

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
Director-General
World Health Organization
Avenue Appia 20
1211 Geneva
Switzerland

XX May 2021

Dear Dr. Tedros,

Taiwan's participation in the WHA as an observer and in all WHO meetings,
mechanisms and activities

We, the undersigned Co-Chairs of the Formosa Club, Members of the European Parliament and Parliaments of European countries, wish to express our concern that Taiwan is still not fully integrated into the World Health Organization's (WHO) mechanisms as the international community continues to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic.

It has now been a year since the COVID-19 outbreak was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern by the WHO. Despite the best efforts of governments around the world to fight the virus and roll out vaccination programs, the pandemic continues to exact an extensive toll on the health and lives of people worldwide, forcing governments to impose more lockdowns and restrictions. Taiwan, on the other hand, has been remarkably effective in containing the spread of COVID-19 and has remained, to a great extent, virus-free since the beginning of the outbreak. As of the end of March 2021, Taiwan has had around a thousand confirmed cases, the majority of which have been imported, and just 10 deaths. The Taiwan Model of disease prevention, which includes diligent contact-tracing, use of innovative technology such as big data analytics, and effective border management, stands out as a unique approach to controlling the spread of COVID-19. Moreover, Taiwan has shown its solidarity with the international community by donating a total of 54 million surgical masks and other anti-pandemic supplies to more than 80 countries in order to bolster global containment efforts.

Nonetheless, our consistent call for the WHO to include Taiwan was not answered last year. In spite of strong support from Europe and other parts of the world, Taiwan was unable to participate in the World Health Assembly (WHA) in 2020. What's more worrying is that Taiwan's participation in the WHO technical meetings remains very much hindered even in the time of a global pandemic, with more than 70% of Taiwan's applications for technical meetings being ignored or declined between the period of

2009 and 2020. This should be unthinkable because the pandemic knows no borders or nationalities. Excluding Taiwan from these important discussions on public health and disease-prevention is not only detrimental to the rights of Taiwanese citizens, it also deprives the international community of the knowledge and experience that Taiwan could otherwise contribute. Taiwan's participation in the WHO is not a game of geopolitics, but a health issue that should remain free of politicization.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that no one is immune to this virus and we should not let any political doctrine stand in the way of a more comprehensive effort to fight the pandemic. As the 74th World Health Assembly is scheduled to take place from 24 May to 1 June 2021, we urge you to invite Taiwan to participate in the WHA as an observer and fully incorporate Taiwan into the WHO meetings, mechanisms, and activities, which would be to the detriment of no one, and to the advantage of all.

Please accept our highest considerations and your prompt response to the issues raised in this letter will be highly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,