

# United States Senate

February 4, 2020

Dr. Fang Liu  
Secretary General  
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)  
999 Robert-Bourassa Boulevard  
Montréal, Québec H3C 5H7, Canada

Secretary General Liu,

I am concerned about the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) systematic exclusion of Taiwan from the ICAO's forums and resources, as well as what appears to be a recent and systematic effort to stem criticism of that exclusion.

The situation has become particularly acute in recent weeks as the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) first identified in Wuhan, China has spread across the world to nearly 20 countries. Inside China, 2019-nCoV has infected thousands and killed more than 200 people, with a 26 percent increase in confirmed cases over recent days. It has now been declared a public-health emergency of international concern by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Taiwan is directly endangered by the outbreak. There are also over 1 million citizens of Taiwan working or living in China, many of them in Wuhan, China, where the virus was first detected. Wuhan is nearly 600 miles from Taipei. If 2019-nCoV spreads to Taiwan, there is a significant chance it will spread beyond the region, in part because Taiwan's Taoyuan International Airport is the fifth busiest airport in Asia, handling over 45 million passengers each year.

ICAO is a specialized agency of the United Nations tasked with international civil aviation safety, charged with providing the basis for and ensuring "safe, secure, efficient...civilian air sector."

Nevertheless, in response to efforts by the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to isolate Taiwan, the Taiwanese have been excluded from its resources and forums. Moreover, there are reports that the ICAO has blocked numerous Twitter accounts that have criticized this decision, including accounts belonging to journalists, Capitol Hill staffers and D.C.-based analysts.

It is deeply concerning that in the midst of this emergency, which requires the greatest degree of international cooperation and transparency, your organization has not only excluded Taiwan but has censored calls for its inclusion. Refusing to share up-to-date standards and procedures with the fifth busiest airport in Asia deprives that airport of the data necessary to prevent further spread of 2019-nCoV, thereby endangering the nearly 24 million citizens of Taiwan and countless people around the world.

This situation is so at odds with ICAO's mission that it raises concerns regarding potential conflicts of interest. You have previously been the General Administrator of Civil Aviation of China, an agency of the People's Republic of China (PRC). There is a credible appearance of impropriety, in which you are pursuing the agenda of your former employer rather than the mission of the ICAO.

Some officials have suggested that member countries are sending pertinent information to Chinese agencies to be passed along. There is no reason to believe that information would be passed along, and indeed reports suggest it is not being transmitted.

Taiwan must be fully included in the international response to this deadly outbreak, and it must be offered every possible resource in this time of need. This is no time for the ICAO to allow the CCP to advance its exceptionalist agenda at the expense of the Taiwanese people. The current situation cannot be allowed to continue.

You and ICAO must begin coordinating with Taiwan, including through the sharing of information and logistical planning and support. You must also immediately move to enhance transparency into this issue and surrounding ones, including by ending political censorship and unblocking users from social media.

ICAO's mission is at risk, and with it the lives of millions of people around the world.

Sincerely,



Ted Cruz  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Aviation and Space  
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

cc. The Honorable Kelly Craft, United States Ambassador to the United Nations