

Taiwanese students join protests in Copenhagen

Written by Taipei Times

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About 30 Taiwanese university students joined thousands of protesters on the streets of Copenhagen, Denmark, on Saturday to demand that world leaders take stronger action to fight climate change.

Some of the Taiwanese were dressed as the endangered Formosan black bear, while others wore cardboard cutouts depicting Taipei 101 with a ring-shaped life preserver to show that Taiwan is under threat of rising sea levels.

Chen Yi-chin (陳宜勤), a National Taiwan University student, said the group wanted to express Taiwan's concern about global warming and climate change and its willingness to help resolve the crisis while the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is being held in Copenhagen.

National Chung Hsing University student Chen Kuan-wei (陳冠偉), clad in a Formosan black bear costume on Saturday, said he was proud to shout the name "Taiwan" at an international airport and bring the symbol of Taiwan's wildlife conservation efforts to Copenhagen.

Taiwan cannot participate officially in the talks because it is neither a member of the UN nor a signatory nation of the UNFCCC.

Cheng Yuan-ching, a Government Information Office official posted in Denmark, wrote a letter to the editor of the Jyllands-Posten — Denmark's largest newspaper — that was published on Saturday.

Cheng wrote that although the UNFCCC conference was the most important climate conference in history, organizers excluded Taiwan despite their own goal of acknowledging that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries.

Even Taiwan's Industrial Technology Research Institute, a non-governmental organization, was listed as being in China, Cheng wrote.

Taiwan's inability to join a UN carbon emission quota allocation will hurt the competitiveness of Taiwan's green technology industry and affect its development, he wrote.

Cheng said the organizers should have invited Taiwan to attend the UNFCCC meetings as an observer, adding that it could provide support that they cannot afford to ignore.

Meanwhile, National Taiwan University graduate student Lin Ting-chie said that when he chatted with people from other countries during the rally, he expressed the concerns of Taiwan's students over global warming and told them that global warming is a public issue that stretches beyond boundaries.

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The Taiwanese students have posted the minutes of the summit meetings and what they saw and heard online at blog.yam.com/tisecop15 to give the public a better understanding of the proceedings.

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