

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0908

November 20, 2020

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

Dear Director-General Tedros:

We write to express our disappointment that the World Health Organization (WHO) once again failed to include Taiwan in this year's second session of the World Health Assembly (WHA) that was held virtually from November 9-14, 2020.

COVID-19 has devastated the world, leaving more than a million dead and has inflicted long-term damage to the global economy. Taiwan's widely recognized success at controlling the outbreak within its borders, which it was able to do without resorting to strict restrictions on its people, should serve as a model to the rest of us, and it is further evidence that Taiwan is extraordinarily qualified to contribute to the WHA. Taiwan has maintained no new cases of domestic infection for more than 200 consecutive days, setting a world record. This success is all the more astonishing considering that Taiwan is located in the region where the initial outbreak occurred, and thus, could have been easily overwhelmed during the earliest days of the outbreak given the high volume of travelers between Taiwan and the People's Republic of China.

Taiwan ranks among the world's most generous donors of personal protective equipment and other medical supplies and technologies to countries in need. Taiwan is well positioned to help the international community by sharing its knowledge regarding the advanced production of critical medical supplies, the careful application of contact tracing, and the targeted use of big data and digital technology to stop the spread of the virus.

Despite its indisputable accomplishments and contributions to global health, the WHO continues to exclude Taiwan from the WHA due to pressure from Beijing. This places the political agenda of a single member over the health of the global community. Allowing Taiwan's meaningful participation in future events will ensure that their public health experts have the opportunity to share best practices and contribute to an effective global response to the pandemic. Marshalling all available resources to respond to this pandemic should be the WHO's top priority, not bending to Beijing's inappropriate and unjustified demands.

As you know, the People's Republic of China was not transparent with the WHO and with the international community in the initial days of the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan. It is clear that Beijing has gotten the WHO to exploit its "one-China" policy to justify shutting out a

democratic Taiwan from contributing to the response to this pandemic and other shared public health challenges.

The WHO cannot fulfill its stated mission of “building a better, healthier future for people all over the world” if it continues to deny Taiwan observer status. It is in the interest of all nations that the world’s leading health agency be able to withstand the influence of bad actors who are motivated by interests that have nothing to do with advancing global health security. Taiwan participated in the WHA for eight consecutive years until May 2017, and as a leader in the fight against COVID-19, Taiwan’s contributions are needed now more than ever. We strongly urge the WHO to once again invite Taiwan to meaningfully participate in future meetings.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



Edward J. Markey
U.S. Senator



Ted Cruz
U.S. Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
U.S. Senator



Sherrod Brown
U.S. Senator