

TAIPEI REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE IN THE UK

駐英國台北代表處



President Tsai Ing-wen points out Taiwan Can Help fight coronavirus.

IN THE NEWSLETTER

Key events featured in this issue include:

- President Tsai & MOFA calling for Taiwan's inclusion in WHO to fight spread of coronavirus
- UK & EU parliamentarians urging WHO to recognise Taiwan is not part of China and allow its participation
- UK Minister of State for Commonwealth & UN voicing support for Taiwan's international participation
- Representative Lin's letter to *The Guardian* about Taiwan's WHO inclusion
- Digital Minister's *FT* interview highlighting Taiwan's tech bolstering its democracy
- Taiwan and UK hosting a reception celebrating renewed friendship in the Lunar New Year
- TRO's visit to the British Library
- Oxford University students' visit to the TRO
- Taiwan deepening cooperation with the UK research council (ESRC)
- A Taiwanese-language cinema tour across the UK and Europe
- TRO preparing to renew the Taiwan Cambridge Scholarship
- An installation by a Taiwanese artist featuring in UK Love Light Norwich Festival

President Tsai and MOFA call for Taiwan's WHO inclusion to fight spread of coronavirus

In February, President Tsai Ing-wen repeatedly called for the World Health Organization (WHO) to allow for Taiwan's participation. In a tweet on 7 February, the president pointed

out that at this critical juncture, Taiwan's continued absence from the global health body has caused countless errors in the handling of the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak. "I believe that health is a human right, and #TaiwanCanHelp the WHO in preventing the spread of #COVID19," she tweeted on 15 February. The president also stressed that politics should never override professionalism, particularly in international organizations dedicated to people's health and well-being in another tweet on 20 February: "#Taiwan is willing and able to contribute to the international community in epidemic prevention & regional prosperity."

In addition to the president's statements, Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) also urged for Taiwan's participation in the WHO and its technical meetings, including the annual World Health Assembly (WHA). In a tweet on 3 February, Taiwan Foreign Minister Joseph Wu called on the WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus to recognise that Taiwan is not a part of the People's Republic of China (PRC), its health care system is administered by separate and independent authorities, and to stop damaging efforts to tackle the coronavirus outbreak and harming global health. On 9 February, MOFA expressed sincere appreciation for the unprecedented level of support extended to Taiwan's campaign for participation in the WHO by diplomatic allies and like-minded nations at the 146th session of the WHO Executive Board (EB) meeting about the 2019 novel coronavirus, which took place from 3-8 February in Geneva. Countries backing Taiwan's participation in the EB meeting included Eswatini, Paraguay, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nauru, Saint Christopher and Nevis, and the Marshall Islands. In addition to these allies, the UK, US, Japan, Germany (representing the 27 member states of the European Union), Australia, New Zealand and Belgium all spoke up in favour of Taiwan at the EB meeting, or echoed the country's appeal for participation by stressing the importance of inclusiveness and ensuring that no gaps exist in the global disease prevention network.

UK and EU parliamentarians urge WHO to recognise Taiwan is not part of China and allow its participation

Dear Director-General,

On behalf of the British-Taiwanese All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG), which is comprised of more than 140 members from the two chambers of the UK Parliament, we wish to express our deepest concern over the WHO's Situation Reports on the 2019 novel coronavirus incorrectly listing Taiwan as part of China.


As you are surely aware, Taiwan is not under China's jurisdiction, and Taiwan's and China's health care systems are administered by separate and independent health authorities. The WHO's decision to list Taiwan as part of China in its reports therefore seriously hinders the timely exchange of information between the proper authorities. This in turn dangerously undermines the international effort to address this global health emergency which is worsening at a worrying rate.

Listing Taiwan under China in the WHO reports also wrongly suggests that Taiwan, like China, possesses "very high risk" of the 2019 novel coronavirus, while in fact the number of confirmed cases of coronavirus in Taiwan is lower than in most countries that are affected. With very limited cases and zero death toll, the situation in Taiwan is well managed and controlled by its health authority. Thus this incorrect information from the WHO has led to inappropriate policy decisions, like the one recently made by the Italian government to ban flights from Taiwan as of 31 January, causing unnecessary harm to all relevant parties.

Furthermore, the WHO's treatment of Taiwan as part of China not only means that Taiwan's democratically-elected government is barred from participating in the WHA, but also that Taiwanese health experts are prevented from taking part in WHO technical meetings. This seriously contradicts with the WHO's motto of "health for all" and "leaving no one behind", and renders the pursuit of a seamless global health security network impossible.

For all the reasons above, we respectfully urge the WHO to immediately correct this error of treating Taiwan as part of China, including wrongfully designating Taiwan under China in any reports. We also call upon the WHO to invite Taiwan to attend this year's WHA as an observer and make proper arrangements to enable Taiwan's full participation in WHO meetings, mechanisms and activities. We look forward to Taiwan's timely inclusion in the WHO under your capable leadership.

Yours sincerely,



Lord Rogan, Co-Chair



Lord Steel of Aikwood, President

On 6 February, British-Taiwanese All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) Co-Chair Lord Rogan and President Lord Steel of Aikwood wrote a joint letter to the World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus expressing their deepest concern over the global health body's Situation Reports on the 2019 novel coronavirus incorrectly listing Taiwan as part of China. The UK parliamentarians stressed that Taiwan is not under China's jurisdiction, adding that Taiwan's and China's health care systems are administered by separate and independent health authorities. They also pointed out that the WHO's decision to list Taiwan as part of China in its reports seriously hinders the timely exchange of information between proper authorities and wrongly suggests that Taiwan possesses "very high risk" of the 2019 novel coronavirus, while in fact the number of confirmed cases of coronavirus in Taiwan is lower than most countries affected. Lord Rogan and Lord Steel also stressed that with very limited cases, the situation in Taiwan is well-managed and controlled by its health authority. The APPG leaders also stated that the WHO's exclusion of Taiwan and its health experts seriously contradicts the WHO's motto of "health for all" and "leaving no one behind", and renders the pursuit of a seamless global health security network impossible. The parliamentarians concluded by urging the WHO to immediately correct this error of treating Taiwan as part of China and called upon the organisation to allow Taiwan's participation in the World Health Assembly (WHA) and WHO meetings, mechanisms and activities.

The Formosa Club, a group of Europe-based lawmakers of which Lord Rogan is a member, also sent a letter on 11 February urging the WHO Director-General to rectify the incorrect listing of Taiwan under China's jurisdiction and grant the country WHA observer status. The WHO's erroneous designation of Taiwan as part of China "has contributed to significant misunderstandings around the world, as seen in the Italian government's decision to ban all flights from Taiwan," the group pointed out, adding that limiting access to WHO technical meetings in the midst of a global health emergency undermines the fundamental human rights of Taiwan's 23 million people and puts everyone at risk. The Formosa Club's letter follows other similar submissions to WHO Director General Ghebreyesus made by lawmakers from the UK, Italy, Latvia, Portugal and the European Parliament.

UK Minister of State for the Commonwealth and UN voices support for Taiwan's international participation

The screenshot shows the Hansard website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'UK Parliament' and links to 'Parliamentary Business', 'MPs, Lords and Offices', 'About Parliament', 'Get involved', 'Visit', and 'Education'. Below this is a 'Hansard' header with tabs for 'Commons', 'Lords', and 'About'. A red banner reads 'House of Lords Hansard'. Underneath, it says 'Contents / Lords Chamber' and 'Text only'. A notice states: 'House of Lords data for 13 February 2020 is currently being processed. Data for this date may temporarily appear incomplete.' The main heading is 'Taiwan' with a 'Share' link. Below this, the date '10 February 2020' and 'Volume 801' are shown. The section is titled 'Question' and '2.52 pm'. It is 'Asked by' 'Baroness Falkner of Margravine'. The question is: 'To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their policy towards Taiwan, and in particular on (1) security, and (2) international engagement issues.' The answer is from 'The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon) (Con)'. The response states: 'My Lords, the United Kingdom's long-standing policy on Taiwan is unchanged. The UK and Taiwan have a strong but unofficial relationship based on dynamic commercial, educational and cultural ties. We support Taiwan's participation in international organisations where statehood is not a prerequisite, and Taiwan can make a valuable contribution. On security, we are concerned by any activity that risks destabilising the status quo. Issues should be settled between people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait.'

On 10 February, UK Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the United Nations Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon issued a statement in the House of Lords expressing support for Taiwan's participation in international organisations. The Minister expressed the UK's support for Taiwan's participation in international organisations where it can make a valuable contribution. Commenting on Taiwan's efforts to participate in the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), Lord Ahmad stated "Taiwan's contribution to these organisations is important and that it has a vital role to play."

In addition, the Minister stressed the government continues to support representations that the UK Department of Health has made directly in lobbying for Taiwan's participation in the World Health Organisation, adding that "we are also working with like-minded countries, including the United States and Australia, to ensure that, at the World Health Assembly which takes place in May this year, Taiwan is represented. The Minister's statement was issued in response to questions raised by Baroness Falkner of Margravine on 10 February about the UK government's policy towards Taiwan, and in particular on security and international engagement issues. Responding to further questions on the UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab's statement of congratulations to the people of Taiwan upon its successful elections on 11 January, Lord Ahmad stressed the importance of recognising Taiwan's democratic process. He also lauded progress in Taiwan-UK relations, citing the rising level of trade, with UK exports to Taiwan growing 40.8% last year.

Representative Lin calls for Taiwan's WHO inclusion amid coronavirus outbreak in letter to *The Guardian*



On 6 February, Representative Lin called on the World Health Organization (WHO) to recognise that Taiwan is not a part of China and allow for Taiwan's participation in a letter to *The Guardian* titled "Issues raised by coronavirus". Representative Lin pointed out that Taiwan's exclusion from the WHO due to pressure from China creates a loophole in global health, citing that on 21 January Taiwan's Centre for Disease Control confirmed the first imported case and immediately reported it to the WHO. "We regret that Taiwan is the only country with a confirmed imported case that was left out of the WHO's emergency committee meeting, because China is blocking Taiwan's attendance in the UN health agency."

Representative Lin stressed that the situation is a fresh reminder of the catastrophic SARS epidemic in 2002-03, at which time Taiwan suffered tremendous loss, unable to engage with the WHO directly and was forced to rely on US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention officials to obtain vital information from the global health body. "As the coronavirus outbreak has been declared a global health emergency, we call on the WHO to recognise that Taiwan is not part of China," he stated, adding "It is time for the WHO to include Taiwan and its 23 million people, and stop damaging efforts to tackle the coronavirus outbreak and harming global health."

Taiwan Digital Minister highlights country's use of technology to bolster democracy in FT interview



On 16 February, an interview with Digital Minister Audrey Tang highlighting Taiwan's use of technology to enhance its democracy was published in *The Financial Times*' opinion piece "Digital tools can be a useful bolster to democracy" by Rana Foroohar. The article cites Taiwan as a case where the power of decentralised technology could be used to support individuals and democracies over the world. The piece praised Minister Tang's work on harnessing technology such as distributed ledgers, quadratic voting and online open-source platforms to enable greater participatory democracy in Taiwan. The article also highlighted Taiwan's efforts to combat disinformation with legislation requiring state agencies to immediately rebut false claims made online or on social media relating to their areas of responsibility, as well as its "presidential hackathons" which seek innovative solutions to public problems. The article stressed Taiwan's commitment to transparency, citing that Minister Tang posts all interviews with the press online. "It seems to be going a long way towards building trust in the country's system of governance," Foroohar added.

The article also pointed out that according to a report by Swedish research group V-Dem, Taiwan was subject to more disinformation than nearly any other country, much of it coming from China. Commenting on the impact of social media on Taiwan's democracy, Minister Tang stressed that rather than social media creating "a false sense of us versus them," decentralised technologies have "enabled a sense of shared reality" in Taiwan.

Taiwan and UK host reception to celebrate renewed friendship in the Lunar New Year



On 12 February, Representative Lin and British-Taiwanese All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) Co-Chair Lord Rogan welcomed UK parliamentarians to a reception celebrating the Lunar New Year and renewing the Taiwan-UK friendship. The event was held at the Attlee Room at the House of Lords and attended by around 50 parliamentarians. House of Lords Government Whip Lord Bethell, UK Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Taiwan Lord Faulkner of Worcester, Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons Nigel Evans MP, former Lord Speaker Baroness D'Souza, 1922 Committee Chairman Sir Graham Brady as well as former Minister of State of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Deputy Lord Speaker Baroness Anelay.

In his opening remarks, Representative Lin thanked the parliamentarians for their longstanding promotion of Taiwan-UK relations, their staunch support for Taiwan's international participation and their congratulations on Taiwan's successful presidential and parliamentary elections. Representative Lin expressed appreciation to UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab for his message of congratulations on 11 January 2020, and pointed out this official statement demonstrates the UK government cherishes its close economic partnership with Taiwan. Representative Lin highlighted the progress of bilateral relations in recent years, citing rising bilateral trade and investment as well as Taiwan ranking as one of the UK's fastest growing export markets. He also expressed gratitude to the parliamentarians for expressing their support of Taiwan's participation in the World Health Organization (WHO) and concern over the global health body's incorrect designation of Taiwan as part of China in its situation reports on the outbreak of coronavirus, which have provided misleading information that has not only harmed the rights and interests of Taiwanese people but also hindered global disease prevention efforts.

In his speech, Lord Faulkner stressed the strength of the Taiwan-UK relationship, citing UK Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the United Nations Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon's answers to questions in the House of Lords on many aspects of Taiwan-UK

relations. Nigel Evans MP offered his personal congratulations to President Tsai Ing-wen on her election victory and expressed his pleasure at the progress in the Taiwan-UK relationship in recent years. Looking to the future, he stressed that as the UK actively seeks to build trade relations with countries around the world following its departure from the EU, he believes there will be further opportunities to further strengthen the Taiwan-UK relationship. Baroness D'Souza pointed out the increasing threat of China's authoritarianism to democracies around the world, and expressed hope that the UK and other democratic countries take more action in the future to support Taiwan.

TRO visit British Library to further strengthen Taiwan-UK cultural exchanges



On 17 February, Representative Lin, TRO Education Division Director Dr Nicole Yen-Yi Lee and Cultrual Division Director Dr Pin-Chuan Chen were invited to visit the British Library in London to further strengthen Taiwan-UK cultural exchanges. Upon arrival, they were honoured with a private viewing of the acclaimed Buddhism exhibition hosted by British Library Chief Executive Roly Keating. Afterwards, the group attended a meeting with Mr Keating and Head of Asian and African Collections Dr Luisa Elena Mengoni. Mr Keating and Dr Mengoni provided information about collaborations between the British Library and National Central Library in Taiwan, as well as plans for future collaborative projects.

Oxford University students visit TRO to learn more about Taiwan-UK relations



On 3 February, Representative Lin welcomed to the TRO a visiting group of 9 students from the University of Oxford's "Foundation of Diplomacy Pre-Master Course", led by tutor and former British Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova John Charles Beyer, to introduce the bilateral relations between Taiwan and the UK and the work of the office. During the exchange, Representative Lin discussed with students Taiwan's politics, culture, education, economy and the importance of the information and technology sector, providing them with a better understanding of the country. Representative Lin also provided relevant figures, articles and statements to illustrate the significance of the Taiwan-UK relationship.

Taiwan to deepen cooperation with UK research council



On 6 February, Representatives from UK-based Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) met with officials from Taiwan's Ministry of Education (MOE), spotlighting deepening academic cooperation between the two countries. MOE Department of International and Cross-strait Education Director-General Bi Cheu-an warmly welcomed the six-member delegation, praising the UK as one of the top destinations for Taiwanese students looking to receive higher education abroad. The meeting is part of Taiwan's efforts to encourage advanced R&D and elevate its competitiveness in the international arena, he added.

University of Sussex Professor Paul Nightingale and director of strategy and operations at ESRC, lauded Taiwan's excellence in the social sciences and looked forward to increasing collaboration in the future. He stressed the visit will help foster understanding between the two sides' academic communities. ESRC, part of UK Research and Innovation, is Europe's largest organisation funding academic exploration of social and economic issues, supporting more than 4,000 researchers and postgraduate students each year. The council facilitates partnerships between British social scientists and preeminent international academics.

Taiwanese-language cinema tour brings classic Taiwan films to UK and European audiences



A UK and European tour featuring classics of Taiwanese language cinema (Taiyupian) began in London on 8 February, followed by screenings at Kings College London (KCL) and the School of Oriental & African Studies (SOAS). “Taiwan’s Lost Commercial Cinema: Recovered and Restored” will travel across the UK and 12 other European countries, including Latvia, France and Belgium, to screen Taiwanese-language classics from the 1950s and 1970s.

TRO Cultural Director Dr Pin-chuan Chen opened the 2020 symposium, stressing in his remarks that when he was Director of Taiwan’s National Film Institute, he considered the restoration of this classic as one of his most significant accomplishments. He also expressed his gratitude to Professor Chris Berry and Professor Ming-yeh Rawnsley for organising the tour and making Taiyupian accessible to audiences across the UK and Europe.

TRO prepares to renew Taiwan Cambridge Scholarship



TRO Education Division Director Dr Nicole Yen-Yi Lee attended a meeting at the Cambridge Commonwealth, European & International Trust on 3 February. During the visit, Director Lee discussed the upcoming renewal of the Taiwan Cambridge Scholarship programme with the Trust Director Helen Pennant. The Taiwan Cambridge Scholarship, which was established ten years ago as a joint agreement between the Cambridge Commonwealth, European & International Trust and the Taiwan Ministry of Education, has enabled dozens of outstanding Taiwanese students to benefit from the opportunity of undertaking degrees at the University of Cambridge.

Ms Pennant also invited Dr Lee to attend a formal reception for Cambridge international students and alumni, scheduled to take place in April. The visit strengthened the TRO's cooperation and long-term links with current and former recipients of the Taiwan Cambridge Scholarship.

Installation by Taiwanese Artist lights up UK City



Taiwanese artist Chuang Chih-wei was invited to participate in the Love Light Norwich Festival held from 13-15 February which featured his installation 'Rainbow in the Darkness'. Previously exhibited in Japan and nominated for a prestigious design award in Taiwan, the installation welcomed members of the public to inscribe messages during the daytime, which then emitted a rainbow-coloured light in the evening. Love Light Norwich is a new festival supported by Arts Council England which showcases light artworks and interactive installations by artists from countries including France, Australia and the UK.

Taiwan in the news:

- ['UK-Taiwan production of Britten's 'War Requiem' to open in Kaohsiung](#)
- [Netherlands to fund offshore wind energy talent program in Taiwan](#)
- [Taiwan allowed to export fresh pineapples to Australia](#)
- [Taiwan's Hsieh, Strycova reach doubles final at Qatar Total Open](#)
- [Shopping districts to get subsidies to improve infrastructure](#)



Follow the TRO on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram

Taipei Representative Office in the UK
50 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0EB
020-7881 2650

