

12/3/03

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

1999



2004

Session document

B5-240/03

27 March 2003

B5-/2003

**- DRAFT -**

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the debate on topical and urgent subjects of major importance

pursuant to Rule 50(1) of the Rules of Procedure

by O. Andreessen, b. von der Bor, G. Watson

on behalf of the ELDR Group

on the observer status of Taiwan in the 56<sup>th</sup> WHA

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**Resolution on the observer status of Taiwan in the 56<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly (WHA)**

***The European Parliament,***

- having regard to its resolution of 14 March 2002 calling for an observer status of the Republic of China on Taiwan to be decided at the May 2002 annual meeting of the 55<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly (WHA) in Geneva;
  - having regard to the fact that good health is important to every citizen of the world and access to the highest standards of health information and services is necessary to improve the public health;
  - having regard to the benefit of direct and unobstructed participation in international health cooperation forums and programs for all parts of the world, especially with today's greater potential for the cross-boarder spread of various infectious diseases such as the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), tuberculosis and malaria;
  - having regard to the fact that Taiwan's population of 23.500.000 people is larger than that ¼ of the Member States already in the World Health Organisation (WHO);
  - having regard that Taiwan's achievements in the field of health are substantial, including one of the highest life expectancy levels in Asia, maternal and infant mortality rates comparable to those of western countries, the eradication of such infectious diseases as cholera, smallpox and the plague, and the first to eradicate polio and provide children with hepatitis B vaccinations;
  - having regard to the important practical assistance and financial aid provided by Taiwan to El Salvador in the aftermath of terrible earthquake which occurred there on 14 January 2001;
  - having regard that Taiwan has in recent years expressed his willingness to assist financially and technically in international aid and health activities supported by the WHO;
  - having regard to the fact that the World Health Organization has allowed observers to participate in the activities of the organization, including the Palestine Liberation Organization in 1974, the Order of Malta, and the Holy See in the early 1950's;
- A. whereas in recent month a fatal disease appeared named Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) that has been classified by the WHO as a world wide health threat and brought out till 27 March 2003 more than 50 fatal casualties and more than 487 registered cases;
- B. whereas this disease is in this early stage of medical research and investigation of unknown etiology even though some medical experts guess it could be a virus like

paramyxovirus or coronavirus family that is characterized by high risk of infection and a rapid spread;

- C. whereas the absence of a current specific treatment recommendation for this syndrome besides generally applied therapies with antibiotics and antiviral agents as well as the taking the infected persons under quarantine;
- D. whereas the case fatality of the SARS is estimated between 3% and 10%;
- E. whereas the fast spread of this fatal disease is primarily caused in a kind of secrecy in public health in People's Republic of China which neglected to ask the WHO in due time formally for assistance;
- F. whereas the Taiwan authorities sought advice and assistance from the WHO in an very early stage to combat this fatal disease;
- G. whereas the success of the world wide efforts to prevent the SARS from spreading requires a participation of all nations with affected areas (so far Canada, P.R.C, R.O.C., Singapore and Vietnam) in the global disease-combating network formed by the WHO;
- H. reiterating that Taiwan should be better represented in International Organizations,
  - 1. believes that Taiwan's experience in dealing successfully with important health issues at home can be of benefit not only regionally but also globally and that therefore Taiwan should be invited to participate in an appropriate and meaningful way in the next 56<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly meeting which takes place in Geneva on 19 - 28 May 2003;
  - 2. considers that in times of a serious endangerment of the World Health by rapidly spreading viruses a worldwide co-operation of states is required to combat an illness that ignores national borders; .
  - 3. considers that globalization eases the fast spreading of infectious diseases across the world which demands a special coordination of international investigations to discover the origin of the illness and a closely cooperation with health authorities in the affected countries to provide the epidemiological, clinical and logistical support like it is warranted by the WHO;
  - 4. calls accordingly again on the World Health Assembly in Geneva to accept the observer status for Taiwan;
  - 5. calls on the European Commission and the Member States to support the application of Taiwan for an observer status to be granted to Taiwan at the forthcoming WHA;
  - 6. instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Member States, the Government of the People's Republic of China, the US Government, the Government of Taiwan, the United Nations and the WHO.