

## Taiwanese shut out of UNESCO events

Written by Taipei Times

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The UNESCO logo is pictured at the opening of the 39th session of the General Conference of UNESCO at its headquarters in Paris on Oct. 30, 2017.

**Photo: Reuters**

Taiwanese are to be excluded from participating in all UNESCO-affiliated events, the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) has confirmed, sources said yesterday.

The confirmation came after Taiwanese researchers — some at institutions abroad — had their applications to join a conference last month rejected.

The ICTP — an organization run jointly by the Italian government and UNESCO — is holding a virtual conference on quantitative biology, which began on Monday last week and runs until Friday next week.

Registration for the conference was open until Nov. 15, but Taiwanese at various institutions around the world posted on Twitter and elsewhere over the past week that their applications had been rejected.

“Founded in 1964 by the late Nobel Laureate Abdus Salam, ICTP seeks to accomplish its mandate by providing scientists from developing countries with the continuing education and skills that they need to enjoy long and productive careers,” the organization’s Web site says.

One Twitter user wrote that the exclusion of Taiwanese was ironic, given that conference organizers were attempting to appear inclusive with the message “Female scientists are encouraged to apply” written on the bottom of a notice for the conference posted on the ICTP Web site.

“My advice for future @ictpnews @UNESCO event: Add an additional line ‘Taiwanese scientist

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will not be accepted'... so ppl won't waste time applying for an opportunity they will be rejected from based on their country of origin," Yeh Chih-fu (葉奇夫), a Taiwanese doctoral student at Stanford University, wrote on Twitter on Wednesday.

Alexander Sullivan, fellow at the Washington-based Center for a New American Security think tank and a Georgetown University doctoral student, on Twitter criticized Beijing's influence over UNESCO and its affiliated organizations.

"China has grown quite powerful within UNESCO, especially post US withdrawal under Trump. Shameful to see UNESCO further constricting not just Taiwan as a government, but individual scientists, as part of the PRC's political agenda," he wrote on Twitter on Thursday, referring to the People's Republic of China.

Citing another researcher, Sullivan wrote that Chinese President Xi Jinping (習近平) has also been influencing archeology through UNESCO "as a way to tell the whole world a good story of Chinese history."

Meanwhile, the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission on Tuesday published its annual report, whose Chapter 5 outlined concerns about Chinese encroachment on Taiwan and laid out recommendations for US action.

The commission recommended that the US secretary of state report on actions planned and taken by the US government to counter Beijing's isolation of Taiwan, and to "strengthen support for Taiwan's engagement with the international community, including [outlining] actions the administration will take should Beijing increase its coercion against Taiwan."

Source: [Taipei Times - 2020/12/07](#)