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Title: An Indo Pacific Policy Strategy: challenges to carry forward the “New Southbound Policy”

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Abstract

In recent years there have been different regional initiatives and strategies in terms of found, connectivity, infrastructure that are taking place not only in Asia, but also projects that has global approach. Nowadays, governments, politics and academics are discussing about the *One Belt and Road of China*, the *Indo Pacific Strategy* lead by USA, Japan and Australia along with other countries of the region, like the *Look East of India*, among others. But the interesting fact is that all of these countries have official diplomatic relations with their partner in all of those these cases.

Since 2016 the Republic of China (Taiwan) has implemented the New Southbound Policy. However, Taiwan lack of official ties with the countries that comprises in this initiative.

This research offers insight into the different ways that Taiwan has implement a political regional initiative without diplomatic recognition and throw public and cultural diplomacy.

INTRODUCTION

The New Southbound Policy (NSP) Initiative, is an economic and trade strategy policy towards the Indo-Pacific region and aim to achieve dialogue and negotiations in terms of exchange of talent, capital, technology, culture and education with eighteen countries from South and Southeast and Asia, Australia and New Zealand. (Hsu, Kuo, Pan, Chen, & Chen, 2017)

At first glance, there is not much difference with other regional initiatives in terms of connectivity, cooperation and infrastructure projects. The difference lies in how to carry out this

policy. Minister Deng coordinator of implementation of the NSP and from the Office of Trade Negotiations, said that: *“The initiative does not seek to advance Taiwan's geopolitical stature or influence, but intends for Taiwan to play a proactive role in the region by expanding and enhancing trade cooperation with neighboring countries through resource sharing and people-to-people exchanges”*. (Hsu, Kuo , Pan, Chen, & Chen, 2017 : 4)

During her campaign in 2016, President Tsai Ing-Wen, unveiled her foreign policy strategy focused on South and Southeast Asia; she would carry forward the "New Southbound Policy." This initiative has the ambition of making ASEAN an Extending Taiwan's domestic market: *" It will not only involve Taiwan going to ASEAN but also have ASEAN members come to Taiwan for tourism and investment"* (Taiwan needs to catch up in ASEAN: Southbound Policy Office chief, 2016)

On November 16th of 2016, the first meeting of the Taiwan-ASEAN Dialogue in Taipei (Taiwan-ASEAN Dialogue attendees meet with VP Chen, 2016) to establish a regular mechanism for dialogues between the two sides in the framework of the New Southbound Policy and President Tsai stressed the importance of foreign policy and the three goals referred to *"strengthen understanding, promote bilateral exchanges and consolidate partnership relations with ASEAN, South Asia, Australia and New Zealand"* (Realizan diálogo sobre intercambios con la ASEAN, 2016).

From an academic perspective, the New Southbound Policy is a crucial initiative of Soft Power, in which Taiwan must take advantage of its knowhow, make use of its cultural diplomacy to promote its national identity and opportunities in subject of cooperation, training, connectivity.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper analyzes Taiwan's New Southbound Policy, regional strategy, geopolitics, and Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy theories.

First, it is necessary to locate ourselves in the regional area to which the Republic of China (Taiwan) foreign policy is directed: Indo-Pacific region. The past years there have been a different approaches and perspectives about the Indo-Pacific's concept. Professors Doyle and Rumley (2020) describe that the Indo-Pacific is the convergence of two regions, two geo-oceanic systems, and diversity of countries, communities, and cultures. They argue that *“this collision of*

water spaces epitomizes the essence of the Indo-Pacific region, as well as the littoral zone between the Indian Ocean and the western Pacific” (Doyle & Rumley, 2020: 1). For both scholars, after the Cold War, “the Indo-Pacific region has been a process of political and economic competition among regional great powers for influence over Indo-Pacific core middle powers” (Doyle & Rumley, 2020: 110). In other hand, Heydarian, R.J. (2020) explain that “the Indo-Pacific, as it’s conceptualized and understood by regional powers today, is at once about and beyond the China question: It’s geopolitical as well as geo-economic; synthetic and spontaneous; and ineluctable (structural) as well as policy-driven (agential). On one hand, it’s all about the Asian behemoth, and how other powers and regional actors seek to respond to its rise. or, to put it in more stark terms, it’s about “constraint” of China’s ambitions in ways that give greater voice to rising powers while discouraging coercively disruptive revisionism” (Heydarian, R.J. 2020: 4).

Professor Söderbaum (2012) says that “*there is a difference between mainstream (rationalist and ‘problem-solving’) and critical and constructivist scholarship regarding the conceptualization and treatment of regions”.* (Söderbaum, F. 2012: 14) As his explain, the Mainstream theory use the term regions as a pre given concept, or as interstate or policy driven frameworks. Following this perspective, regions are identifiable from material structures or formal regional organizations. In the other hand, for recent constructivist and post-structuralist theories, all regions are deemed to be socially constructed and hence politically contested. The focus is in how political actors perceive and interpret the idea of a region, notions of ‘regionness’ and region- building (Söderbaum, F. 2012: 14)

At the same time, Ali, S.M. (2017) focus his work in the concept of patron-client relationships to “*defining Indo-Pacific insecurity dynamics linking subsystemic turbulence to emergent systemic polarization with a view to ascertaining how these relationships affected, and were affected by, US-PRC interactions” (Ali,S.M., 2017: 238). Professor Ali explains that the need of support by allies or strategic-partners within a contested milieu erodes the patron’s dominance while partly concealing the client’s frailty. He concludes that “although alliance-relations rely on power-imbances to be initiated and sustained, the relationships tend, at least in terms of how the imbalance is effectuated in policy, to mitigate such asymmetries” (Ali,S.M., 2017: 238).*

The Indo-Pacific concept means different interpretations to different governments or academics. For this essay, we are going to use the definition proposed from the countries that the Republic of China (Taiwan) perceived as the Indo-Pacific in this New Southbound Policy: Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Vietnam, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Australia and New Zealand.

These geostrategic cooperation policies, on the one hand, allow for greater regional participation and its commercial benefits through obtaining greater allies or partners within each initiative proposed. One of the apparent objectives is to diversify trade with different partners, in order to counteract economic dependency, especially with China. The increasing growing power of the People's Republic of China and its role in the South China Sea is perceived by some countries of the Southeast Asia as a threat. In this sense, security policies to maintain the stability of the region through more cooperation is needed to reduce tensions, and to establish equilibrium of power in the Indo-Pacific region.

According to the Report published by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) "Meeting Asia's infrastructure needs" estimates that developing Asia will need to invest \$26 trillion from 2016 to 2030 (or \$1.7 trillion per year) to achieve and maintain the economic growth in the Asia and the Pacific between 2016 and 2030. The region will need investment in infrastructure in sectors such as transport, power, telecommunications, and water supply and sanitation to continue its economic growth momentum, eradicate poverty, and respond to climate change. (Asian Development Bank, 2017)

These initiatives proposed by governments in the Asia Pacific region evidence the need for investment in infrastructure and connectivity, to improve not only the domestic economies, but also to give more dynamism to trade in the region. The new trade routes proposed by each initiative also respond to seeking new market niches, new business partners and to alleviate the busy routes or the traditional financial and logistics hubs.

Since the beginning of the One Belt Road Initiative in 2013 by the People's Republic of China, the President Xi Jin Ping, proposed the establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) with the objective of financing infrastructure projects, regional interconnectivity and economic integration through the OBOR partnership countries.

As a counterpart other initiatives are redefining or propose in the region. The Indo-Pacific Strategy present by USA, Japan and Australia. In August 2016” at the sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development, the Prime Minister S. Abe advocated the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy”. Japan’s Policy to promote the initiative “*in order to develop the Indo-Pacific region as international public goods that bring stability and prosperity for any country*”. And the vision involves maintain and strength “*a free and open maritime order based on the rule of law across the region through the elimination of those various threats, as well as through enhancing connectivity within the region by developing quality infrastructure in accordance with international standards*” (Chapter 1: International Situation and Japan's Diplomacy in 2018, 2019).

United States vision of the Indo-Pacific Strategy proposes that they are linked to the Indo-Pacific countries, being a Pacific nation and through bonds of shared history, culture, commerce, and values. “*We have an enduring commitment to uphold a free and open IndoPacific in which all nations, large and small, are secure in their sovereignty and able to pursue economic growth consistent with accepted international rules, norms, and principles of fair competition (...) Interstate strategic competition, defined by geopolitical rivalry between free and repressive world order visions, is the primary concern for U.S. national security. In particular, the People’s Republic of China, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, seeks to reorder the region to its advantage by leveraging military modernization, influence operations, and predatory economics to coerce other nations*” (Indo-Pacific Strategy Report:Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region, 2019).

From the Professor's analysis Ding Ding Chen, “*The objective why Trump returned to the "Indo-Pacific Strategy" is very clear-The "Indo-Pacific Strategy" is the expansion and revision of the "Asia-Pacific rebalancing strategy." The purpose is to contain China's rise and safeguard U.S. leadership in the region*” (Chen, 2018).

Australia’s government published in 2017 its White Paper on the Foreign Policy where it sets attitude toward the Indo-Pacific Strategy. The Document highlights the importance of partnerships with United States, Japan, Indonesia, India and South Korea. “*We will do more bilaterally and work across these partnerships, including in small groups, to promote and protect a shared vision for the region and to support a balance in the region favorable to our*

interests”. From a pragmatic point of view, Australia maintains its relations with the United States and the People’s Republic of China: “*The Government will broaden and deepen our alliance cooperation and encourage the strongest possible economic and security engagement by the United States in the region. Strengthening our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with China is also vital for Australia both to pursue extensive bilateral interests and because of China’s growing influence on the regional and global issues of greatest consequence to our security and prosperity*”(Foreign Policy White Paper, 2017: 37-38).

ASEAN, under Indonesian leadership, also proposes its perspective on the Indo-Pacific. On 2018, Retno Marsudi, Indonesian Foreign Minister, presented the Indonesia’s Indo-Pacific Concept during the ASEAN Foreign Ministerial Meeting. The Foreign Minister described the Indo Pacific concept as “*an ASEAN centric regional architecture that is open, transparent, inclusive and rules-based, and that such cooperation should be based on ASEAN centrality*” (Sulaiman, Y. 2019) The Document “ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific” released in June 2019 establishes ASEAN's intention to shape their economic and security architecture in the wider Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions or the Indo-Pacific (ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, 2019). The document not only highlights ASEAN's centrality within the region, but also it proposes as a platform to advance on the proposal the East Asia Summit and with the precept of an "Open and Inclusive Indo-Pacific". The Outlook presents four areas of action: maritime cooperation, connectivity, sustainable development goals and areas of economic cooperation. (ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, 2019)

During the nineties, the India’s Look East Policy was meant to opening up the Indian economy establishes the India-ASEAN relations, as India became an ASEAN sectorial dialogue partner in 1992, and a full dialogue partner in 1996. India's Look East Policy has been transformed into the Act East Policy. In 2018, in his opening speech at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, the Singaporean Prime Minister advocated “*an open, stable, secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific Region*”. In addition, he had called for a common commitment, based on shared values and principles, to promote a rule-based order in the Indo-Pacific. (Prime Minister’s Keynote Address at Shangri La Dialogue, 2018)

In addition, South Korean President Moon Jae-in announced the New Southern Policy (NSP) during his visit to Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines for the 2017 Asia-Pacific Economic

Cooperation (APEC) Summit and ASEAN + 3 meetings and the Summit of East Asia (EAS) 2017. The NSP *“focuses on countries to Korea's south in Southeast Asia and India. The initiative was guided by the “three Ps” of People, Prosperity and Peace, and announced a number of economic and socio-cultural initiatives that would lead the initiative”* (Jaehyon, 2019)

At the same time, the Republic of China, Taiwan's "Go South Policy" during Lee Teng Hui government can be mentioned as a previous scheme to the New Southbound Policy proposed by the President Tsai Ing-Wen in 2016. This new foreign policy has two major factors: the threatening stance of the People's Republic of China towards Taiwan; and the need of the Taiwanese government to diversify its economy and foreign trade, which is currently highly dependent on the PRC.

The case of the Republic of China, Taiwan, is one special to analysis, and probably the only one of its kind. Actually, Taiwan doesn't have official recognition as sovereign state for the countries of the NSP, this situation is perceived as the first wall to pursue of its goals: get more involved in the regional organizations, forums, develop trade partnerships and have an active role in regional chains of value. Taking into account that ROC, Taiwan once, was part of this international order as a member at the UN and participate in another's international institutions, but for almost 50 years it's not.

The Convention of Montevideo from 1933, establish the rights and duties of States: a) a permanent population; b) a defined territory; c) government; and d) capacity to enter into relations with the other states (International Law Documents, 2018). Therefore following the requirements, to be a Modern State it needs to be able to be recognized for another members States of the international system and also to participate or be a member in international organizations. While Taiwan meets most of the requirements proposed by the Convention, in the case of recognition, it only partially fulfills it, currently having 15 diplomatic allies (Diplomatic Allies).

Hedley Bull (1977) explains that a society of states (or international society) exists when a group of states, aware of certain common interests and values, form a society in the sense that they consider themselves bound by a common set of rules in their relations between them, and participate in the functioning of common institutions. The end of the Second World War led, on

the one hand, to many countries under colonial rule becoming independent and establishing their states. The legal body that emerged in 1945, the United Nations served to establish an agreement regarding International Law. Within this scheme, China, was represented by the Government of the Republic of China (ROC) and was one of the five founding members of the UN and part of the Security Council as an original member on October 24, 1945. After the UN decided to recognize the People's Republic of China and hand over the chair to the Security Council, the rupture of relations between ROC, Taiwan in favor of mainland China was triggered by a domino effect. In the present, the Republic of China, Taiwan lacks official diplomatic relations with NSP countries; it must resort to other means to maintain unofficial relations. This is the principal problem in develop substantial relations with another partners and also to maintain the official relations with those countries that recognize ROC, Taiwan as a sovereignty state.

With this case scenario Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy are alternatives to ROC, Taiwan's Policy. Joseph Nye expounded the theory of Soft Power in 1990 as a counterpart to the realistic theory of Hard Power. For the author, the implementation of soft power "*is based on the ability to configure the preferences of others*" (Nye, 2004: 5) and its power is based on attraction and cooperation. For example, through shared values and justice and the duty to contribute to the achievement of those values (Nye, 2004: 7). What is interesting is that the implementation of Soft Power in the case of Taiwan, but also in the People's Republic of China, emphasizes economic cooperation, resource aid, investment assistance and participation in multilateral organizations (Kurlantzick, 2007: 6). On the other hand, Gregory (2011) defines "Public Diplomacy" as: "*an instrument used by states, associations of states, and some sub- and non-state actors to understand cultures, attitudes, and behaviour; build and manage relationships; and influence thoughts and mobilize action to advance their interests and values*" (Gregory, 2011: 353)

In addition, the soft power of a country is based mainly on three resources: "*its culture, its political values and its foreign policies*" (Nye, 2004: 11). While according to Nye, cultural diplomacy is "an excellent example of soft power". According to Goff, P. (2013) "*cultural diplomacy rests on the assumption that art, language, and education are among the most significant entry points into a culture. Cultural diplomacy sits on a spectrum of ideational approaches to diplomacy. Alongside it on this spectrum one can locate soft power, branding,*

propaganda, and public diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy is on the soft-power side of the hard power–soft power equation, since it functions by attraction and not coercion” (Goff, P. 2013: 1). Within the framework of Cultural Diplomacy, the role played by "people to people diplomacy" as an instrument that contributes to and complements official diplomatic channels in the construction of international relations. Although the official diplomatic channel is exercised by what is called the “Track One Diplomacy”, the unofficial channel or “Track Two Diplomacy” (Montville, 1991), it is the one carried out informally by non-governmental, academic actors, private think tanks, NGOs, the media, artists, athletes, etc. The knowledge imparted by specialized professors in the Academic Institutions and Cultural Centers, the studies and the experiences of the students abroad contribute not only to the formation of the student interested in the various subjects, but also, over time, these they can become new agents of "people to people diplomacy". Within this concept of "cultural diplomacy", especially the concept of: "people to people diplomacy" which Taiwan has used to improve its image and presence in the Southeast Asia region.

ROC, Taiwan’s Policy in Cultural Diplomacy

Following the White Paper “*The One-China Principle and the Taiwan Issue*”, the Chinese government does not object to Taiwan's non-governmental economic and cultural contacts abroad. From this perspective, the government in Taiwan can carry out commercial and cultural activities with other countries. It is for this reason that the development of trade relations and the cultural and educational promotion are essential elements in the framework of this initiative. As the Republic of China (Taiwan), lacks of diplomatic relations with the countries that comprise the initiative, the New Southbound Policy requires the use of soft power and cultural diplomacy as a strategy to find cultural niches or markets that are attractive to promote Taiwan's participation in the region.

The Professor Chu Yun-Han (2011) from the at National Taiwan University explains that the Soft Power implemented by the government of the Republic of China (Taiwan) comes from different sources, but specially came from “*the effects of Taiwan’s democratic experience, the inherited strong cultural and linguistic affinity between Taiwan and the mainland, Taiwan’s vibrant and diversified civil society, and strong economic and social ties. It is also argued that*

the exercise of soft power has little to do with public diplomacy, the most familiar form of state-organized soft power. The principal agents of change are instead Taiwan's numerous private actors acting on their own initiatives" (Chu, 2011: 118).

The importance of Taiwan's Soft Power to constructive a positive image and promote its participation as a player in the East and Southeast Asia region. As Professor Chu said: *"Without this soft power, Taiwan will become increasingly vulnerable, irrelevant, and marginalized"* (Chu, 2011: 119).

However, in the case of Taiwan and the Soft Power through public diplomacy is not an easy task. Normally, the conduct of public diplomacy is an interstate relationship and is conducted through the track one diplomacy. For example, to conduct bilateral relations and negotiations are made by semi-official intermediaries. Actually, Taiwanese businessman or social actors can be agents in this cross-strait trade and cultural exchange.

Nowadays, it can't be argued that Taiwanese people have preserved traditional Chinese culture, in terms or language, and traditional writing, social customs, religion and Chinese philosophy, gastronomy, family ethics in terms of Confucianism. Nevertheless is also need to understand that Chinese culture is not the only component that has left its mark on Taiwanese society. Studying the History of the Formosa Island, we can understand that there were more foreign actors that contribute to shape cultural aspects and its society, especially during the Japanese occupation. In the other hand, the history of the island had another turn from the establishment of the Kuomintang government with Chiang Kai-Shek and his sinicization policy toward the local population in the island. Otherwise, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) had also apply its own policy in the idea or construction of a Taiwanese identity and the so called "new Taiwanese" concept¹.

Since 2016, Tsai Ing-Wen has adopted another angle in the narrative of the history of the Republic of China (Taiwan) and focusing on the rights of indigenous peoples, setting more inclusive policies for ethnic minorities (2% of the population); and also, accentuate the occupation of European Powers such as Spain and the Netherlands. According to this

¹ The notion of "new Taiwanese" was developed during the government of Lee Teng-Hui, who tried to unify the culture brought by the mainland Chinese and the Taiwanese by calling them "new Taiwanese" in order to generate an idea of national entity.

perspective, research on the history of the indigenous peoples of the island, due to their Austronesian origin, was also supported, thus including the theory of "Out of Taiwan"² to its historical revision. In this way, the connection with Southeast Asia through historical and cultural links with the Austronesian peoples in the region.

The establishment of the Taiwan Academy Center in non-allied countries is an effective soft power tool to promote Taiwanese culture. This policy has been carried out since 2008 with the aim of promoting the traditional Chinese language and the cultural diversity of Taiwan, seeking to differentiate itself from the Confucius Institutes that have established the PRC in numerous countries. President Ma Ying-Jeou published the White Paper on Cultural Policy during his 2008 election campaign; and as a result the first three Taiwan Academies emerged that were established in 2011 in New York, Houston and Los Angeles. Taiwan Academies report to the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of China (Taiwan), but also collaborate with higher education institutions in foreign countries. For example, the Taiwan Education Center in Surabaya in 2011 and also The Jakarta Taiwan Education Center (JTEC) in March 2015 to promote the Taiwanese education system in Indonesia.

Government-run soft power in education is very important, in part also for Confucian cultural and educational value as well as for the benefits of exchanges. The specialization of foreign students contributes to the construction of educational and social networks that allow for greater knowledge of the country and therefore a better perception of friendship and cooperation in the Southeast Asia region.

Although the scholarships awarded to Southeast Asia countries are largely targeted at those of Chinese ethnic origin, the government also gives study grants to students with other ethnic backgrounds to study in Taiwan.

For (Yang, 2017) the New Southbound Policy is classified as a "people-centered" initiative and is a formal response by the Taiwanese government to the development of relations with the ASEAN community. It is also a strategic movement designed to show the international community that Taiwan is ready to make an active contribution to regional prosperity and

² Bellwood (2004) expounded the "Out of Taiwan" theory, through archaeological, ethnographic, and linguistic studies, determined that the dispersion of agriculture coincides with the migration of Austronesian groups from Taiwan more than 5,000 years ago to what they are today the territories of the Philippines and Indonesia, and later these groups reached Madagascar and other Pacific islands.

integration. A highlight is the creation of the Yu Shan Forum (玉山), opened on October 11, 2017 (New South Bound Portal, 2017), in order to promote economic and social connectivity with Southeast Asia and South Asia as well it is a tool implemented to carry out the initiative.

Relations between Taiwan and the principal's New Southbound Policy countries

The regionalism of East and South Asia has put Taiwan on the sidelines for political reasons. The government seeks to diversify Taiwan's foreign investment and alleviate the harm of being excluded from FTAs in Asia. The priority countries for the NSP are the principal regional trade partners (excluding the PRC): India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, Singapore.

It's important pointing that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a regional body does not have a stated policy on the Taiwanese issue. Furthermore, the member countries adhered to the "One China Policy" and recognize Taiwan as part of the People's Republic of China, so they avoid intervening in the matter for fear that regional stability will be jeopardized. Since the arrival of Democracy late 80s in Taiwan, there were significant changes in the direction of foreign policy being classified as "pragmatic diplomacy", which sought to promote and strengthen formal diplomatic ties; the development of relations with countries that maintain unofficial relations with Taiwan; and the pursuing to get the admission or readmission to international organizations. The government of Lee Teng-Hui between January 1988 and May 2000 promoted an active diplomatic policy in search of a more important international role and to achieve greater recognition of national sovereignty through the increase of agreements or the establishment of diplomatic representations offices, etc. However, economic ties between Taiwan and ASEAN date back to the 70s, when the island of the government began to relocate its labor-intensive manufacturing industries in Southeast Asia and in the 80s, ASEAN became an important investment destination for Taiwanese companies.

As a previous foreign policy we can study the implementation of the "Go South Policy" launched in December 1993 under the document published by the Ministry of Economic Affairs "Policy Statement on Go South Investment". To encourage trade and investment, President Lee made visited the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand in 1994. The ROC (Taiwan) has also sponsored a

series of training programs and classes, which are designed to invite staff from friendly countries to learn techniques and get island experience. During the nineties, Taiwan managed to sign economic and trade agreements for the protection and promotion of investments with the majority of ASEAN member countries: Indonesia (1990 and 1995), Philippines (1992), Malaysia (1993 and 1996), Vietnam (1993 and 1998) and Thailand (1996 and 1999) (Jing, Bo-Jiun, 2016: 10). In this context, the "Go South Policy" was an useful initiative to increase Taiwan's presence in financial, organizational technical and computer assistance to Taiwanese companies that were interested in investing in Southeast Asia; in addition to helping companies that were already investing in the region.

However, there has been a certain perception that the stability of relations between the Taiwan Strait largely determines the influence and the scope of the commitment of the ASEAN countries with respect to Taiwan. For this reason, as a non-confrontation Policy towards PRC during President Ma's government, the foreign policy was focused on the negotiation of bilateral economic cooperation agreements with Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. (Jing, Bo Jiung, 2016: 41)

Taiwan is among the top foreign investors in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. In turn, it is an important market for ASEAN goods and services as well as a good provider of technology in this area. In 2015, exports to ASEAN reached 50.92 trillion USD and imports from the region reached 28.31 trillion USD. Taiwan is Indonesia's 12th largest trading partner and the main source of migrant workers. For this reason, in December 2015, he opened his commercial office in Surabaya, Indonesia. In 2016, both countries signed a memorandum of understanding for supervisory cooperation in banking, securities and insurance businesses. An agreement was reached with the Philippines on several fishery cooperation in 2017³; and in March 2016, the two parties agreed to establish a hotline in fishing disputes and cooperate against illegal fishing. In June 2015 Myanmar established a business office in Taipei and in March 2016 Taiwan the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Myanmar began operating.

³ Focus Taiwan, Taiwan-Philippines fishery meeting sees agreement on proposals, (03/10/2017), URL:<https://focustaiwan.tw/business/201703100021>

The effectiveness of the South Policy and the future of relations between ASEAN and Taiwan, it can be said that both issues depend on many factors and actors that play internationally. In developing relations between the two sides there must be a strong political-economic strategy so that Taiwan can actively participate in the ASEAN community and not just bilaterally.

For the New Southbound Policy, the three areas of great potential are electronic commerce, infrastructure and tourism; US \$ 238 million will be allocated during this year 2018. In turn, a fund of US \$ 3.5 billion will be established for infrastructure and development projects in the nations included in the NSP.

Bilateral ties between India and Taiwan have improved since 1990, although they have no official relations. In 1995, the India-Taipei Association (ITA) was established in Taipei as a representative office and its counterpart in India is the Taipei Economic and Cultural Center (TECC) in New Delhi. Both institutions offer consular and passport services and contribute to promote trade, business, tourism, culture, science & technology and people-to-people exchanges. (India-Taipei Association) With time, there were open TECC offices in Chennai, Kolkata, and Mumbai.

The government in Taiwan wants to improve the economic Relationship between Taiwan and India, especially to facilitate Taiwanese investment in India and the South Asia countries. An agreement on investment promotion and protection was signed in 2005 and a memorandum on trade cooperation between Taiwan and India was signed in 2006. Tamil Nadu has emerged as the focal point of Taiwanese business in recent years. President Tsai visited India in June 2016 which allowed opening the representative Taiwanese office in Chennai, Tamil Nadu state.

Exchanges at the educational level, it can be mentioned that Taiwan's research institutes and research groups have expanded their presence in India. Think tanks of India and organizations such as the Institute for Defense and Analysis Studies, the Observer Research Foundation, the Confederation of Indian Industries, the International Center of India, the Center for Political Research and the National Institute of Studies Advanced, they have their counterparts in Taiwan.

The Australian Government recognized Taipei until the establishment of diplomatic relations with the People Republic of China in 1972. The "Taipei Economic and Cultural Office" (TECO) was set up in 1992 in Canberra. In addition to the Head Office of TECO in Canberra, there are

three regional TECOs in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane to serve various states and territories of the Commonwealth of Australia.

The Australian Office in Taipei represents Australian interests in Taiwan in the absence of formal diplomatic relations. While the Australian government supports Taiwan's participation in international organizations and conferences where appropriate, also encourages Australian business to pursue trade and investment opportunities involving Taiwan and supports the development of people-to-people contacts.

The ROC established full diplomatic ties with New Zealand in 1961, but on December 22, 1972, the government switched recognition to the People's Republic of China. To maintain trade relations between Taiwan and New Zealand, the ROC government established the East Asian Trade Center in Auckland in May 1973. In 1991, the office was moved to Wellington and the name was changed to Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO). The office promotes economic, trade, cultural, educational, scientific, financial, and other exchanges and cooperation between Taiwan and New Zealand (An Introduction of Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in New Zealand, 2019). The trade relation between Taiwan and New Zealand is important to point out the fact that they signed a Free Trade Agreement in July 18, 2013: the Agreement between New Zealand and the Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu on Economic Cooperation (ANZTEC)

Cultural and political diplomacy carried out in the New Southbound Policy

Along with NSP, the Republic of China (Taiwan) wants to start up negotiation and dialogue to establishing close cooperation with the nations of ASEAN and South Asia as well as New Zealand and Australia. Taiwan's need to define its future role in regional development in the Indo-Pacific.

The key goals of the New Southbound Policy can be divided in long term achievements and short- to mid-term goals. In the long term, the focusing areas are in terms of economic and trade relations, science and technology, and culture; share resources, talent, and markets; and create a new cooperation mode that seeks mutual benefits and win-win situations; and establish mechanisms for wide-ranging negotiation and dialogue. In the short and midterm objectives are the combination of national will, policy incentives, and business opportunities to spur and

expand "two-way" exchanges in the areas of economic and trade relations, investment, tourism, culture, and talent; expand multilateral and bilateral negotiation and dialogue to enhance economic cooperation and resolve disputes and disagreements. (Guidelines for the New Southbound Policy)

To pursue a strategy of four key links are need to develop: Soft Power links, linking regional markets, supply chain links, people-to-people links. (Guidelines for the New Southbound Policy)

1. Soft power links: soft power in areas such as technology, people and culture. Take advantage of Taiwan's broad experience in medical care, education, technology, and agricultural cooperation and small and medium enterprises to promote multilateral and bilateral cooperation
2. Supply chain links: In the area of trade and investment. This integration is needed in such sectors as information and communications technology (ICT), domestic-demand-driven industries, energy and petrochemicals, new agriculture, and financial services.
3. Linking regional markets: Accordingly, investing in soft and hard infrastructure and strengthening links with regional markets are key to cooperation with the nations of ASEAN and South Asia as well as New Zealand and Australia, and offer immense business opportunities.
4. People-to-people links: Travel and tourism are at the core of people-to-people ties, and a catalyst for intercultural exchange and fusion.

Taking into account the policies carried out at the moment regarding Soft Power and People to People links within the framework of the New Southbound Policy, the following areas of action can be mentioned:

a) Medical Diplomacy and Healthcare

The Ministry of Science and Technology has established twelve scientific centers since 2017 in Countries of the NSP, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, India, Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines, among others. The centers for investigation and cooperation and exchange capabilities in areas like environment, climate change, healthcare, water purification and human science. (Yang, Pei, Liu, Hsiao, & Hsin, 2019: 4)

In respect of Medical Diplomacy and the development of healthcare and medical expertise cooperation, one of the key point projects under the NSP, the Ministry of Health and Welfare carries the Policy of “One country, one hospital” which implies that six Taiwanese hospitals has to work in a medical center in one of six countries of the NSP, like India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines. (Yang, Pei, Liu, Hsiao, & Hsin, 2019: 6)

Since the NSP was implemented, more than 200 medical personnel from NSP countries have visited Taiwan to capacitated and study. (Yang, Pei, Liu, Hsiao, & Hsin, 2019: 15)

As a soft power mechanism, the medical diplomacy and humanitarian assistance efforts contribute to build a positive image in the international health system, but without the possibility of participate on it. Since 2016 is no longer an observer member of the World Health Organization. Despite of this, Taiwan has adopted a planned strategy to promote the brand image of high quality and affordable healthcare service internationally. The “soft power policy of medical services to stimulate the export of the entire healthcare industry chain to New Southbound partner countries” (Office of Trade Negotiations, 2019: 8)

b) Education and languages exchanges

The decision of the government on implement the selection of one of the mayor languages of countries of the Southeast Asia at the curriculum of schools at primary and high school in Taiwan is an initiative that will contribute in develops relations with the region in the future. The increasing number of immigrants from the Southeast Asia on the island determines that the government must implement policies of social and cultural inclusion. The linguistic and cultural programs contribute to the development human and institutional ties. Educational and sports exchanges are good initiatives of the second track diplomacy.

According to the information data of the Ministry of Education, students from the NSP are growing in numbers. For example, each year, more than 10.000 Malaysian students chose Taiwan to complete their academic studies and as well from Vietnam and Indonesia students. (Yang, Pei, Liu, Hsiao, & Hsin, 2019: 16)

Bilateral exchanges and resources sharing throw promote and expand the higher education market overseas. The bilateral educational cooperation by integrating social and cultural links.

The past two years, schools have been established graduate degrees with counterparts in the NSP partners. For example, the PhD Program established in 2019 between the National Chiao Tung University and the Indian Institute of Technology (Cheung, 2019: 15)

One of the objectives pursued by these educational programs is the so-called “people to people diplomacy”. Once the students finish their programs, they could experience learning in Taiwan, as well as the language skills and contribute to build “bridges” and networks between their home countries and Taiwan.

Another mechanism that has contributed to the development of policies for the New Southbound Policy initiative and as a people to people diplomacy instrument is the work done by the Think Tank Taiwan- Asia Exchange Foundation (TAEF) founded in 2018. The TAEF focuses on the study of South and Southeast Asia, but also it is in charge of organizing the Yu Shan Forum, a platform of the NSP. In turn, the Think Tank focuses on 5 special Programs:

1. Asian Youth Leadership
2. Think Tank Collaboration
3. Civil Society Connections
4. Regional Resilience
5. Cultural Exchanges

An interesting mechanism that TAEF has developed is the Asia Engagement Consortium (AEC), an interdisciplinary alliance of think tanks and NGOs, whose main objective is to facilitate synergy between the main expert groups between Taiwan and neighboring Asian countries. Another initiative is the Taiwan-Asian Young Leaders Engagement or TAYLE in which delegates from the countries of the New Southbound Policy can participate.

Cultural aspects

Nowadays, initiatives in the field of cultural diplomacy by governments are more popular. The need to implement attractive and creative cultural programs as Film and Musical festivals, Museums’ exchanges, presentations in art galleries, are good resources to promote national culture.

Taiwan is well known for its cinematography industry and initiatives carried out by the Department of Cultural Affairs of the Taipei City Government, for example, or the Kaohsiung

Film Festival, The Taiwan International Documentary Festival, among others, contribute, not only to Promote Taiwan's history or cultural values, also that Taiwanese citizens learn about the history, cultural and social aspects of other countries, especially the ones of the New Southbound Policy.

As it was mentioned before, the local history of the island is important not only to define the Taiwanese identity, but also to explain the Austronesian's roots and links with other countries of the NSP, as Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei. In 2018 the partnership between the Tanjungpura University in Indonesia with the National Taitung University concludes in the creation of the Taiwan-Indonesia Center of Southeast Asia Ethnicities, Cultures and Societies. Another example is the establishment of the Science and Technology Innovation Center for Taiwan – Philippines Indigenous Knowledge. (Cheung, 2019)

Taking into account the role and growth of the Muslim population in the region is essential to formulate social inclusion policies for the local Muslim population, or also to attract Islamic tourism. In Taiwan there are between 50,000 and 60,000 citizens who define themselves as Muslims; and to these number add more than 200 thousand immigrants, mainly from Indonesia and other countries in Southeast Asia, who profess this religion. In this sense, the Halal is an extremely important potential market for Taiwan, and since the NSP initiative includes many countries with a Muslim population, including Indonesia. Halal services and prayer spaces have begun to develop in tourist attractions, transportation hubs, Taoyuan airport, and government buildings. Also, the number of halal-certified restaurants in Taiwan increased: from 15 locations in 2011 they went to 104 in April 2017. (Glaser, b., Kennedy, s., Mitchell, d., & Funaiole, M., 2018) According to the certification processed by the Tourist Office and the Chinese Muslim Association, for a restaurant to be classified as halal it must be inspected and comply with the regulatory specifications of the halal diet (origin of food, methods of preparation, utensils specific and segregated preparation areas).

The establishment of religious centers is also an important aspect for the insertion of Muslim population, for example, the Taipei Grand Mosque is the oldest of the seven mosques in total in the country. It was built by the Muslim Chinese Association around 1950 in order to serve as a meeting and prayer place for the community; and to develop diplomatic, cultural and economic ties with other Islamic nations. On the other hand, there is also the Chinese Islamic Youth

Association or the Chinese Muslim Youth League that dates back to the 1930s and is the organization that built and runs the Taipei Cultural Mosque.

In turn, the At-Taqwa Mosque is an example of the importance and growth of the Indonesian Muslim community in Taiwan, as it arose from a project started in Taoyuan County. In 2013, the community of Indonesian factory workers and domestic workers gathered to buy the land surrounding the store and build the mosque. This community later founded the Taiwan Muslim Association in 2016, of which the majorities are Indonesians residing on the island.

c) Industrial Innovation and Cooperation

The ROC (Taiwan) government is interested in deepening relations with NSP partners at the industrial level, in order to establish an industrial supply chain partnership. For this reason, the *Five Plus Two Industrial Innovation Program*⁴ and create an Asian Silicon Valley as one of main goal.

The importance of establish mechanism of communication and dialogue as congress, summits, associations between institutions or center of technology for Industrial Innovation. In those events it is possible to facilitate the people to people connections and develop substantial relations and partnerships and promote knowledge and capability in the Industrial Innovation field. A partnership between Taiwan's Institute for Information Industry and Thailand's Digital Economy Promotion Agency is being carrying on to implement smart city pilot projects. Another important Project is the possibility of build the Technology Innovation International Park in the city of Bengaluru in India. (Office of Trade Negotiations, 2019: 15)

The Indo-Taiwan Research Center on Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning at the Indian Institute of Technology Ropar allows academic exchanges, collaboration in various fields from microelectronics, space technology, and industrial innovation technology, among others. (Cheung, 2019)

⁴ The Five Plus Two Industrial Innovation Program involve industries and projects: intelligent machinery, Asia Silicon Valley, green energy, biomedicine, national defense and aerospace, new agriculture and the circular economy.

Regarding the commitment to environmental protection, Taiwan is increasing its participation along with the New Southbound Policy countries in annual meetings and events on initiatives in air pollution control. Focusing in environment programs, we can mentioned the partnership between the University of the Sri Jayewardenepura and the National Sun Yat-sen University that together in 2019 launched the Taiwan-Sri Lanka Environmental Change Science and Technology Innovation Center. (Cheung, 2019)

d) Tourism

If we follow the perspective that Soft power is the capability to attract through culture, ideology or political values, the tourist industry is important sector to develop in terms of Nye's theory. *"From a soft power perspective, the tourist is a geopolitical subject and object. As such, soft Power has been an implicit area of tourism studies. It will become more explicit as policymakers and scholars are now venturing into the implications of global perceptions, country image, and destination marketing in geopolitical and international business terms"* (Ooi, 2016: 878).

In the past years, the increase of number of tourist to The Republic of China (Taiwan) from the NSP countries reached to 2.59 million in 2018 and the tourist are especially from Malaysia, Vietnam, Singapore, The Philippines, Thailand and Indonesian. (Yang, Pei, Liu, Hsiao, & Hsin, 2019) One of the principal reasons of the increase in tourists are the policies carried by the government in term of flexibility and simplify requires for obtain the visa. The Republic of China (Taiwan) has established a visa exemption with duration of stay up to 90 days with Australia and New Zealand, with a duration period of 30 days with Malaysia and Singapore. While the Philippines, Thailand, Brunei can stay up in Taiwan to 14 days. In the case of Vietnam, is allowed multiple-entry visas with long validity for more than 2 years. (New Southbound Policy Portal, 2019)

Another possibility of countries of the NSP is the policy under "Project for Simplifying Visa Regulations for High-end Group Tourists from Southeast Asian Countries" with includes Tourist groups from Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam. Another option designated to Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka for the purpose of conducting business at the recommendation of local offices of the Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA) are eligible for an eVisa. (General Information on eVisa Application)

While there is still a need to improve the tourism sector, at the infrastructure and connectivity level, but also in cultural terms: from religious aspects (for example, Muslim and Hindu tourists) to linguistics (the training of tourist guides who master the languages of the NSP countries). Currently, many of the tour guides are immigrants from the Southeast Asian countries.

In the other hand, the gastrodiploamacy is an important way of attract more tourist, being Taiwan well known for their diverse gastronomy; but also, by promoting the development of the halal market in the country.

Conclusion

The active foreign policy directed by the Republic of China (Taiwan) from the nineties towards Southeast Asia has contributed to obtain a greater presence in international organizations, at least as an economy. The signing of bilateral agreements and memorandums of understanding with ASEAN countries, including Indonesia and even a Free Trade Agreements with Singapore and New Zealand can be seen as a basis for building unofficial relations with countries in the region.

On a social level, the immigration of citizens from the Southeast Asia to Taiwan has been a growing phenomenon and has contributed to shaping a more diverse society and building networks and contacts at the commercial, educational, tourist and cultural levels.

The New Southbound Policy initiative depends on a stable regional environment, in which there is no tension in the Taiwan Strait; and the governments that make up ASEAN do not see themselves under pressure from the PRC regarding relations with Taiwan. On the other hand, this foreign policy is strengthened in building ties by signing economic cooperation agreements with important trading partners and renewing bilateral investment and tax protection treaties.

From a theory perspective, the New Southbound Policy scheme consider the importance of soft power that can be used by the Taiwan's government and take advantage of its know-how, make use of its cultural diplomacy to promote its national identity and opportunities in matter of cooperation, training, connectivity that it can offer. In addition, the policy can contribute to increase and diversifying trade with other partners in the region and to counter economic dependence on China.

The so-called "people to people diplomacy" has contributed to tie Southeast Asia countries and Taiwan relations closer from a socio-cultural perspective, through educational exchanges, the formation of joint associations to carry out artistic presentations; promoting and participating in film festivals and performing arts shows.

In terms of Public Diplomacy, its need to explain in more detail and the objectives of the New Southbound Policy to the countries partners of the initiative. Think Tanks, educational institutions or research centers, for example, are favorable spaces for dialogue to present the initiative, present its objectives and design policies aimed at broad cooperation and covering different areas and sectors of the NSP; and which, in turn, can lead to inter-institutional partnerships.

Cultural diplomacy allows knowledge and understanding of the "other" and contributes not only to relations between countries, but also to building a friendlier international environment.

As for the effectiveness of the New South Policy and the future of relations between Taiwan and the countries that include the initiative, it depends on many factors and actors that play internationally, especially the People's Republic of China. The Taiwanese international reality still differs from the stated objectives of relations with the Indo-Pacific region.

Some remarks:

- The NPS has contributed to increase the number of tourism and cultural exchanges, but the real results of this soft power policies are long term
- The NSP budget is insufficient to cover the 18 countries projects and not only compete against funds from AIIB and the New Silk Road Initiative or ADB among others financial institutions.
- Taiwan has possibilities of economic expansion in the region, so it seeks to focus on the emerging markets of the region, creating better bilateral trade conditions.
- Taiwan should be able to sign bilateral treaties with its NSP partners, due to the sensitivity of political issues, and thus avoid conflicts with the PRC.

The New Southbound Policy, more than a strategy that economically competes with other initiatives policies such as OBOR, Indo-Pacific or Look East, can be seen as a complementary policy for the countries of the region, in which, unlike the above mentioned policies with a geostrategic and economic political character; the Republic of China (Taiwan) initiative, seek to

participate more actively and integrate in the region through commercial and cultural ties, without disturb the power balance in the region.

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