

A Statement in support of the scientists, public health and medical professionals of China

Subject: A Statement in support of the scientists, public health and medical professionals of China
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Attachments: Statement of support, 2019nCoV China Final.docx

Dear Ralph, Linda, Jim, Rita, Linfa and Hume,

I've been following the events around the novel coronavirus emergence in China very closely and have been dismayed by the recent spreading of rumors, misinformation and conspiracy theories on its origins. These are now specifically targeting scientists with whom we've collaborated for many years, and who have been working heroically to fight this outbreak and share data with unprecedented speed, openness and transparency. These conspiracy theories threaten to undermine the very global collaborations that we need to deal with a disease that has already spread across continents.

We have drafted a simple statement of solidarity and support for scientists, public health and medical professionals of China, and would like to invite you to join us as the first signatories. If you agree, we will send this letter to a group of around half-a-dozen other leaders in the field and then disseminate this widely with a sign-up webpage for others to show their support by signing up to its language. I will then personally present this at my plenary during the ICID 2020 conference in Malaysia in two weeks, with the goal of also getting widespread attention in SE Asia to our support for the work that our colleagues in China are undertaking.

I sincerely hope you can join us. Please review the letter, and let me know if you are willing to join Billy Karesh and myself as co-signatories. Also, please confirm your title and affiliation that will be shown in the letter. We plan to make circulate this widely to coincide with a letter from the Presidents of the US National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, which will likely be released tomorrow or Friday.

Thank you for your consideration and support of the scientific and public health community around the world!

Cheers,

Peter

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President

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EcoHealth Alliance leads cutting-edge research into the critical connections between human and wildlife health and delicate ecosystems. With this science we develop solutions that prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

Statement in Support of the Scientists, Public Health, and Medical Professionals of China Combating the Novel Coronavirus Outbreak

We, the undersigned, are scientists who have followed the emergence of 2019-nCoV, and are deeply concerned about its global impact on people's health and well-being. We have watched as the scientists, public health and medical professionals of China have worked heroically to rapidly identify the pathogen behind this outbreak, put in place significant measures to reduce its impact, and share their results transparently with the global health community. We sign this statement in solidarity with all scientists, public health, and medical professionals in China who continue to save lives and protect *global* health during the challenge of this novel coronavirus outbreak. We want you to know that we are all in this together, with you in front of us on the battlefield against the novel coronavirus.

The rapid, open and transparent sharing of data on 2019-nCoV is now being threatened by rumors and misinformation around the origins of this outbreak. We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that 2019-nCoV does not have a natural origin. Scientific evidence overwhelmingly suggests that this virus originated in wildlife, as have so many other emerging diseases (1-4). This is further supported by a letter from the Presidents of the US National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, and by the scientific communities they represent (INSERT REF). Conspiracy theories will do nothing but create fear, rumors, and prejudice that jeopardize our global collaboration in the fight against this virus. We need to prioritize scientific evidence and unity over misinformation and conjecture now. We want you all to know that **we stand with you**, the science and health professionals of China, in your fight against this virus.

We invite others to join us in supporting the scientists, public health, and medical professionals of Wuhan and across China. Stand with our colleagues on the front-line!

Please add your name in an act of support by going to [INSERT LINK HERE].

Signatories

Dr. Peter Daszak, President, EcoHealth Alliance

Dr. Jim Hughes, Professor Emeritus, Emory University

Dr. Rita Colwell, former Director of National Science Foundation

Dr. Ralph Baric, Professor, The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Dr. Linda Saif, Distinguished University Professor, The Ohio State University

Dr. Billy Karesh, Executive Vice President, EcoHealth Alliance

Dr. Linfa Wang, Professor, Duke-NUS Medical School

Dr. Hume Field, Honorary Professor, The University of Queensland

References

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2. R. Lu *et al.*, Genomic characterisation and epidemiology of 2019 novel coronavirus: implications for virus origins and receptor binding. *The Lancet*, (2020).
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