

## **Chiu-Chin Tien**

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I am the commissioner of Taiwan's National Human Rights Commission. Taiwan had been under the rule of martial law for thirty-eight years. We have shed blood and sweat, and countless people have been imprisoned and even sacrificed their lives in the fight for freedom, democracy and human rights. Today, one step at a time, countless efforts have accumulated, and we now enjoy full freedom of speech, and "a nation founded upon the principles of human rights" is Taiwan's national policy.

Back in 2006 while serving as Legislator, I felt deeply shocked and could hardly believe it when Falun Gong practitioners who came to me to present their case told me about forced organ harvesting. Previously I had always thought the Nazi's atrocities were the most heinous evil. I could not imagine any other atrocity more hideous or brutal than that. It turned out that forced organ harvesting is a systematic violation perpetrated by the state power against human rights, a crime against humanity that is baffling and beyond our imagination. Therefore, during my eleven-year tenure as Legislator at the Legislative Yuan, I was constantly concerned about this issue. Besides me, many of legislators, government units and people from different fields in the Taiwan society have also concerned themselves with the issue.

Until 2007, along with Taiwan's Legislative Yuan and sixteen municipal or county councils had respectively passed resolutions against forced organ harvesting. Those are official resolutions going into records.

After many years of continued efforts at the Legislative Yuan, I finally succeeded at pushing for amendment in 2015, which was to amend Taiwan's Human Organ Transplantation Act to explicitly prohibit organ transplant tourism. In addition, the amended Act further provides that after returning from receiving a transplant abroad, recipients have to register compulsorily whichever country they go abroad to for organ transplantation. First, you must register the country, the hospital, and the doctor who performs transplantation of which organ. Furthermore, there are penalty clauses. There will be penalty if you do not comply with the requirement of mandatory registration. Finally, we also succeeded in

getting the Ministry of Health and Welfare to agree that if an overseas transplant recipient fails to do mandatory registration, if he fails to register as the Act provides, our national health insurance shall not pay for his anti-rejection drugs. He must obtain the drug, which he has to take for the rest of his life, at his own expense.

With such continuous push, all overseas organ transplant recipients are now required to register upon their return, and the registry is online. With such gatekeeping, the number of people going to China for organ transplants has dropped significantly. Then our government is able to know which doctors' patients most often go to which countries and which hospitals perform which organ transplants. And this naturally formulates control and supervision. In the past a few years, our government has taken a step further to monitor those Chinese doctors who are found by our international organizations to be involved in forced organ harvesting in China. They would be denied entry. We have also established a certain list. We and China are only a Strait apart. Our people are prone to go there for organ transplants unwittingly. We must fulfill our duty of supervision. We have been gradually formulating these measures because this is a crime against humanity and because we must also protect our people from committing the mistake of participating in this crime.

In 2019, an independent "China Tribunal" was established in London, chaired by the former prosecutor of the International Tribunal for Yugoslavia. After many hearings and argumentation from hundreds of pieces of evidence, it was determined that the forced organ harvesting committed by the Communist China continues to take place, and that it is also a crime against humanity.

Because we are in Taiwan, we are so close to China, and we speak the same language as China, we put in a great deal of efforts to prevent our people from going to China for organ transplants. We know very well that now in China, Uyghurs, Falun Gong, and dissidents are suffering in prisons and in concentration camps, and they are at risk of having their organs harvested while being alive. The whole world cannot ignore such suffering; we cannot remain silent about such evil.

We are acutely aware how much profit is involved in forced organ harvesting. That is why such an atrocity cannot possibly come to an end by itself. Driven by profit, the atrocity not only does not stop, but it may also spread instead. We know very well that although the

international community is becoming more and more concerned about this issue, it may go underground and appear to comply with international norms, while in fact all the atrocities continue unchecked.

Therefore, I would like to implore you to explicitly prohibit organ transplant tourism in your country's human organ transplant regulations, and to consider the inclusion of a compulsory registration mechanism into your country's legal system, such as that of Taiwan. Finally, I would like to implore you once again: I know that many human rights experts of the United Nations have been concerned about this issue and have spoken and voiced their opinions. Taiwan is not a member state of the United Nations. We want to join the United Nations but cannot do so. We have great respect for the United Nations, especially its Human Rights Committee. I would like to implore the Human Rights Committee to form a "Task Force on Investigation into Forced Organ Harvesting"

At least we have to understand the situation; we should investigate what on earth is going on in the world in this regard. We have to seek the truth. We have to expose the problem and face it, so that we can resolve it and stop such an atrocity against humanity and against human rights.

Please, I'm entrusting this matter to you all!