Honduras drifts from Taiwan towards China

Vocabulary Match

dissatisfaction • delegation • diplomatic • recognition • optimistic • establish •

• group • unhappiness • acknowledgement • political • set up • hopeful

Article

Taiwan announced on Thursday that it will recall its ambassador to Honduras due to worsening ties, as the Central American nation prepares to switch diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to China.

Taiwan's foreign ministry stated that it had recalled the ambassador to "express our strong dissatisfaction" over Honduras sending a delegation to Beijing. The move "ignores the traditional friendship" between the two countries, which spans over 80 years.

Honduran President Xiomara Castro announced on March 15 that her country would establish diplomatic ties with China, which would essentially end its current relationship with Taiwan. Only 14 countries, including Honduras, have official relations with Taiwan, as several others have switched recognition to China in recent years.

Parsifal D'Sola, founder and director of the ABF China-Latin America Research Center, said that economic benefits offered by China are particularly appealing to developing Latin American countries and hard for Taiwan or its supporters to counter. Taiwan's foreign minister Joseph Wu warned Honduras not to "fall into China's trap" and admitted the situation was not optimistic.

Quiz

1. Why is Taiwan recalling its ambassador to Honduras?
2. What is one reason some Latin American countries are switching recognition to China?

Conversation

A: Can you believe Honduras is switching diplomatic recognition to China?
B: Yeah, it's a tough blow for Taiwan. They're losing another ally.
A: And after more than 80 years of friendship, too!
B: Well, you can't blame them. China's offering some serious economic benefits.
A: I guess so, but Taiwan's foreign minister warned them not to fall into China's trap.
B: We'll see how it all plays out in the end. It's a complicated situation.

Discussion

1. How might Taiwan be affected by losing its allies to China?
2. What are some ways a country can maintain strong international relationships?

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