

World Health Assembly Goes Virtual



On 18 and 19 May, the 73rd World Health Assembly (WHA) is being held. There are a number of hot issues on the agenda, including participation of Taiwan as an observer and a probe into the COVID-19 pandemic.

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The World Health Assembly is the decision-making body of the World Health Organization (WHO), which determines the policies of WHO, appoints the Director-General, supervises financial policies, and reviews and approves the proposed programme budget.

The event is held annually in Geneva, Switzerland, and attended by delegations from 194 WHO member states to discuss a wide range of health topics. This year, however, due to the coronavirus pandemic, the assembly is meeting virtually for the first time ever, and its agenda has been reduced to fit into two days, with the COVID-19 pandemic being the main issue.

Over 100 countries, including all European Union member states, are backing a resolution calling for an independent investigation into the coronavirus pandemic. The resolution has been initiated by Australia and attracted a strongly [negative reaction](#) from China. The WHA will consider a [motion](#), drafted by the EU, calling for an "impartial, independent and comprehensive evaluation" of the "international health response to COVID-19."

Aside from the pandemic, WHO officials are also expected to raise the question of [Taiwan's participation](#) as an observer at the WHA – a move that is also expected to anger China.

During the meeting, WHA will also elect a president and five vice-presidents of the WHA for the next year.

Additional information and live streaming of the event are available [here](#).

Published on : Mon, 18 May 2020