

The Post-Presidential Election Prospects for Taiwan's New Southbound Policy, and Roles in the Indo-Pacific Framework and India-Taiwan Relations

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Abstract

Taiwan's 2020 Presidential Election results not only granted President Tsai Ing-wen her a second term with a wide margin but also stronger support for the New Southbound Policy (NSP) which aims to promote and deepen connections with South and Southeast Asian countries. At the same time, the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) has become revitalized with a strong push by the Trump administration's Indo-Pacific strategy. We propose that for the NSP to deepen and be sustained, it should be better coordinated with and operated within the context of QUAD 2.0. Taiwan should play an active role of an interlocutor, a promoter of democracy and peace, and an indispensable link between NSP and QUAD countries with bilateral or multilateral mechanisms. When QUAD 2.0 reinforces bilateral relations, more spaces and opportunities in areas of security, intelligence and defense will also surface that Taiwan may make use of.

Keywords: Taiwan Election of 2020, New Southbound Policy, Indo-Pacific Strategy, Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), India-Taiwan Relations

I. Introduction

On January 11, 2020, 14 million eligible voters in Taiwan cast their ballots to elect the 15th President and Vice President as well as all 113 members of the national legislature, the Legislative Yuan. Although not the first time that the people of the young democracy have elected a head of the state and legislators, the consequences have more significant implications for Taiwan's future foreign relations and dynamics of regional security. The election results decided the policies of incumbent president Tsai Ing-wen and her Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) government will continue, including those on green energy, pension reforms, and LGBT rights. Yet just like previous ones, this presidential (and legislative) race is considered by many as a referendum of Taiwan's attitudes towards the People's Republic of China and on cross-Strait relations: standing firm to protect Taiwan's democracy and autonomy or choosing to embracing a powerful but authoritarian China.

In the following sections, we analyze Taiwan's election results with more focus on the following issues: the background and results of the election, assessments of the New Southbound Policy, the grand strategy proposed by President Tsai to consolidating connections with Southeast and South Asian states, Taiwan's role in the Indo-Pacific strategies and Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, and the prospects for collaboration with India, the largest and most important country in both the NSP and Indo-Pacific region.

II. Election Results: A Stronger Mandate for Going Further into the Indo-Pacific

Unlike the prevalent optimism for democracy in the aftermath of the Cold War in the early 1990s, the world has seen many new challenges to democratic values and human rights in recent years. The international community has failed to stop the long civil wars in Syria and Yemen, and was reluctant to take concrete steps to save the lives of the Rohingya refugees from Myanmar and Uighur Muslims from Xinjiang, China. Elected autocrats like Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Turkey and Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines have undermined the reputation of democratic systems. In China, a powerful but authoritarian government is becoming more attractive to leaders of the developing world, encouraging them to reject democratic values and the liberal

order promoted by the United States and other Western countries in the past decades. The world, and Asia in particular, is entering a stage which looks more like a revival of the Cold War with two competing ideologies: resisting or embracing the temptation of the “Ill Winds” of the crisis for democracy, as described by Larry Diamond.¹

Taiwan's Presidential Election of 2020, to a large extent, is also a choice between the above two ideologies. In the campaign, the incumbent President Tsai and DPP focused on the issues of preserving Taiwan's sovereignty and security, and emphasizing the increasing military threat from China. In contrast, the opposition Kuomintang (KMT) and its presidential candidate, Han Kuo-yu, highlighted the importance of China to Taiwan's economy, and promised to build a stable relationship with Beijing. The election results showed that the DPP's position was welcomed by the majority of voters: President Tsai won a record 8.17 million votes (57.1 %), compared to 5.52 million votes (38.6 %) cast for Han. In the Legislative Yuan, the DPP won 61 out of the 113 seats, seven seats fewer from previous (2016) election but still retaining a majority in the legislature, while the KMT won 38 seats. Three smaller parties also gained seats: the newly established Taiwan People's Party (Taiwan Minzhong Dang) secured five seats; the New Power Party (Shidai Liliang) gained three seats, and the newly established Taiwan Statebuilding Party (Taiwan Jijin Dang) received just one seat. The election results are indeed a victory for President Tsai's pro-independence stance.

Tsai's wide-margin support is also a strong endorsement of her foreign policy strategy initiated in the first term—a move closer to Washington, Tokyo and the 18 Indo-Pacific Countries of the “New Southbound Policy (NSP)” to balance the influence of China—out of the fear that Taiwan's autonomy would possibly be subverted by Beijing's assertive stance. NSP, the new grand strategy proposed by President Tsai in her first term with the purpose of repositioning Taiwan's role in Asia and establishing multiple links with ASEAN and South Asian countries, can be broadly classified into four areas: (1) economic and trade cooperation, (2) interactions and exchanges between professionals and educators, (3) resource sharing, and (4) connecting the local regions together.² The NSP first encompassed all 10 ASEAN members, six South Asian states,

1. Larry Diamond, *Ill Winds: Saving Democracy from Russian Rage, Chinese Ambition, and American Complacency*, (London: Penguin Putnam Inc., 2019), pp. 1-368.

and Australia and New Zealand, but later the policies seemed to focus on just six countries, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, and India.



Figure 1. President Tsai Ing-wen Won Her Second Term against the Backdrop of Increased Support from the U.S. and Improved U.S.-Taiwan Relations

Source: Tsai Ing-wen, “Delighted to meet with my good friend,” January 12, 2020, *Twitter*, <<https://twitter.com/iingwen/status/1216614123460415488/photo/1>>.

III. Empower NSP in the QUAD Context

The NSP has substantially boosted the economic and societal interactions between Taiwan and Indo-Pacific countries since its launch in 2016. However, due to the One China Policy and the fact that none of the NSP countries have formal diplomatic relations with Taipei, the improvement of bilateral relations is confined to the non-official level, and political, military and intelligence engagement have been relatively limited. However, recent changes in great power dynamics could create more space for the convergence of the NSP and QUAD countries, and for security and military cooperation.

First of all, the NSP has been intrinsically complementary to the QUAD countries’ policies toward the region. The U.S.’ Indo-Pacific Strategy and the Act East Policy

2. Mumin Chen & Saheli Chattaraj, “New Southbound Policy in India and South Asia,” *Prospect Journal*, No. 18, October 2017, p. 38, 40.

of India both aim to approach Southeast Asian countries. Japan has engaged actively with Southeast Asia since the early 20th Century in the Inter War Colonial Era and as the relations solidified after the second world war; Australia has also viewed Southeast Asia as a “nexus of strategic competition”³ and established a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with ASEAN countries.

Guided by NSP, Taiwan has further enhanced the connections in trade, commerce and education with ASEAN countries. Traditionally Taiwan maintained close relations with Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand, and with Vietnam through international marriage and immigrant workers.⁴ Well-networked within ASEAN countries, experienced in NGO and grassroot organizations and strong in democratic practice, since 2015 Taiwan has been hosting and participating in the Global Cooperation and Training Framework (GCTF) supported especially by the U.S. and Japan.



Figure 2. Taiwan Has Been Bridging Southeast Asian and QUAD Countries via Mechanisms Like U.S.-sponsored GCTF, or Global Cooperation and Training Framework

Source: American Institute in Taiwan, “Remarks by AIT Director W. Brent Christensen at GCTF Workshop on Good Energy Governance in the Indo-Pacific,” November 20, 2019, *AIT*, <<https://www.ait.org.tw/remarks-by-ait-director-w-brent-christensen-at-gctf-workshop-on-good-energy-governance-in-the-indo-pacific/>>.

3. Australian Government, *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper*, (Barton: Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2017), p. 43.

4. 劉奇峯, 〈美國新印太政策下 台灣新南向的契機〉, 《交流》, No. 157, February 2018, 《海基會》, <<http://www.sef.org.tw/ct.asp?xItem=1043458&ctNode=4407&mp=1>>.

Originated in 2007 and dormant for a decade, QUAD, the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, was revived in 2017 when the division-level foreign ministry officials of the United States, Japan, Australia and India met on the sidelines at the 31st ASEAN Summit in Manila. Raised by Shinzo Abe, the Japanese Prime Minister, QUAD 1.0 failed for at least two reasons. First, the governments of the U.S., Japan and Australia turned “left” around 2008, altering the foreign policy agenda. Second, among the four democracies there lacked a unified perspective on China whether to regard it as an opportunity or a threat.⁵

The stance towards China of QUAD member states, however, has changed since. Against the backdrop of U.S.-China trade war, Washington has promoted bilateral relations with Taipei by policies such as passing the *Taiwan Travel Act* (Pub. L. 115-135) based upon which President Tsai was able to meet key members of the U.S. Congress during a stopover in New York City. In August 2019, the *National Defense Authorization Act* was passed, in which a special section stipulates the importance of strengthening the readiness of the Taiwanese armed forces by expanding the exchanges between the two militaries. In February 2020, during the first-ever invited visit to Washington DC before assuming office, the Vice-President-Elect William (Ching-te) Lai attended a National Prayer Breakfast and met with officials in the White House as well as members of Congress.

Washington’s promotion of relations with Taiwan reflects the general atmosphere against Xi Jinping and his administration across the political spectrum from the left to the right. Nancy Pelosi, the Democratic veteran politician and Speaker of the House of Representatives, has repeatedly expressed her concerns on China’s record on human rights and democracy as she met with the Hong Kong political activist Joshua Wong and Taoyuan City Mayor Cheng Wen-tsan from Taiwan, as well as in a video conference with President Tsai during her transit in Hawaii. The left is also encouraged to engage in competition and even rivalry with China since “[c]ompetition with China can advance a progressive agenda” of the Democratic Party.⁶ Against this bipartisan

5. 劉奇峯, 〈川普「印太戰略」構想的演變與印度的角色〉, 《中共研究》, Vol. 52, No. 2, March 2018, pp. 29-45.

6. Tarun Chhabra, Scott Moore, & Dominic Tierney, “The Left Should Play the China Card,” February 13, 2020, *Foreign Affairs*, <<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2020-02-13/>>

backdrop, decoupling from China is speeding up when the over-reliance on China in areas such as technology and the pharmaceutical industry,⁷ and actions taken by the Trump Administration as part of the trade war (e.g., the continuous indictment of Huawei). The spread of COVID-19 in 2020 has also accelerated the withdrawal of U.S. investment and supply chains from China.⁸ Centered around the U.S., the security collaboration among other QUAD countries—Australia, India and Japan—has also deepened with more political momentum.



Figure 3. India and the U.S. Held the Second “2+2” Foreign-Defense Ministerial Consultations in December 2019

Source: Richard M. Rossow, “A More Balanced U.S.-India Strategic Partnership,” December 20, 2019, *CSIS*, <<https://www.csis.org/analysis/more-balanced-us-india-strategic-partnership>>.

left-should-play-china-card>.

7. Gibson, R., “Time to Act: Author Warns of U.S. Dependence on China Drugs,” August 12, 2019, *American Association for Physician Leadership*, <<https://www.physicianleaders.org/news/dependence-on-china-drugs>>.

8. Weizhen Tan, “Coronavirus outbreak will speed up U.S.-China ‘decoupling’ more than the trade war, Milken Institute analyst says,” February 11, 2020, *CNBC.com*, <<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/02/12/coronavirus-effect-on-us-china-decoupling-versus-trade-war-milken.html>>.

IV. QUAD 2.0: Closer Bilateral Security Cooperation within the Multilateral Framework

Australia in the QUAD: The assertive foreign policy of China, including interference in domestic politics (e.g., illegal election funds for parliamentary candidates) and in its higher education system, has raised widespread concern in Australia. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has reached the South Pacific Islands. Kiribati and the Solomon Islands' severance of diplomatic relations with Taiwan exposed the weakness of Australia's foreign policy when facing Beijing's offensive in the South Pacific Region.

China's acts created a common strategic problem for Australia, the U.S. and Taiwan. Besides the common geopolitical challenges, other national security issues include fake news and disinformation campaigns launched by China, the infiltration of Chinese communist ideology into university campuses, social/business groups and civil societies, and the interference in academic publications and research.

Compared with QUAD 1.0, QUAD 2.0 has gained more political momentum. The first working-level (divisional) meeting began in 2017, and was followed up with a ministerial meeting in September 2019. QUAD 1.0 resembled a regional forum focusing more on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) as the meetings began and ended only at the bureaucratic level, while QUAD 2.0 has been formed not only as a multilateral forum but also as a combination of strengthened bilateral security mechanisms built upon high-level dialogues. Thus, substantial improvements in the bilateral security collaboration between QUAD member states become more essential and can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of QUAD.



Figure 4. Japan and Australia Held Joint Air Force Training Program “Bushido Guardian” in September 2019

Source: Japan Ministry of Defense, “Japan and Australia Held Joint Air Force Training Program,” September 25, 2019, *Twitter*, <https://twitter.com/ModJapan_jp/status/1176815567958757377/photo/1>.

India in the QUAD: The security relations between U.S. and India as well as Australia and India have seen an improvement since 2015. Although the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, has claimed that the Indo-Pacific Concept (IPC) of India, with the Act East Policy (AEP) at the core, will not function only as “a club of limited members,” collaborations between New Delhi and Washington have grown substantially.⁹

In November 2019, the Indian and U.S. armed forces held the first-ever tri-service “Tiger Triumph” military exercise, which is seen as a breakthrough since India has only held such exercises with Russia before.¹⁰ In December 2019, the second India-

9. Roger Liu, “When Modi’s ‘Indo-Pacific Concept’ Meet Trump’s ‘Indo-Pacific Strategy’: Possibilities for Further Convergence and Implications for Taiwan,” *Taiwan Strategists*, No. 3, September 2019, pp. 1-22.

10. Montague, Z., “U.S.-India Defense Ties Grow Closer as Shared Concerns in Asia Loom,” *New York Times*, November 20, 2019, <<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/20/world/asia/india-military-exercises-trump.html>>.

U.S. 2+2 (defense and foreign affairs) Ministerial Dialogue was held in New Delhi, after which both sides reaffirmed stronger bilateral and multilateral (in the context of QUAD) collaboration in important areas such as infrastructure development and regional connectivity.¹¹

The number of U.S. weapon systems acquired by New Delhi also increases in numbers. Recent deals include a fleet of P-8I anti-submarine aircraft for the Indian Navy's surveillance missions in the Indian Ocean, MH60R Seahawk helicopters and Integrated Air Defense Weapon System (IADWS, which can work to target threats at different heights with the Russian-made S-400 SAM). The security collaboration between Canberra and New Delhi has also seen growth while India has been reconsidering on Australia's participation in the Malabar Exercise of 2020.¹²

Strengthened bilateral relations by the other members with India—the “weakest link” in the QUAD—would stabilize this security mechanism. QUAD 2.0, compared with its predecessor, has stronger domestic political support when the right-wing ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) stipulated in its 2019 Lok Sabha (Lower House) Election Manifesto the importance of the triangular Japan-America-India (JAI) relations in the context of an “open, inclusive, prosperous and secure Indo-Pacific.”¹³ While another triangular Russia-India-China is built up to balance China, JAI signifies the substantial reinforcement of trilateral security collaboration in the context of QUAD 2.0.

11. U.S. Embassy and Consulates in India, “Joint Statement on the Second U.S.-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue,” December 20, 2019, *U.S. Embassy and Consulates in India*, <<https://in.usembassy.gov/joint-statement-on-the-second-u-s-india-22-ministerial-dialogue/>>.

12. Chaudhury, D. R. “Malabar exercise with Australian participation is not Quadrilateral military alliance: Envoy,” *The Economic Times*, February 3, 2020, <<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/malabar-exercise-with-australian-participation-is-not-quadrilateral-military-alliance-envoy/articleshow/73892801.cms>>.

13. Bharatiya Janata Party, “Sankalp Patra: Lok Sabha 2019,” April 2019, *The Times of India*, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/realtime/BJP_Election_2019_english.pdf>.



Figure 5. India and Japan Held the First-Ever “2+2” Foreign-Defense Ministerial Consultation in December 2019

Source: Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 1, 2019, *Facebook*, <<https://www.facebook.com/Mofa.Japan/photos/pcb.3269841196421169/3269837713088184/>>.

Japan in the QUAD: The original idea of QUAD came from Japan. When Abe Shinzo was in his first term as Prime Minister, in 2007, he stressed in his speech, “The Confluence of the Two Seas,” the importance of working with India, which was also mentioned by Aso Taro, then the Foreign Minister, and to work together along with Japan, the U.S. and Australia to form the core of the “Arc of Freedom and Prosperity.” In May 2007, four division-level foreign affairs officials from the U.S., India, Japan and Australia met in Manila at the sidelines of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), as India was incorporated for the first time. When Abe resumed his premiership in 2012, based upon the previous idea, he argued that a “Democratic Security Diamond (DSD)” should be formed by Washington, Tokyo, Canberra and New Delhi “to safeguard the maritime commons stretching from the Indian Ocean to the western Pacific.”¹⁴

Within the framework of a multilateral security dialogue, the foreign affairs

14. 劉奇峯, 〈川普「印太戰略」構想的演變與印度的角色〉, pp. 29-45.

officials for Japan, Australia and India had four meetings from 2015 to 2018 without U.S. participation. After Donald Trump assumed office, within the QUAD framework, the four countries have five division-level official meetings from 2017.¹⁵

At the bilateral level, Tokyo's security collaboration with Canberra begun as early as 2007 when the first 2+2 foreign and defense ministerial consultation meeting was held. The latest consultation meeting took place in October 2018, to continue "defense cooperation, including exercises, operations, capacity building, enhanced navy, army, and air force engagement activities and strategic visits, trilateral cooperation with the United States, and further cooperation on defense equipment, science and technology."¹⁶



Figure 6. The Revitalization of QUAD Cannot Be Achieved without the Implementation of U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy Based upon Close U.S.-Japan Security Collaboration

Source: Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Close U.S.-Japan Security Collaboration," January 19, 2020, *Twitter*, <https://twitter.com/MofaJapan_jp/status/1218842591048790016/photo/1>.

15. 添谷芳秀, 〈日本のインド太平洋外交と近隣外交〉, 《国際問題》, January-February, 2020, p. 22.

16. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Joint Statement: Eighth Japan-Australia 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations," October 10, 2018, *Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan*, <<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/000407228.pdf>>.

Japan has had strong political relations with India since Abe Shinzo resumed office in 2012. But it is in recent years (especially after Donald Trump assumed office) that defense cooperation between the two countries has been taken to a new level. The first India-Japan Foreign Defense Ministerial Dialogue was held in New Delhi in November 2019. In the joint statement, although the Indian side was reserved regarding further high-profile participation in QUAD (“The Ministers welcomed the recent Japan-India-Australia-U.S. Foreign Ministerial consultations in New York in September 2019”), New Delhi expressed the desire to close negotiations on the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA), and agreed to expand and regularize the joint military training exercise between the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force and the Indian Army, as well as the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Indian Navy. The first-ever joint aircraft pilot training is also scheduled to take place in Japan in 2020.¹⁷

What Taiwan Can Do with QUAD. QUAD 2.0 is more likely to become a constant collective security mechanism or even a quasi-alliance (although India and Australia avoid using this term). In such a situation, Taiwan should consider to further combine or coordinate its NSP within the framework of the “bilateral-cum-multilateral” QUAD. Australia and India are both NSP and QUAD countries, so policies could complement each other. For example, Taipei might use its investment in the defense industry (NSP) to enhance the security collaboration (QUAD) with India. Taiwan can also join the defense-related industries and R&D where it has advantages such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT) and robotics, on which the U.S., Japan and India have been collaborating.¹⁸

With the increased support from the U.S., and closer cooperation with Japan, Australia and India who all place ASEAN at the center of their Indo-Pacific strategies, Taipei could get more strength to counter possible political harassment from China in Southeast Asia, and serve as another important dot to connect QUAD countries

17. 佐堀万梨映, 〈日印、初の外務・防衛閣僚会議 安保協力深化をめざす〉, 《日本経済新聞》, November 30, 2019, <<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXMZO52830910Q9A131C1EA3000/>>.

18. Satoru Nagao, “The Rise of India and Japan-America-India Defense Technology Cooperation,” February 11, 2020, *ORF*, <<https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/the-rise-of-india-and-japan-america-india-defence-technology-cooperation-61272/>>.

and Southeast Asia. The GCTF initiated by the U.S. can be a model for development and empowerment among QUAD and NSP countries. In November 2019, Australia for the first time co-hosted the GCTF Good Energy Governance Conference in Taipei, showing the potential of an expanding multilateral platform within the QUAD/NSP framework.

Another realm of security collaboration is enhanced intelligence sharing and coordination of QUAD state agencies and Taiwan. Since the Cold War era, Taiwan has closely worked with the U.S. intelligence branches so the relationship continues. For Australia and India, who either are currently or will be under growing attacks from China's (dis)information warfare, Taiwan can share its experience in dealing with China's sharp power and work closely with them.

We argue that there are at least three important roles Taiwan can play in the NSP/QUAD framework. First, *an active interlocutor*: Taipei should actively discover creative topics in different realms including security, trade, technology and culture and act as the bridge between the QUAD and Southeast Asian countries. Second, Taiwan can play *a promoter for democracy and peace*. Taiwan's history of peaceful democratization and democratic practice can provide alternative and practical models of governance for Southeast Asian countries. Third, Taiwan should aspire to become *an indispensable link in the Indo-Pacific* by using, sharing and demonstrating its capacity, contribution and potential in a variety of aspects for the region.



Figure 7. The Demand from More Defense Interactions Would Create More Opportunities between India and Other Indo-Pacific States Including Taiwan

Source: Photograph by Roger Liu.

V. Taiwan's Relationship with India as Part of the NSP: Status and Issues

A swing state in the Indo-Pacific strategy, India is a natural balancer to China and has a great potential to play an active and effective role in QUAD 2.0. When President Tsai Ing-wen announced the NSP in 2016, India was placed as a top priority

on the list of the grand strategy. For Taiwan, strengthening connections with India will not only reduce economic and trade dependence of China but also gain access to the emerging market of India as well as other South Asian states.

The DPP administration initiated a series of policies to promote bilateral collaborations. In terms of trade, the amount has increased from US\$4.81 billion in 2015 to US\$7.05 in 2018, in which Taiwan enjoyed US\$527 million of surplus. India now ranks as Taiwan's 16th trade partner, accounting for 1.132% of Taiwan's overall trade. In terms of investment, the number has also increased substantially. James Huang, Chairman of the Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA), announced that Taiwanese investment in India reached US\$360 million in 2018. This amount accounted for almost half of the entire Taiwanese investment in India in the past 50 years (US\$710 million).¹⁹ In order to promote trade and investment in India and South Asia, TAITRA has also set up new promotion offices in New Delhi and Colombo (Sri Lanka), and launched a series of Taiwan Expos in different Indian cities since 2018.

In the education and tourism sectors, with the increasing number of scholarships and fellowships provided by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and universities, the number of Indian students studying in Taiwan also soared in the past four years from 1,245 in 2015 to 2,836 in 2018.²⁰ In order to attract more Indian tourists and investors in Taiwan, the Tsai government has also decided to allow Indian citizens to visit Taiwan through the e-visa scheme in September 2016. By the end of 2019, the number of Indian citizens visiting Taiwan has increased 3,000 annually, from 32,198 in 2015 to 38,385 in 2018 and 37,064 in 2019 (January to November).²¹

19. 呂依萱, 〈台灣對印度投資熱 黃志芳：大爆發趨勢〉, 《自由時報》, July 1, 2019, <<https://news.ltn.com.tw/news/politics/breakingnews/2838944>>.

20. Statistics obtained from Ministry of Education, Taiwan. The number includes degree seeking, exchange, short-term, and language learning students. Ministry of Education, Taiwan, "Statistical Report," February 15, 2020, accessed, *Ministry of Education, Taiwan*, <<https://ois.moe.gov.tw/WEB/fs/html/StatisticSearchD.html>>.

21. Tourism Statistics Database of Taiwan Tourism Bureau, 〈用數據看觀光 STATISTICS〉, February 15, 2020, accessed, *Tourism Statistics Database of Taiwan Tourism Bureau*, <<https://stat.taiwan.net.tw>>.

However, these numbers remain small compared to Taiwan or India's ties with China. For instance, Taiwan's exports to China reached a record US\$137.9 billion in 2018, an increase of 6.1% from the previous year and accounting for 41.3% of Taiwan's entire exports. Taiwan's investment in India did increase substantially but the number is still small compared to overall FDI: India received US\$42 billion of foreign investment inflows in 2018, and Taiwanese investment (US\$360 million) only made an insignificant contribution to this amount.²²



Figure 8. A Taiwanese Delegate of Central Legislators Visited Their Indian Counterparts in 2017

Source: Photograph by Mumin Chen.

The developments in Taiwan-India relations provide an opportunity for us to re-examine the objectives and effectiveness of NSP. The DPP's strategy is to strengthen relations with Southeast and South Asian countries through soft power and people-to-people relations. President Tsai might wish to attract ASEAN or South Asian nations not just to build closer economic and trade partnerships but also other cultural aspects, in order to have a bond that can also link sectors like tourism, education cooperation and youth and cultural exchanges. But none of these objectives will rid Taiwan of increasing pressure from Beijing, who insists that the One China Principle be a

²² Bureau of Foreign Trade, Taiwan, 〈我國貿易統計〉, February 15, 2020, accessed, *Bureau of Foreign Trade, Taiwan*, <<https://www.trade.gov.tw/Pages/List.aspx?nodeID=1375>>.

prerequisite for resuming bilateral talks. For some in the DPP government, the success of NSP is not to have more students or trade with Southeast or South Asia, but eventually to reduce Taiwan's economic dependence on China and to find a reliable ally to resist the growing threat from the latter. From this perspective, NSP hardly meets Taiwan's strategic objectives.

VI. Conclusion

To better coordinate the NSP with the QUAD framework, we suggest that the Government of Taiwan establishes an "Indo-Pacific Task Force" directly under the President and to include key players from departments and agencies of the Central Government, from major policy arms (such as government-sponsored foundations or organizations) as well as from major research think tanks and academia. This task force should also encourage young and enthusiastic bureaucrats, academicians and practitioners to join, and coordinate between the President, the Executive Yuan and other different units, groups and individuals.

As for Taiwan-India relations, the increase of bilateral trade or Taiwanese investments in India does not translate well into changes to Indian government's policies on Taiwan. Policymakers in New Delhi remain with the "One China Policy" and consider relations with Taiwan to be unofficial by nature. Nevertheless, the Government of India has shown great interest in Taiwan's investments and technologies, and wishes to attract more investments.²³ These imbalanced expectations constitute a challenge for Taiwan.

Structural problems are difficult. We suggest that decision-makers on both sides look for other potential aspects to expand the essence of collaboration; other than merely looking for investments or a strong balancer against China. New Delhi and Taipei could explore more realms of cooperation, even in areas of high politics, such as security, defense and intelligence. Both sides should explore more possibilities creatively and with practical attitudes in the shadow of China's growth. The comeback

²³ Mumin Chen, "Taiwan-India Relations under the Shadow of a Rising China," in G. V. C. Naidu, Mumin Chen, & Raviprasad Narayanan eds., *India and China in the Emerging Dynamics of East Asia*, (New Delhi: Springer India, 2015), p. 57.

and transformation of QUAD might offer more opportunities for such enlarged collaboration. As a result, how cleverly Taipei could adjust its current NSP, and make it work closely together within the framework of QUAD 2.0, is thus becoming essential.

