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SANTA BARBARA, Calif.

AP - Sen. Edward M. Kennedy Friday urged the United States to take the initiative in drafting and supporting a resolution to admit Communist China to the United Nations along with Taiwan.

Kennedy said there are major obstacles to inclusion of both red China and Nationalist China, but that an American initiative at the next session of the international body would "contribute to a new beginning in our Asia policy."

Kennedy's statement was in a position paper submitted to a Japanese-American conference on China policy at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. The new Senate majority whip did not attend the opening session but was scheduled to appear Saturday.

Several U.S. officials, including Sen. J. William Fulbright, D-Ark., and 10 members of the Japanese Diet joined Kennedy in calling for a more flexible policy toward Communist China.

The conference was the idea of the Japanese legislators, members of the ruling Liberal Democratic party who want their government, as well as the United States, to recognize red China.

Kennedy's statement called for easing a U.S. trade embargo against red China which he said "has only been effective as a symbol of hostility." He also advocated easing travel barriers between the two countries and development of additional contacts with Chinese diplomats.

"The conflict in Vietnam has made adjustment in American policy toward China difficult, if not impossible," Kennedy said.

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Santa Barbara, China-U.N., take 2. said.

But the twilight of this conflict is hopefully at hand, and given the new national leadership in the U.S. and the gradual shifting of power and changing of conditions within China itself, the time is appropriate to refocus attention on building mutual understanding and respect."

Fulbright did not advocate that the United States take the initiative immediately in overcoming opposition to red China's entry into the UN. But he said the U.S. should abstain on the issue for the present, rather than leading the position.

"It seems to me that the time has come when we should suggest that the Chinese themselves solve this problem - the Chinese on the mainland and the Chinese on Taiwan," Fulbright said.

Edwin O. Reischauer, former ambassador to Japan, said Japan should take the lead in moving toward a rapprochement with China. "Japan has much more to fear from tensions and turmoil in East Asia than does the U.S. and much more to gain from the relaxation of tension and the development of peace, stability and prosperity," Reischauer said. "The most likely way China will find its way back to a mutually satisfactory relationship with the outside world is through development of better relations with Japan first."

One of the Japanese participants, Tokuma Utsunomiya, said the U.S. appears committed to a course in Asia that can "only lead to disaster." He said both Americans and Japanese must liberalize China policies or tension in Asia will intensify.

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