

Louise Arbour, winner of the Tang Prize in rule of law this year, yesterday said that it makes sense for Taiwan to have a seat in international organizations such as the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), where the participation of every nation is important.

Arbour, who received the award at a ceremony in Taipei on Sunday, made the comment during a discussion session after giving a speech at National Taiwan University on the rule of law.

When asked during the discussion to comment on Taiwan's exclusion from this year's ICAO Assembly in Canada, the former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, and Supreme Court of Canada judge, said Taiwan has a strong case for inclusion in organizations where international interest in universal participation is high.

"This is why I find it surprising that in the field of international aviation, that there could be an exclusion of a player," she said.

"It doesn't make a lot of sense to use political principles or rules or interests in keeping out partners who need to be enlisted for the greater good," Arbour said.

"Whatever the method of accommodating Taiwan having a seat at the table, I think it makes sense," she said.

Meanwhile, in a commentary published by online magazine The Diplomat, David Sutton, a research analyst at the NATO Association of Canada, said the ICAO's decision to not invite Taiwan to its general assembly due to Chinese pressure is against international principles and the best interests of aviation safety.

Excluding Taiwan from the 39th ICAO Assembly, which was scheduled to open yesterday in Montreal, was the result of a wider campaign of pressure by Beijing to isolate Taiwan from the international community, he said.

Taiwan should be part of global groups: Arbour

Written by Taipei Times

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The move violates the UN spirit of developing friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, Sutton said in a commentary.

“China, or any other country, should not dictate world affairs on the basis of threats, particularly when it is contrary to the spirit of cooperation and constructive progress,” he said.

He said Taiwan’s highly developed and globalized economy is a sizable contributor to air traffic and would affect or be affected by any changes to regulations by which it currently abides.

As Taiwan was invited to attend the last ICAO Assembly in 2013, there is no reason its participation should not continue, he said.

“If Taiwan’s delegation is not welcomed in Montreal this week, it will be another unfortunate precedent of Beijing’s unnecessary and unconstructive interference in a global regulatory body to the detriment of unified progress and cooperation,” Sutton said.

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