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STATEMENT

BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY MR. CRISPIN GREY-JOHNSON
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

AT

**THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE DURING THE
59TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

ON

**“THE QUESTION OF THE REPRESENTATION OF THE 23
MILLION PEOPLE OF TAIWAN IN THE UNITED NATIONS”**

**15TH SEPTEMBER 2004
NEW YORK**

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation offers you our warmest congratulations on your election as President of the 59th Session of the General Assembly. We have no doubts whatsoever that with your wisdom that has been tested and tried over your many years of service within the international system, our deliberations during this session will be easily guided to a successful conclusion. Please be assured of my delegation's fullest cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation comes once more to the General Committee with a request that it include in the Agenda of the 59th session, a supplementary item entitled, "Question of the Representation of the 23 million people of Taiwan in the United Nations". This request has the support of the following Member States:

Belize, Burkina Faso, Chad, Grenada, Malawi, the Marshall Islands, Nicaragua, Palau, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Solomon Islands, Swaziland and Tuvalu.

We have submitted this request through a letter of 6 August 2004, to the Secretary-General in accordance with Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly. Annex I of our letter contains an explanatory memorandum, and Annex II, a draft resolution for the Committee's consideration. Our letter and its annexes have been circulated as document A/59/194 of 10 August 2004.

Mr. Chairman,

Today, we all have yet another opportunity to revisit the burning question of the representation of the 23 million people of Taiwan in the United Nations. Had this lingering question been resolved as it should have been, this intervention would not have been necessary. It has taken us far too long to put this case behind us, but it is still not late. The exclusion of a sovereign, peace-loving nation of 23 million people from the United Nations, indicts us all both morally and politically.

Mr. Chairman,

The Charter of the United Nations opens with the phrase "We the peoples of the United Nations..." and this included the people of Taiwan before they were excluded by the UN itself.

The responsibility to undo this anomaly of history is one that falls squarely on our shoulders. Resolution 2758 (XXVI) which, some have argued, settled the question of

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Taiwan's representation in the United Nations, does not state that the People's Republic of China represents Taiwan in the United Nations nor does it say that Taiwan cannot be admitted into the United Nations.

As of now, the people of Taiwan have no representation whatsoever in this world body. In this era of threats and new challenges to the international system, leaving out any nation, especially a significant actor in world affairs like Taiwan is indeed foolhardy and counter productive. This is all the more so at a time when we are all eager to tighten cooperation among states in all areas, and strengthen global governance.

That Taiwan is a sovereign nation is a fact that cannot be disputed. All nations of the world, including its main detractor, conduct trade and other exchanges with Taiwan as a sovereign entity. And there is no gainsaying the fact that without Taiwan, global industrial output, scientific and technological R&D, medical and pharmaceutical research, information technology, maritime and air transportation, etc., will not be the same. In all these areas and more, Taiwan has made, and continues to make invaluable contributions to the health of the global economy.

Strategically, Taiwan is emerging as a potentially strong power broker in East Asia. Its record as a functioning democracy and a champion of human rights stands out among its peers in that part of the world. As a proven advocate of the maintenance of world peace it could contribute immensely in the search for the peaceful resolution of some of the emerging conflicts in Asia. But for us to be able to harness this potential that Taiwan offers, we must formally embrace its 23 million people and bring them into the United Nations fold.

Mr. Chairman,

With the exclusion of Taiwan one can reasonably conclude that we are yet to attain the goal of universality in the United Nations.

But the people of Taiwan have shown us all how resilient they are inspite of their thirty three years of exclusion. They are firm in their determination to rejoin the United Nations and that is why they have not lost hope. Through hardwork, sacrifice and dogged determination, Taiwan has emerged as a technological powerhouse. Taiwan is also an economic powerhouse ranking as the 17th largest economy in the world. This is no mean feat, given the forced political isolation imposed on its 23 million people. And it shows that Taiwan is more than ready to play its full part in global affairs. Even with all the roadblocks placed in its way, Taiwan has shown its readiness to assume its humanitarian responsibilities in situations where many countries could, or would not. It is unacceptable that even in the fight against diseases of global reach, crude, subjective measures are being used to interfere with the collective response that is called for. And it is alarming that in this day and age of global terrorism, Taiwan's overtures to contribute to the fight against this scourge receives only marginal attention.

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Mr. Chairman,

What is striking and stands out for particular mention is the continued commitment of Taiwan to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Taiwan interacts with the rest of the world in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations when, by our conduct, it is legally under no obligation whatsoever to do so. The reason behind this is simple: Taiwan perceives itself as a responsible and integral member of the international community. It is no pariah state.

Mr. Chairman,

There is no unilateral policy on Taiwan's sovereignty that can be implemented through the threat of the use of force, or the actual use of force. Events in the Taiwan straits should elicit a response from the United Nations. The use of force or the mere threat of it to settle disputes is illegal according to our Charter. Cross-strait talks aimed at achieving lasting peace and stability remains the legitimate goal of the peace-loving people of Taiwan. In the same vein, this should also be the goal of every peace-loving neighbour in that region and beyond.

Mr. Chairman,

While exclusion may appear to be expedient at some point in time, its deliberate and mindless pursuit as a policy by any power, diminishes that power's standing over time. The United Nations should neither be a party to such a policy, nor condone it. We cannot continue to ignore the legitimate aspirations of the people of Taiwan and expect to achieve the purposes of the organization. Today, we have an opportunity to set in motion a process that should lead to a rectification of one of history's greatest injustices – the exclusion of Taiwan from the United Nations.

I urge you therefore, Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, to agree with us that a supplementary item entitled, "Question of the Representation of the 23 million people of Taiwan in the United Nations", be included in the agenda of the 59th session of the General Assembly.

Thank you.