A Historical Re-examination from the Member States' Perspectives*-, 20-21 December 2003.
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**Introduction**

In January 1919 the delegates from twenty-seven nations assembled in Paris in order to draft a peace settlement for the First World War. Three months later the Treaty of Versailles was completed. Though the final character of the Treaty of Versailles was determined almost entirely by the so-called Big Three – Woodrow Wilson, Lloyd George, and Clemenceau, it was Wilson's Fourteen Points that had built the foundation for the discussions among the delegates. In the Peace Conference, only four parts of Wilson famous program were adopted without modification. Among them Point Fourteen calling for a League of Nations was Wilson's first and foremost concern.

This postwar new international organization should be formed, in Wilson's words, "for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike." Accordingly, the League was supposed to bear responsibility for preventing war and promoting world peace. Before the Paris Peace Conference, official and unofficial proposals on the organization and functions of the League had been advanced in America and Europe. The idea of the international cooperation with a view to enhancing international interests was brought up in several plans. In effect, the Covenant of the League embodied this idea.<sup>1</sup>

China was one of the victors of World War I because she had joined the Allies since 1917. In the Peace Conference, Chinese delegates strove very hard for the return of Shandong Peninsula from Japan. In the meanwhile, the people in China were preoccupied with the debates about China's territorial arrangement in Paris, but they know little of the emerging of the League. Before the League came into existence, Cheng-t'ing Wang (1882-1961), one of Chinese delegates, had expected that the new international organization would furnish China with "expert knowledge and capital."<sup>2</sup> And Liang Qichao (1873-1929), a famous

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the idea in several plans, see Margaret E. Burton, *The Assembly of the League of Nations* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1941), pp. 2-10, 15-15, 23, 34-38.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted from Norbert Meinenberger, "China and the League of Nations," in *The league of Nations in Retrospect: proceedings of the Symposium* (Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1983), p. 341.

reformer at the turn the century who had been keeping track of the Peace Conference, noticed that some organs taking charge of reconstruction would be set up according to articles 23 to 25 of the Covenant.<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, when China signed the Treaty of St. Germain with Austria and thus automatically became one of the founding members of the League, most Chinese still put their expectations for the League on its maintaining world peace, solving the Shandong question, and saving China from international unequal treatment.<sup>4</sup>

The inability of the League to hinder Japan's occupation of Manchuria in 1931-32 greatly disappointed the Chinese. There still, however, existed a close technical cooperation between the League and Nationalist China in the 1930s. Evidently, Nationalist China appreciated this international cooperation with the League. In October 1944 at Dumbarton Oaks Conference, the promotion of international intellectual, economic, and social were included in China's proposals.<sup>5</sup>

This paper intends to examine Nationalist China's relations with the League and UN in terms of international cooperation. What the technical assistance rendered by the two international organizations will be discussed respectively. And Nationalist China's aid to foreign countries in the 1950s and 1960s will briefly be introduced.

### **Technical Cooperation between the League and Nationalist China**

The Nationalist Government of the Guomindang ruled Mainland China from 1928 to 1949. Before 1928 the Chinese government in Beijing had sent its delegates to Geneva and made a few responses to the League's initiatives in international cooperation. In 1926 the League asked all its member states to ratify "The Convention for International Exchange of Official Documents, Scientific and Literary Publications" and "The Convention for the Immediate Exchange of Official Journals, Parliamentary Annals and Documents, " which had been concluded in Brussels in 1886. In response to the League's request, China not only ratified them but also set up the Bureau of International Exchange of

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<sup>3</sup> Liang Qichao, *Oyu xinyinglu jielu* (Reflections on my European travels) (Taipei: Zhonghua Bookstore, 1976), p. 135.

<sup>4</sup> T'ang Ch'i-hua, *Beijing zhengfu yu guojilianmeng, 1919-1928* (The Beijing Government and the League of Nations, 1919-1928), (Taipei: Dongda Publishers, 1998),

<sup>5</sup> *Zhonghuaminguo yu Lianheguo shiliao hueibian: choushepian* (Documentary Collection on R.O.C and the United Nations: Origin) (Taipei: Academia Historica, 2001), pp. 251-267.

Publications in the Ministry of Education.<sup>6</sup> This bureau became a part of the Beihai Library in Beijing in 1928, then belonged to the Academia Sinica. Since 1934 the National Central Library has took over this bureau, which has been in charge of governmental publications exchange with international organizations and foreign countries to this day.

Besides this, the League tried twice to contact the Beijing Government for the cooperation in the field of health, but the latter failed to respond to them. In 1922 F. Norman White of the Health Section of the League Secretariat undertook an enquiry into the prevalence of epidemics and the work of the quarantine service in East Asia. Though his visit to China did not evoke interest from the Beijing Government, his investigation in East Asia helped the League to establish the Far-Eastern Epidemiological Intelligence Office in Singapore. Early in 1926, Ludwig J. Rajchman, Director of the Health Section, paid an informal visit to Beijing. The Minister of Interior met with him but still did not take official action.

Despite his unsuccessful contact with the Beijing Government, Rajchman began to cultivate intimate relation with Chinese new government in Nanjing. When the Nationalists completed the Northern Expedition in 1928 and set out to modernize China, it was Rajchman who played an important role in coordinating the League's efforts in China.

Late in 1928, the League decided to send its Deputy Secretary-General Joseph Avenol to pay an official visit to China. Some Chinese diplomats in European countries urged the Nanjing Government to take this opportunity to ask the League for help in China's national reconstruction. At the invitation of the Chinese Government two senior officials of the League Secretariat, Sir Arthur Salter, Director of the Financial and Economic Section, and Robert Haas, Director of the Transit and Communications, were invited to come to China in 1930 and 1931. Together with Rajchman's trips to China in 1929 and 1930 for port health investigation, their visits to China encouraged the National Government to advance the proposals on technical cooperation with the League on April 25, 1931. In addition to an account on what the League had already done to China in the field of health by then, these proposals asked the League for technical assistance in China's economic and educational reconstruction. In May the League Council unanimously adopted these

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<sup>6</sup> *Zhongguo jiaru guoji chubanshin xieyue zhi jingguo* (A record of China's ratification of the conventions of international exchange of publications) (Beiping; Beihai Library, n.d.).

proposals. At the same time, the Secretary-General's suggestion about methods of carrying out this collaboration was approved.<sup>7</sup>

Technical cooperation in the field of health had been carried on since late 1929 after Rajchman gave his advice to the Ministry of Health. During succeeding years, medical experts sent by the League rendered their assistance in the establishments of quarantine service, the Central Field Health Station, and the Central Hospital. Some experts helped in the control of epidemics in Shanghai and the flooded area in Lower Yangzi region. Professor Knud Faber of Copenhagen University made a survey of the system of medical education and the existing medical schools and gave advice on new medical curricula.

The League put much attention to educational reform in the field of intellectual cooperation. The educational cinematography was introduced to China by an Italian expert A. Sardi in 1931. Three European professors were invited to teach in the National Central University in 1931-1933. Above all, in 1931 the League sent a mission to China for a survey of Chinese education. Their observations and recommendations in *The Reorganization of Education in China* provoked heated debates among Chinese and American educators. In response to one of their recommendations a mission of five Chinese educators visited eight European countries for the purpose of studying different educational systems. Fernand Maurette, Deputy Director of the International Labor Office, pointed out in 1934 that the recommendations of the two missions did encourage the Ministry of Education to launch educational reform in some respects.

Economic reconstruction was one of the main concerns of the Nanjing Government. As early as 1930 the National Reconstruction Council directly asked the League to send experts to China for assistance. The Nanjing Government declined its attempt but set up the National Economic Council in 1931 "for planning reconstruction League collaboration." From 1931 on experts from the League gave their advice in the work of road construction, water conservancy, irrigation, agriculture, sericulture, and agricultural cooperatives.

In July 1933 the Committee of the Council for Collaboration between the League of Nations and China was organized for the purpose of coordinating the experts' advisory work in China. In addition, Rajchman

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<sup>7</sup> Tze-hsiung Kuo, "Technical Co-operation between China and Geneva," *Information Bulletin* 1: 6(July 1, 1936), pp. 3-4.

was recommended by the Nanjing Government to act the technical agent. The cooperation benefited China a lot, but Japan was always suspicious of its political implications and never concealed her dissatisfaction with it. Since 1934 the League had gradually reduced the scope of cooperation. After the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, anti-epidemics almost became the sole assistance the League offer to China until 1941.

Obviously, the League's technical cooperation with China was conducted mainly by way of sending experts to China. In total over fifty European advisors of various fields rendered their service to China's reconstruction efforts. The League also made plans for training Chinese experts abroad. Up to the end of 1937 twenty Chinese experts had been recommended by the National Economic Council, by some of them did not go abroad due to the outbreak of the war.

### **The UN's Technical Assistance to Nationalist China**

The League's technical cooperation with its member states has been regarded as one of meaningful efforts in maintaining world peace. The Bruce Report of 1939 "recommended the expansion of the existing economic and social activities of the organisation, and the establishment of a high-power council with the League to organise this work."<sup>8</sup> This idea was realized in 1950 when the United Nations Expanded Program of Technical Assistance (UNEPTA) was created. In 1959 the United Nations Special Fund (UNSF) was established. The former "open up resources of a much greater magnitude for sharing the knowledge of experts and assisting special projects around the world as well as providing for a host of training programs and fellowships to improve national productivity," and the latter provided "pre-investment projects in the form of survey, feasibility studies, or manpower development for the underdeveloped countries."<sup>9</sup> Both of them were supported by voluntary contributions from states. Since 1965 these two efforts has been merged to form the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

Nationalist China was not only one of the founding members of the UN but one of five permanent members of the Security Council. Shortly after the World War II the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation

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<sup>8</sup> Evan Luard, *The United Nations: How It Works and What It Does* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1979), p. 55.

<sup>9</sup> Clark M. Eichelberger, *New Dimensions for the United Nations: The Problems of the Next Decade* (New York: Oceana Publications, Inc., 1966), pp. 175-176.

Agency had poured two million tons of food, medicine, clothing and supplies to China until the end of 1947. The relief program was of some help in recovering Nationalist China, but it could not save her from being defeated by the Chinese Communists. In December 1949 the Nationalist Government was forced to move to Taipei.

Since 1949 Taipei's main concern of all activities in the UN had been to uphold her representation. But before Nationalist China was ejected from the UN in October 1971, she had kept close contact with the UN technical agencies. In October 1951 Nationalist China made her first request for technical assistance from the UN by applying to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Since the UNESCO could only provide technical assistance in fundamental education, it transmitted all other requests to the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the United Nations in accordance with the nature of these requests.<sup>10</sup>

In November 1952 the Taipei Government established a Committee for United Nations Technical Assistance. Since its establishment, the Committee had met from time to time to review all the requests previously submitted to the UN and its Specialized Agencies and to consider the desirability of new applications for more technical assistance. Taiwan had begun to apply to the UNEPDA since 1952, and it had submitted projects to the UNSF for its approval yearly since 1960. These activities continued after the establishment of UNDP. From 1952 to 1969 Taiwan received US\$ 1.4 million from the UNEPTA for the recruitment of specialists and the dispatch of technical personnel to receive training abroad.

**Table 1. Number of Experts and Fellowships Sponsored by the UNEPDA and UNDP**

<b>Year</b>	<b>UN experts to Taiwan</b>	<b>Fellowship recipients</b>
<b>1952</b>		<b>20</b>
<b>1953</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>1954</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1955</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1956</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>1957</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>1958</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>64</b>

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<sup>10</sup> *China Handbook 1953-54* (Taipei: China Publishing Co., 1953), pp. 147-151.

1959	16	65
1960	13	36
1961-1962	11	18
1963-1964	20	18
1965-1966	21	46
1967-1968	22	46
1969-1970	12	42

From 1960 to 1970 the UNSF and UNDP successively appropriated or approved US 13 million for the recruitment of experts and the training of Chinese technicians for eighteen projects connected with economic development in Taiwan. For some projects, a part of the equipment was also provided. Up to 1970 seven of the eighteen projects had been completed, ten were under implementation and one was pending.<sup>11</sup>

**Table 2. Projects Approved by the UNSF and UNDP**

Year	UN's allocation (US\$)	Taiwan's contribution (US\$)	Project
1960	321,450	198,475	Hydraulic Development projects
1960	334,000	278,000	Establishment of a Training and Research Center for Telecommunication and Electronics
1962	695,700	509,000	Expansion of the Auto-technician Training Center
1963	1,097,400	954,105	Establishment of a metal Industries Development Center in Kaohsiung
1963	885,800	909,000	A Comprehensive Hydraulic Development Survey of the Choshui and Wu Basins in Central Taiwan
1963	208,000	214,000	Planning of Tidal Land Reclamation along the Western Coast of Taiwan
1964	880,200	731,400	Development of Livestock Production on Marginal Land
1965	1,386,600	6,438,563	National Maritime Development Institute
1965	694,900	377,100	Forest and Forest Industry Development
1965	583,500	NT\$30million	Improvement and Expansion of Typhoon and Flood Warning Service
1966	603,500	678,300	Urban Planning and Housing
1966	783,200	1,076,000	Food Processing Institute
1967	1,078,700	1,015,000	National Vocational Training Service for

<sup>11</sup> *China Yearbook 1966-67* (Taipei: China Publishing Co., 1967), pp. 258-259. *China Yearbook 1969-70* (Taipei: China Publishing Co., 1970), p.363.



			Industry
1968	17,400	17,000	Sewerage Planning in the Greater Taipei Area
1969	804,500	1,513,000	Research Institute of Swine Science
1970	442,200	27,900	Preparation of a Consolidated Community Development Program
1970	1,058,100	2,227,000	Plant Protection Center
1970	510,000	741,000	Union Industrial Research Institute

In addition, every year the UN Technical Assistance Administration and the Specialized Agencies also provided technical assistance to Taiwan under their Regular Programs, which were financed with their own budget.

### **Taiwan's Technical Assistance to Foreign Countries**

1. The technical cooperation between the League and Nationalist China was financed by China's annual member fee. But in the UN Nationalist China not only pay her annual fee but made voluntary contribution to the UNEPTA and UNDP.
2. Around 1960 the Taipei Government recommended a number of Chinese technicians to the UN and its specialized agencies as candidates for technical assistance experts. They were assigned by the UN to Ceylon, Hong Kong, Borneo, Afghanistan, Laos, Pakistan, Trinidad and Iraq to render services in such fields as entomology, public health, nursing education, malaria control, agriculture, sericulture, and road constructions.
3. In the 1960s a lot of Taiwan's experts assisted some African countries in agricultural production and public health. Their devotion helped the support of these countries in upholding Nationalist China's representation in the UN.

### **Conclusion**

How to define "recipient" and "contributor" in international organizations?