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KMT: the Chinese Nationalist Party turning into a Taiwanese Centrist Party?

Since the year 2000 the KMT had to confront a number of serious challenges. As a result of its defeat in the presidential elections of that year, it lost its access to executive power and thus the basis for its preferred political approach: redistributive politics. The aftermath of the electoral defeat deprived the party of some of its outstanding politicians with considerable voter appeal. Furthermore, the party underwent a second phase of split-offs, resulting in the loss of considerable segments of its membership and voter base and in the creation of new competitors in the form of the PFP and the TSU. Deprived of power and harrowed by plans of the DPP government to confiscate its extensive assets, the KMT seemed to be on the verge of disintegration.

In spite of these difficulties the KMT restructured its membership and a reorganised its party apparatus, providing elected politicians with greater influence on policy formulation and decision-making. In two legislative elections the party succeeded in maintaining a position of influence as the nucleus of the blue camp.

Within the restructured field of party politics in Taiwan, composed of a quartet of political parties, the nativist TSU, a radical reformist DPP and a China-oriented PFP, the KMT might consolidate its position in domestic politics by playing the role of a centrist party appealing both to moderate Taiwanese and Mainlanders.