

Taiwan is an indispensable partner in the global fight against COVID-19 and pursuit of post-pandemic recovery



Support Taiwan's full inclusion in all WHO meetings, mechanisms, and activities

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought the world to its knees, exacting a heavy and extensive toll on the health and lives of humankind. More than 150 million people across the globe have been infected by the virus and more than three million have lost their lives. The message is loud and clear: this is not the time to fight on territorial or political issues or in the name of race, creed, caste, religion, ethnicity or colour. The situation demands a united fight against the virus that has posed the biggest challenge to the global community since World War II.

While major countries went into a shutdown in the wake of the outbreak of COVID-19 around this time last year, Taiwan took the pandemic head-on by making optimum use of the massive healthcare public infrastructure the country has created over the years and the technology at its disposal. We can proudly claim that the "Taiwan Model" has set an excellent example and earned global recognition for the series of actions we took and demonstrated to the world that "Taiwan can help, Taiwan is helping." The pandemic has further strengthened international affirmation of the importance and imperative need for Taiwan to participate in global cooperation mechanisms for disease prevention, leading to an unprecedented support for its participation in WHO.

No country can fight an epidemic alone. International cooperation is the only path to epidemic prevention and control. Taiwan, while willing to be an indispensable partner in the international community's recovery efforts, remains committed to seeking institutionalized participation in WHO. The accession will stand to benefit WHO and the international community in our collaborative efforts to contain COVID-19.

SHARING THE TAIWAN MODEL—A SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE OF FIGHTING COVID-19

Under the concerted efforts of its government and people, Taiwan has relied on its distinctive healthcare system, cooperative citizens, democratic spirit, and technological prowess to employ smart disease prevention systems as part of the implementation of numerous innovative policies, which have effectively contained COVID-19. Taiwan has proactively exchanged information on anti-pandemic measures with public health officials, experts and scholars from other countries by organizing COVID-19 related forums and by participating in APEC's High-Level Meeting on Health and the Economy and other virtual bilateral and multilateral conferences. It has also taken the initiative to hold more than 140 online professional meetings with government officials and experts from hospitals, universities and think tanks in over 60 countries as of February 2021.



The first batch of 150 oxygen concentrators and 500 oxygen cylinders have arrived in New Delhi on Sunday 2 May. The following batches of medical equipment will be airlifted to India soon.



President Tsai Ing-Wen

Taiwan stands with India in this difficult time, & we are ready to provide help.

Backed by private-sector resources and its compassionate people, the Taiwan Government has conducted four rounds of international humanitarian assistance to help contain COVID-19, donating 54 million surgical masks and other anti-pandemic supplies to more than 80 countries, including India. It will continue to share more resources, including surgical masks, medicines, and technology, so as to contribute to global containment efforts.

Relying on medical and healthcare strengths:

Taiwan's success in containing COVID-19 is attributable to its sound and comprehensive healthcare system and world-class medical capabilities. In 2021, the crowd-sourced global database Numbeo ranked Taiwan world no. 1 in its Health Care Index for the third straight year. Since the onset of COVID-19, Taiwan quickly developed a rapid test kit that could yield results in 15 minutes, eliciting extensive interest in technology transfer among other Asian countries. It has also actively engaged in vaccine development and procurement, and joined the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) Facility spearheaded by GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance; the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations; and WHO. In addition, it has encouraged domestic research institutes and biotech companies to expedite vaccine research and production.

Participating in the reform of WHO and global pandemic response measures:

To prevent other major global disease outbreaks, WHO is reviewing pandemic response measures and mechanisms. In May 2020, the World Health Assembly (WHA) passed a resolution to establish an Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response (IPPR), which is reviewing COVID-19 countermeasures and gathering opinions from experts and stakeholders worldwide. Taiwan supports this review process and wishes to participate in the IPPR's collective efforts to define a better global anti-pandemic strategy.

Helping create a more resilient post-pandemic era:

In countries around the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has shaken economic and government systems to their very core and irrevocably altered the future of humankind. Nevertheless, Taiwan saw its GDP climb 2.98 per cent in 2020. As a key partner in the restructuring of global supply chains in the post-pandemic era, it will leverage its industrial competitiveness to promote international cooperation in disease prevention, medicine, and digital healthcare. Taiwan's participation in WHO remains severely restricted.

WHO must fully accept Taiwan's participation; No gap should be allowed in the global anti-pandemic system:

Taiwan is a transport hub for the Asia-Pacific region. Yet, Taiwan is unable to comprehensively participate in the WHO-led multilateral public health system and network, thus creating the risk of a gap in the global anti-pandemic system.

Taiwan's real-time information exchange with the world via WHO's IHR:

As the COVID-19 pandemic broke out from late 2019 to early 2020, Taiwan took the lead in reporting information to WHO via the International Health Regulations (IHR) mechanism, and continues to do so. However, to date, WHO is yet to include the contact information of Taiwan's Centers for Disease Control on the IHR intranet (Event Information Site, EIS). As a result, countries have been unable to obtain key information from Taiwan and exchange information with Taiwan via WHO's IHR in a timely manner, gravely impacting the efficacy of international cooperation against the contagion.

WHO has improperly listed Taiwan data under China:

WHO sadly continues to improperly list confirmed cases in Taiwan under China in its COVID-19 reports. This unacceptable approach fails to acknowledge the fact that the People's Republic of China and Taiwan are separate jurisdictions, neither subordinate to the other. It also misleads other countries in terms of how they gauge the spread of the pandemic. On the basis of professionalism, pragmatism, and global public health and welfare, we are confident WHO shall rectify the improper listing of cases as soon as possible and include Taiwanese experts in all regional meetings and mechanisms on COVID-19 containment.

Improvements to be made for Taiwan's participation in WHO technical meetings:

Taiwan's continued exclusion from WHO laboratory networks has severely undermined the health rights of the Taiwanese people and the global efforts against disease. Other than WHO's political considerations, China's obstruction has been the primary reason for this. WHO and China have time and again declared that Taiwanese experts have been involved in all of WHO's consultations "so they are fully engaged and fully aware of all the developments," and that WHO has been "engaging with technical colleagues on the Taiwanese side over the whole course of this event... in all aspects of technical cooperation." These claims are factually incorrect, to say the very least.

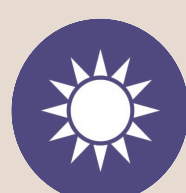
CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has again reminded people worldwide that disease knows no boundaries. Having been left high and dry in the past during numerous epidemics, Taiwan all the more realizes the importance of mutual support and is keen to work hand in hand with WHO and the comity of nations to grapple with such formidable challenges. We stand by our commitment to participate in international healthcare cooperation and again urge WHO to maintain a professional and neutral stance, renounce improper political considerations, and invite Taiwan to attend the WHA as an Observer. Only the democratically elected government of Taiwan can represent its 23.5 million people at WHO and protect their rights to health. It would be in the fitness of things for WHO to seek an appropriate avenue for institutionalized and comprehensive participation by Taiwan in all WHO meetings, mechanisms, and activities. Taiwan also earnestly appeals to its international friends in all sectors to staunchly support Taiwan's participation in the global health network and facilitate its further contributions in the post-pandemic era. Taiwan must be allowed to share our experience with the global community in fighting the pandemic in the interest of humanity.



Taiwan is delivering critical medical supplies to India. Taiwan is committed to providing necessary assistance to the people of India in Time of need.

Maha Siddiqui's Exclusive Interview with Taiwan's
Former Vice President Chen Chien-jen
Tonight at 6:30 PM and
Tomorrow at 9:30 PM on World360



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