



Taiwan protests WHO director-general's false accusation

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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China (Taiwan) expressed deep regret and strongly protested April 9 over the accusation by World Health Organization Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus that Taiwan is orchestrating personal attacks against him.

Taiwan is a civilized and mature democracy state, and the government has never and will not ever encouraged personal attacks on Dr. Tedros or issued any racially discriminating remarks, the MOFA said in a statement.

The MOFA's statement followed remarks by Dr. Tedros during a news conference on April 8 in Geneva at which he defended himself and the U.N. health agency's response to the coronavirus pandemic and claimed to have been subject to a coordinated campaign of racially motivated abuse orchestrated by Taiwan for the past three months.

Dr. Tedros' accusation is totally baseless and has caused great harm to the government and people of Taiwan, the ministry said, urging him to apologize and clarify his misleading remarks immediately.

According to the MOFA, the government of Taiwan condemns all forms of discrimination, and regrets any biased statements made against Dr. Tedros. The country's 23 million people can relate as they have long been victimized by the politics of the global health system, it said.

In February, the MOFA encouraged individuals and associations to adopt a reasonable manner when making the case for Taiwan's full participation in the activities, mechanisms and meetings of the WHO.

People in democratic societies have the right to express their opinions over the WHO's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the government of Taiwan has no control over internet criticisms, the MOFA added.

Although Taiwan is barred from the U.N. and has been stripped of its observer status at the WHO's World Health Assembly for a long time. At the same time, Taiwan has the most robust public health systems in the world, and has won praise for its handling of the COVID-19 virus outbreak.

Despite its close proximity to China and the frequency of travel between the two sides, Taiwan has reported just 382 cases and six deaths till April 10.

In fact, Taiwan announced on April 1 that it was initiating a first wave of international humanitarian assistance in response to the continued spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak, donating 10 million medical masks and other medical supplies to the US, Europe, and diplomatic allies. This has drawn praise and recognition from around the world.

Following this first wave, on April 9, Taiwan announced a second wave of international humanitarian assistance. Taiwan will once again donate medical masks to support countries hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of six million masks will be shipped to EU member states in Northern, Central, and Eastern Europe, more severely affected states in the US, countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, partner countries under Taiwan's New Southbound Policy, and other friendly nations. Taiwan has also held discussions with Japan on donations to that country. Further announcements will be made when these

discussions lead to concrete outcomes.

Epidemic prevention and containment transcend national borders. *Countries cannot fight COVID-19 alone.* A strong defense against the disease can only be built through close mutual assistance for mutual benefit. The ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China (Taiwan) called on Dr. Tedros to set aside political prejudice and invite Taiwan to take part in the World Health Assembly as an observer in order to help realize the WHO's goal of Health For All.