

WMA RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF TAIWAN'S PARTICIPATION IN ALL WHO HEALTH PROGRAMS AND INCLUSION IN THE INTERNATIONAL HEALTH REGULATIONS (IHR) MECHANISM

*Adopted by the 170th WMA Council Session, Divonne-les-Bains, France, May 2005
and amended and adopted as a Resolution by the 72nd WMA General Assembly (online), London, United Kingdom, October 2021*

PREAMBLE

In line with the Charter of the United Nations, Member States of the WHO recognize the *"enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health"* as a fundamental right of every human being *"without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition"*, uphold that *"the health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security and is dependent upon the fullest co-operation of individuals and States"* (Preamble of WHO's Constitution).

Taiwan, located at a key position in the Asia-Pacific region, has long enjoyed close relationship with countries and areas of the region, with over 20 million regional and international travelers per year. Thus, the devastating outbreak of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus further highlights the urgency and importance of inclusiveness and leaving no one behind in the global health network. By continuing to refuse to grant Taiwan observer status to the WHA and full access to its meetings, mechanisms and activities, the WHO fails to fulfill the principles of universality and equality established in WHO's constitution as well as the ethical standards of the organization. From 2009 to 2016, Taiwan was invited to participate in the World Health Assembly (WHA) as an Observer, with very limited access to WHO technical briefings, mechanisms and activities. Since 2017, the WHO has not granted the Observer status to Taiwan anymore.

Although Taiwan has been officially included in the implementation framework of the International Health Regulations (IHR) since 2009, its contact point information is not included on the IHR Portal established by WHO, impeding timely exchange of information and communication to the detriment of Taiwan. Delayed and/or incomplete medical information can impact adversely on the Taiwanese population, causing a gap in Taiwan's domestic disease control network, with unavoidable implications for global health.

Allowing the participation of Taiwan to the World Health Assembly and fostering its inclusion in all WHO's health programmes and in the International Health Regulations would benefit the people in Taiwan, but also the WHO and its member states as well as all related parties.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Considering the Sustainable Development Goal 3 aiming to ensure healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages and WHO's primary objective to *"attain by all peoples the highest possible level of health"* (article 1 of WHO's Constitution), both aims requiring a true inclusive strategy comprising all populations worldwide,
2. Reminding the ethical core value of the medical profession to serve humanity regardless of any other considerations than people's health and well-being, and firmly committed to the safeguard and promotion

WMA COUNCIL RESOLUTION ON OBSERVER STATUS FOR TAIWAN TO THE WORLD HEALTH

of health-related human rights, the WMA and its constituent members call on:

- WHO to grant Taiwan observer status to the World Health Assembly and to ensure Taiwan's participation in all its health programs based on a substantive, timely and professional basis,
- WHO and its Member States to include Taiwan as a full participating party to the International Health Regulations, allowing its critical contribution to the global health protection network.