

Representing a non- recognized State: the job of a Taiwanese diplomat (29 January 2019)

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Représenter un État non reconnu :
le métier de diplomate taiwanais

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Though de facto fully independent, meeting international law's definition of a State and ranked 22nd economic power in the world, Taiwan is excluded from the inter-State community, no longer a member of the UN or any of its specialized agencies, and having diplomatic relations with only 17 countries, none of which are a key player on the international stage. Nevertheless, Taiwan's diplomatic corps is the same size as that of a fully recognized State in terms of budget, staff and careers, whether within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Taipei or within the network of informal representative offices located in more than 100 countries. What are the workspaces given to these diplomats by the chanceries who do not recognize their State?

Does representing a non-recognized State lead to innovative diplomatic practices? What are the motivations that bring these diplomats to such a career? When examining, one by one, all the duties assigned to the missions by Article 3 of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, it becomes clear that the daily activity, and the career, of Taiwanese officials is very similar to any diplomat's. While they do not officially represent their State, they are the gatekeepers of any bilateral cooperation.

