

Reality Check of US Allegations Against China on COVID-19

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China

Recently, some US politicians and media outlets have been fabricating preposterous allegations and lies of one kind or another in order to shift the blame to China for their inadequate response to COVID-19.

However, as Abraham Lincoln said, "You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time".

Lies evaporate in the light of truth. It is time to let facts speak for themselves.

In future, we will continue to reveal the truth to the world whenever new lies appear.

1. Allegation: COVID-19 is "Chinese virus" or "Wuhan virus".

Reality Check: WHO has made it clear that the naming of a disease

should not be associated with a particular country or place.

◆ Drawing on the lessons about naming infectious diseases in the past, especially the huge negative impacts caused by the naming of the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) in 2012, WHO, in collaboration with the World Organization for Animal Health and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, identified the Best Practices for the Naming of New Human Infectious Diseases on 8 May 2015. According to these guidelines, the naming of a disease should avoid geographic locations, people's names, class of animal or food, cultural, population, industry or occupational references (for example legionnaires) and terms that incite undue fear.

https://www.who.int/topics/infectious_diseases/naming-new-diseases/en/

◆ On 11 February 2020, WHO, on the basis of the 2015 Best Practices for the Naming of New Human Infectious Diseases as well as international public health practices, officially named the pneumonia caused by novel coronavirus the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200211-sitrep-22-ncov.pdf?sfvrsn=fb6d49b1_2

◆ Last April, the British science journal Nature, published three editorials, apologizing for connecting COVID-19 with Wuhan and China. It called for an immediate stop to coronavirus stigma and the irresponsible act of associating a virus with a specific place.

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-01009-0>

◆ The New York Times, the American Broadcasting Company (ABC), the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and other mainstream media in the West all reported that the wrongful connection of Asian communities with COVID-19 stoked serious xenophobia, and frequent occurrences of racist discrimination and harassment against these communities in the US.

2. Allegation: Wuhan is the origin of the virus.

Reality Check: Being the first to report the virus does not mean that Wuhan is its origin. In fact, the origin is still not identified. Source tracing is a serious scientific matter, which should be based on science and should be studied by scientists and medical experts.

◆ Historically, the place that first reported a virus were often not its origin. For example, HIV infection was first reported by the US, yet it might also be possible that the virus did not originally come from the US. And more and more evidence proves that the Spanish Flu did not originate from Spain.

◆ Source tracing is a scientific matter. Its main purpose is to prevent similar epidemics from happening again and causing damage to the human society. At the moment, scientists around the world are searching for the source of the virus, and have presented many academic views on it. Chinese scientists are also earnestly conducting studies in order to provide the scientific basis for identifying the origin at an early date and dealing with the virus with targeted measures.

◆ On 24 January, The Lancet, an authoritative British medical journal, published an article co-authored by Cao Bin, Director of the Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine Department of the China-Japan Friendship Hospital, Huang Chaolin, Vice President and Chief Physician of Wuhan Jinyintan Hospital, Professor Li Xingwang, an expert with the Clinical and Research Center of Infectious Diseases of Beijing Ditan Hospital, Professor Ren Lili, an expert at the Institute of Pathogen Biology of Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, Zhao Jianping, Director of

Department of Respiratory Medicine of Wuhan Tongji Hospital, etc.

The article reviews and analyzes the first 41 confirmed cases of COVID-19 admitted to hospital in Wuhan between 16 December 2019 and 2 January 2020. It has found that 27 of the 41 patients had been exposed to Huanan seafood market, while the rest 14 had not. The symptom onset date of the first patient identified was 1 December 2019. None of his family members developed fever or any respiratory symptoms. This patient had no exposure to Huanan seafood market. No epidemiological link was found between him and later cases.

◆ Viruses are the common enemy of mankind, which may appear at any time and in any place. Epidemics are natural in origin, not man-made. The origin of a virus or epidemic is a victim, not a culprit. It is unfair and unacceptable to blame it or hold it accountable.

◆ On 1 May, Dr. Michael Ryan, Executive Director of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme, said that science needs to be at the center of the exploration of the source of the virus, and they would like to see scientists at the center. He also stated that the WHO had not received any data or specific evidence from the US Government relating to the purported origin of the virus.

https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/transcripts/who-audio-emergencies-coronavirus-press-conference-04may2020.pdf?sfvrsn=3ef4c516_4

◆Michael Melham, Mayor of Belleville of New Jersey, said that he has tested positive for coronavirus antibodies, and thinks he may have been sick with the virus back in November 2019. That is over two months before the first reported case in the US on 20 January 2020.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/3149444e79514464776c6d636a4e6e62684a4856/index.html>

◆On 6 May, USA Today reported that 171 people in Florida showed symptoms of COVID-19 as early as in January 2020, and none reported traveling to China. That was several months before officials announced it had come to Florida.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2020/05/05/patients-florida-had-symptoms-covid-19-early-january/3083949001/>

◆On 3 May, International Journal of Antimicrobial Agents published an

article entitled "SARS-COV-2 was already spreading in France in late December 2019". According to the article, researchers reviewed the medical record of 14 selected ICU patients admitted for influenza-like illness between December 2, 2019 and January 16, 2020, and retrospectively performed COVID-19 reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) on them between April 6 and 9, 2020. It was found that one sample was positive taken from a 42-year-old man. The absence of a link with China and the lack of recent travel abroad suggest that the disease was already spreading among the French population at the end of December 2019.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0924857920301643>

3. Allegation: The virus was constructed by the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Reality Check: All available evidence shows that SARS-CoV-2 is natural in origin, not man-made.

◆ On 30 January, the prestigious UK medical journal, The Lancet, published an article on COVID-19 by research teams including China CDC, which considered the virus a new human-infecting coronavirus,

based on the phylogenetic analysis of the ten 2019-nCoV genome sequences from nine confirmed patients from Wuhan. The article pointed out that compared with SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV, 2019-nCoV was more closely related to two bat-derived severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)-like coronaviruses. The analysis suggests that bats might be the original host of this virus.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)30251-8/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)30251-8/fulltext)

◆ On 19 February, The Lancet published a joint statement by 27 leading medical experts from eight countries, indicating that scientists from multiple countries have published and analyzed genomes of SARS-CoV-2, and they overwhelmingly conclude that this coronavirus originated in wildlife, as have so many other emerging pathogens.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)30418-9/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)30418-9/fulltext)

◆ On 17 March, five prominent scholars from the US, the UK and Australia pointed out on Nature Medicine that the evidence shows that SARS-CoV-2 is not a laboratory construct or a purposefully manipulated

virus.

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-020-0820-9>

◆ In his blog article posted on 26 March, Francis Collins, Director of the US National Institutes of Health (NIH), pointed out that this novel coronavirus arose naturally. Researchers discovered that the virus could not have been man-made for it does not have the backbones of known coronaviruses. Instead, it probably evolved from a bat coronavirus and a novel virus found in pangolins. It is not the product of purposeful manipulation in a lab.

<https://directorsblog.nih.gov/2020/03/26/genomic-research-points-to-natural-origin-of-covid-19/>

◆ On 21 April, WHO spokesperson Fadela Chaib said at a news briefing that all available evidence suggests the virus has an animal origin and is not manipulated or constructed in a lab or somewhere else. It most likely has its ecological reservoir in bats but how the virus came from bats to humans is still to be seen and discovered.

https://edition.cnn.com/us/live-news/us-coronavirus-update-04-21-20/h_8

02e1e857336975e196e3c25c647b02e

◆ On 30 April, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence of the US issued a statement on its official website making clear that the Intelligence Community concurs with the wide scientific consensus that the COVID-19 virus was not man-made or genetically modified.

<https://www.odni.gov/index.php/newsroom/press-releases/item/2112-intelligence-community-statement-on-origins-of-covid-19>

◆ Executive Director of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme Michael Ryan said on 1 May that numerous scientists have looked at the genome sequence of this virus and we are assured that this virus is natural in origin.

https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/transcripts/who-audio-emergencies-coronavirus-press-conference-01may2020.pdf?sfvrsn=b8091a87_2

◆ WHO Representative in China Dr. Gauden Galea said on 5 May that all available evidence to date suggests that the virus has a natural animal origin and is not a manipulated or constructed virus. Many researchers

have been able to look at the genomic features of the virus and have found that evidence does not support that it is a laboratory construct.

<https://www.who.int/china/zh/news/detail/06-05-2020-covid-19-q-a-with-dr-galea>

◆ The French news weekly, *Valeur Actuelle*, cited information from the country's intelligence authorities to state that it is absolutely certain that the novel coronavirus is not a leak from a P4 lab in Wuhan.

4. Allegation: COVID-19 was caused by an accidental leak from the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV).

Reality Check: The Wuhan National Biosafety Laboratory (Wuhan P4 Laboratory) in the WIV is a government cooperation program between China and France. The Institute does not have the capability to design or synthesize a new coronavirus, and there is no evidence of pathogen leaks or staff infections in the Institute.

◆ The Wuhan P4 Laboratory is a government cooperation program between China and France, with its design, construction and management all following international standards, and operations protected by special

facilities and strict protocols. All lab staff must pass relevant tests to obtain qualification, and the first group had received training in other P4 labs in France and America. The Lab must have its facilities and equipment examined on an annual basis by a government-accredited third-party agency, and can continue to operate only after it passes such annual inspections.

◆The WIV is committed to timely and open sharing of research information through sharing data, publishing papers, attending seminars and conferences, and promoting science among the general public. Over the past year, the Institute has received visits by over 70 researchers and scholars from other parts of the world. As one of the dozens of P4 labs in the world, the Institute pursues a global vision of development, upholds the principles of being open and transparent to all, and promotes exchange and cooperation with all countries in an active and pragmatic way. The "2019 Novel Coronavirus Resource (2019nCoV)", an information sharing platform of the WIV, has so far registered over 600,000 visits and 21 million downloads.

◆Operations of the Wuhan P4 Laboratory have all along been safe and stable. There had been no SARS-CoV-2 in the lab until 30 December 2019 when the first COVID-19 patient specimens were delivered there

for testing three days after the local government received first reports of the virus. No one in the WIV has so far been infected by COVID-19.

◆ An official at French President's office said in mid-April that "there is to this day no factual evidence ... linking the origins of COVID-19 and the work of the P4 laboratory of Wuhan, China."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-france-lab-idUSKBN21Z2ME>

◆ According to a recent article posted by NPR on its website, many US leading virus researchers have concluded based on their studies that there is virtually no chance that the new coronavirus was released as result of a laboratory accident in China or anywhere else. Rather, they believe that this new coronavirus reached humans in the same way that other coronaviruses have.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/04/23/841729646/virus-researchers-cast-doubt-on-theory-of-coronavirus-lab-accident>

◆ Peter Daszak, President of the US EcoHealth Alliance and a virus expert who has been working with the WIV for the past 15 years, said

during his interview with CNN on 26 April that the Wuhan P4 Laboratory didn't have the virus that led to COVID-19, and what has been found now are close relatives, not the same virus. So it's not a possibility that the virus could have come from that lab.

<https://edition.cnn.com/videos/tv/2020/04/26/exp-gps-0426-daszak-int.cn>
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◆Anthony Fauci, director of the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said in an interview with National Geographic published on 4 May that the best evidence shows the virus was not made in a lab in China. If you look at the evolution of the virus in bats and what's out there now, the virus could not have been artificially or deliberately manipulated. This virus evolved in nature and then jumped species. Based on the scientific evidence, he doesn't entertain the theory that someone found the coronavirus in the wild, brought it to a lab, and then it accidentally escaped.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/05/anthony-fauci-no-scientific-evidence-the-coronavirus-was-made-in-a-chinese-lab-cvd/?cmpid=org=ngp::mc=social::src=twitter::cmp=editorial::add=tw20200504science-faucicoronavirus::rid=&sf233573268=1#close>

◆According to The Independent, British Health Secretary Matt Hancock said in an interview with Sky News on 6 May that the British government has not seen any evidence to suggest that the novel coronavirus was man-made. He added that "we haven't seen any evidence of a link (between the virus and laboratories researching virus in Wuhan)."

<https://www.sky.com/new-search/ask-the-health-secretary-06-05-20-ccc49a95-e2ca-47af-ad14-aa31d75ab92b?q=Matt%20Hancock>

◆The US National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced on 24 April that it would terminate a joint study on bat-to-human virus transmission between the non-profit agency EcoHealth Alliance and the WIV, and withdraw all future funding. The NIH made this decision only seven days after President Trump demanded an end to a grant to the WIV during his 17 April press conference, based on allegations that "the virus escaped the lab". This decision has been widely questioned and criticized by US science community. Gerald Keusch, deputy head of the National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory at Boston University, called it "a horrible precedent" and "the worst kind of thing that political interference can cause", while Dennis Carroll, chair of the Global Virome Project, described it as an attempt by the Trump Administration to "attack

really critical science for cheap political gain".

5. Allegation: China could have contained the virus within Wuhan in the first place. However, it allowed many of its nationals to fly to Milan, New York and other places, spreading the virus to the rest of the world.

Reality Check: China took the most stringent measures within the shortest possible time, which has largely kept the virus within Wuhan. Statistics show that very few cases were exported from China.

◆ The Chinese government took the most comprehensive, rigorous and thorough measures in a timely fashion, and effectively broke the chain of transmission. According to a Science report, thanks to these measures, the number of infections in China was reduced by more than 700,000.

◆ China put Wuhan under a temporary lockdown as of 23 January, meaning that there were no outbound commercial flights or train services from 24 January through 8 April. So it was impossible for Wuhan residents to travel overseas during this period of time.

◆ When Wuhan was shut down on 23 January, only one case was publicly confirmed in the US. When the US closed its borders on 2

February to all Chinese citizens and foreigners who had been to China within the previous 14 days, there were only eight confirmed cases in the US according to its official data. When the US declared a national emergency on 13 March, the number of its confirmed cases was 1,896. When China lifted the lockdown on Wuhan on 8 April, the number of confirmed cases in the US rose to 400,000. At present, confirmed cases in the US have exceeded 1.2 million, with as many as over 70,000 deaths so far. Looking back, it took less than 100 days for the number of confirmed cases to surge from one to one million in the United States.

◆ New York Governor Andrew Cuomo pointed to a research by the Northeastern University showing that strains of the novel coronavirus entered his state were not from China. The New York Times cited US research that most New York coronavirus cases did not come from Asia.

◆ Data from Canada's major provinces show that the virus was brought into the country by US visitors. The French research institute Institut Pasteur found that the virus strain circulating locally in France is of unknown origin. None of the imported cases in Russia was from China. The Australian Department of Health noted that only a very small portion of imported cases came from Northeast Asia. In Singapore, cases imported from China were less than one-tenth of those from other

countries. The Japanese National Institute of Infectious Diseases believed that the strain confirmed in Japan since early March was not from China.

6. Allegation: The Chinese contracted the novel coronavirus while eating bats.

Reality Check: Bats are never part of the Chinese diet.

◆ The Internet video clip in which a Chinese female tour guide drinks bat soup was part of a travel promotion show filmed by her team on a small Pacific island in 2016 and was posted online that year. Bat soup was a local specialty.

◆ Bats are never part of the Chinese dishes. Wuhan Huanan seafood market, where cluster cases were identified in the early days of the epidemic, does not sell bats.

7. Allegation: China is reopening wildlife markets. It should immediately close all "wet markets".

Reality Check: There are no so-called "wildlife wet markets" in China. China has passed legislation banning all illegal hunting and trade of wild

animals.

◆ On 24 February 2020, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China adopted a decision on thoroughly banning illegal wildlife trade and eliminating consumption of wild animals to safeguard people's lives and health. This has further established the regime of complete prohibition of hunting, trading and transportation of terrestrial wild animals for the purpose of consumption. The legislative decision was welcomed by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

<https://www.worldwildlife.org/press-releases/wwf-statement-on-china-s-revision-of-the-wildlife-protection-law>

◆ Selling wild animals is illegal in China. Such an act will be immediately stopped once discovered, and will be punished in accordance with law.

◆ There are no so-called "wildlife wet markets" in China. And in fact, China does not even have the concept of "wet markets". What we have in China are farmers' markets and live poultry and seafood markets. They sell fresh fish, meat, vegetables, seafood and other farm produce. A few of them sell live poultry. Basically, they are no different from the fish

markets or fruit and vegetables markets in Western countries. Such markets exist not only in China, but also in many other countries. They are an important part of local life. No international law restricts the opening or operation of such markets. What were reopened in Wuhan are these traditional farmers' markets.

◆ Research has shown extremely low homology between COVID-19 and the known coronaviruses in livestock and poultry. Based on such scientific understanding and taking into account people's need for live poultry and seafood products, China has allowed the reopening of such markets in places where sound containment measures are in place as a prerequisite. China attaches high importance to epidemic prevention. As safeguards, competent authorities and sub-national governments have taken a host of stringent measures to strengthen the management of such markets. Sub-national governments, market operators and vendors are required to earnestly fulfill their respective responsibilities and ensure that strict anti-epidemic protocols are duly enforced in these markets.

Relevant authorities will also, in accordance with China's law on animal epidemic prevention, perform quarantine and checkup on live poultry and seafood products, and rigorously implement all prevention and control measures against animal epidemics.

Given the current situation in Wuhan, Hubei, the Huanan seafood market remains closed.

8. Allegation: China's initial cover-up and delayed release of information resulted in the spread of the virus.

Reality Check: What has happened is an unexpected attack by an unknown virus against human beings. It takes time to study and understand it. China has provided timely information to the world in an open, transparent and responsible manner.

◆ On 27 December 2019, Dr. Zhang Jixian, director of the respiratory and critical care medicine department of Hubei Provincial Hospital of Integrated Chinese and Western Medicine, reported three cases of pneumonia of unknown cause immediately after receiving the patients. This was the first reporting of suspected cases of a new disease by local authorities of China. On the same day, the Wuhan CDC conducted epidemiological investigation and testing on the patients concerned.

◆ On 30 December 2019, the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission issued two emergency notices on the reporting and treatment of

pneumonia of unknown cause.

◆ On 31 December 2019, the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission released a situation report on pneumonia of unknown cause in Wuhan. On the same day, China informed the WHO China Country Office of cases of pneumonia of unknown cause detected in Wuhan.

◆ On 3 January 2020, China began sending regular, timely updates about the novel coronavirus to WHO, other countries including the United States, and China's Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan regions. Between 3 January and 3 February, China updated the US 30 times on the epidemic situation and its response measures.

◆ Following the first public reporting of the pneumonia by the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission on 31 December 2019, China completed the identification and sequencing of the virus as early as on 7 January 2020, and shared the genome sequence information with WHO and other countries on 11 January. On 10 January, the Wuhan Institute of Virology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and other professional institutions developed preliminary testing kits, and stepped up research on vaccines and effective medication. On 20 January, the National Health Commission designated the new coronavirus pneumonia as a statutory

infectious disease. On 24 January, COVID-19 cases began to be directly reported online.

◆ In contrast to China's response measures, the US government had not declared a national emergency until 13 March, 70 days after it was notified by China of the new virus on 3 January 2020, 40 days after it closed its borders on 2 February to all Chinese citizens and foreign nationals who had traveled in China within 14 days.

◆ On 1 May, the US CDC posted on its website a report drafted by its Principal Deputy Director Dr. Anne Schuchat and COVID-19 Response Team.

According to the report, after "the first confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) case in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020", the "outbreak appeared contained through February, and then accelerated rapidly." It notes that "various factors contributed to accelerated spread during February -- March 2020, including continued travel-associated importations, large gatherings, introductions into high-risk workplaces and densely populated areas, and cryptic transmission resulting from limited testing and asymptomatic and presymptomatic spread."

9. Allegation: China arrested Dr. Li Wenliang, a whistle-blower, to cover up the spread of the virus.

Reality Check: Dr. Li Wenliang was not a whistle-blower, and he was not arrested.

◆ All countries have strict rules on the confirmation of infectious diseases. This is a common practice.

◆ China's Law on Prevention and Treatment of Infectious Diseases has established strict approval procedures and rules for the reporting, verification and information release of an infectious disease.

◆ Dr. Zhang Jixian, a respiratory doctor, was the first to report COVID-19 cases, and was awarded for this contribution.

◆ On the afternoon of 30 December 2019 (three days after Dr. Zhang Jixian reported cases of unknown infection and one day before Wuhan released the relevant information), Dr. Li Wenliang, an ophthalmologist, sent a message to his alumni WeChat group. He claimed that there were "seven confirmed SARS cases", and asked the group not to spread the

information. However, leaked screenshots of the conversation spread quickly on the Internet and caused panic.

On 3 January 2020, Wuhan's local police authorities asked Dr. Li to a police station for inquiry, and urged him to stop spreading unconfirmed information by issuing him a letter of reprimand.

In mid-January, Dr. Li started to show symptoms of infection. And on 31 January, he was confirmed to be infected by COVID-19.

On 7 February, Dr. Li passed away after all rescue measures were exhausted. On the same day, the National Health Commission publicly expressed condolences over his death. The National Supervisory Commission decided to send an inspection group to Wuhan to investigate issues related to Dr. Li.

On 19 March, the inspection group released its findings and held a press briefing. Wuhan's Public Security Bureau announced the decision on the matter, pointing to the misapplication of relevant legal provisions in Dr. Li's case, and revoked the reprimand letter.

◆ Dr. Li Wenliang was a good doctor. He was a member of the

Communist Party of China, not a so-called "anti-establishment figure". On 5 March, he was named a "national model healthcare worker in fighting COVID-19". On 2 April, he was honored as a martyr.

Labeling Dr. Li Wenliang as an "anti-establishment hero" or "awakener" is very disrespectful to Dr. Li and his family. It is purely political manipulation with no sense of decency. On 28 April, the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League of China and the All-China Youth Federation jointly issued the 24th "May Fourth Medals" to honor outstanding representatives and role models of Chinese youths, and Dr. Li Wenliang was among the honorees. The Independent Media Institute conducted a thorough investigation on how the media made unjust reporting about Dr. Li, and concluded that the attempt of Western media to describe what happened to Dr. Li as evidence of the Chinese government's suppression of information about the virus is simply not logical.

<https://independentmediainstitute.org/growing-xenophobia-against-china-in-the-midst-of-coronashock/?from=singlemessage&isappinstalled=0>

10. Allegation: China was too late in disclosing information about human-to-human transmission. As a result, the US and the rest of the

world had not gained enough knowledge about how contagious and deadly the virus was and therefore failed to respond quickly enough.

Reality Check: The messages from China and the World Health Organization have been timely and strong. The US knows about the danger of the virus all along.

◆ It takes a rigorous scientific process to determine whether a new virus can be transmitted from person to person.

On 9 January, a Chinese expert group had already confirmed on the media that the pathogen was preliminarily determined as a novel coronavirus.

On 20 January, the high-level expert group of the National Health Commission informed the media that the novel coronavirus could be transmitted from person to person. On that day, the US reported no confirmed case.

On 23 January, China sent a powerful warning to the world by putting Wuhan, a city of 12 million people, under lockdown. On that day, the US reported only one case.

◆On 22 January, WHO issued a warning about the potential risk of human-to-human transmission on its website.

On 27 January, WHO raised the level of risk posed by COVID-19 at a global level from moderate to high, noting the risk to be very high in China and high at a regional level.

On 30 January, the WHO International Health Regulations Emergency Committee held a meeting and declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).

◆The US was the first country to pull out personnel from its consulate-general in Wuhan and the first to announce entry restrictions on all Chinese citizens:

As early as on 25 January, the US announced the decision to close its consulate-general in Wuhan and pull out its staff;

On 2 February, the US announced the decision to close borders to all Chinese citizens and foreign nationals who had been to China within the prior 14 days, while it only had eight reported cases on that day.

◆It was not until early March that the US government seriously acknowledged the danger and severity of the spread of the virus in the country.

◆In an opinion article, Jeffrey Sachs, a renowned US economist and Director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University, criticized the US government for making reckless charges against China, calling them illogical and dangerous. He said that the US government's claim that China is the cause of America's problems is a big lie and recalls the end of McCarthy era.

<https://www.jeffsachs.org/blog/m222zmqwdpm83mc32ntfbgr38hml4mj>

◆The Taiwan authorities claimed that its CDC had warned WHO of the existence of human-to-human transmission of COVID-19 in an email at the end of December 2019, but WHO withheld this information from the world. In response to this allegation, Dr. Michael Ryan, Executive Director of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme, clarified on 4 May that the email sent from Taiwan on 31 December 2019 was not a warning, but a request for more information on cases of atypical pneumonia reported by news sources.

https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/transcripts/who-audio-emergencies-coronavirus-press-conference-04may2020.pdf?sfvrsn=3ef4c516_4

11. Allegation: China is not transparent in data releasing. Its official numbers of confirmed cases and fatalities are too low to be true, and the real figures are at least 50 times more.

Reality Check: China has been fully open and transparent about its COVID-19 data. The figures can well stand the test of history.

◆As of 21 January, China's National Health Commission (NHC) started to update the public on a daily basis on the COVID-19 situation of the previous day on its official website and through its social media accounts. Starting from 27 January, the State Council inter-agency task force on COVID-19 has been holding daily press briefings to release key information and respond to questions from domestic and foreign media. More than 3,000 press conferences have been held at national and sub-national levels. Government officials, medical workers, experts and recovered patients engaged the media face-to-face without dodging any questions.

http://paper.people.com.cn/rmrb/html/2020-05/05/nw.D110000renmrb_20200505_2-03.htm

◆These COVID-19 data are an important basis for China's decision to pursue all-round reopening of the economy with necessary containment measures in place and to restore the normal economic and social order. One case in point is the lifting of the 76-day lockdown of Wuhan after a continuous drop in infections.

◆China's relatively low number of confirmed cases and fatalities was attributable to the most comprehensive, rigorous and thorough measures taken promptly by the Chinese government, such as completely shutting down the transportation out of Wuhan. The Science magazine estimated in one of its reports that these measures helped prevent at least 700,000 infections in China.

◆The Chinese government always puts people first. In its fight against COVID-19, saving lives is the government's number-one priority. China has expanded hospital admission and treatment to cover all those in need to cure and save as many patients as possible. All suspected cases and close contacts have been placed under quarantine at designated places to

cut off the chain of transmission and stem the further spread of the virus. That is why China's nationwide infection rate has stayed relatively low. In Hubei Province alone, over 3,600 patients aged 80 and above have been cured, including seven centenarians.

◆On the evening of 22 January, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus noted in Geneva that China's "cooperation and transparency is very, very commendable". In an interview with US media in March, Dr. Bruce Aylward, Team Leader of the WHO-China Joint Mission on COVID-19, responded to questions about China's official data by saying that he "didn't see anything that suggested manipulation of numbers".

◆On 3 March, Dr. Bruce Aylward, a senior advisor to the WHO Director-General, noted in an interview with US media VOX that China is not hiding anything. And the data he collected through talks with physicians from various hospitals and other stakeholders could help corroborate China's data.

<https://www.vox.com/2020/3/2/21161067/coronavirus-covid19-china>

◆On 28 April, Christoffer Koch and Ken Okamura, two economists from the US and the UK, jointly published a paper based on studies of the data

from China, Italy and the US. They found that the confirmed infections in China match the distribution expected in Benford's Law and are similar to those in the US and Italy. They thus concluded that there is no possibility of manipulation of figures.

◆On 29 April, Yale Professor Nicholas A Christakis, co-author of the Nature magazine paper entitled Population Flow Drives Spatio-temporal Distribution of COVID-19 in China, tweeted that "Incidentally, this result sheds light on accuracy of Chinese COVID-19 reporting, because a totally different source of info (telco mobility) obtained from different source predicts case counts so well, in keeping with epidemiological expectations."

<https://twitter.com/NACChristakis/status/1255466011672879109>

◆On 5 May, Dr. Gauden Galea, WHO representative in China, said that "The WHO has been in constant technical communication with China since January 3 on the severity, transmission dynamics and the possibility of sustained human-to-human transmission, the clinical course, and effectiveness of treatments, and the WHO has provided detailed information to the international community under the framework of the International Health Regulations (IHR)."

http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2020-05/06/c_1125945126.htm

12. Allegation: Wuhan's revision of the numbers of confirmed cases and fatalities shows again that China covered up a large number of cases in the early days of COVID-19.

Reality Check: The data revision by Wuhan is a common international practice. As a matter of fact, it proves that China is open, transparent and responsible.

◆On 17 April, in accordance with the Law of the People's Republic of China on Prevention and Treatment of Infectious Diseases, the Regulations on Preparedness for and Response to Emergent Public Health Hazards, the Regulations on the Implementation of the Statistics Law of the People's Republic of China, and the Rules on the Administration of Death Information Registration (for Trial Implementation), Wuhan issued a notification, revising up confirmed cases by 325 to a total of 50,333, and fatal cases by 1,290 to a total of 3,869.

◆It was out of a high sense of responsibility to history, to the people and to the lives lost to the coronavirus that Wuhan took the initiative to revise

the numbers to reflect the facts it had gathered. The reason that caused the gap between the figures was four-fold:

First, when the city was first hit by the virus, hospitals were swamped due to the surge of patients. Some patients were thus unable to be hospitalized and passed away at home.

Second, during the peak of COVID-19, hospitals were running overloaded, and medical workers were preoccupied with providing treatment, which resulted in delayed, inadequate or inaccurate reporting of relevant cases.

Third, due to a subsequent rapid increase in medical institutions designated to treat COVID-19 patients, including both hospitals under the central, provincial, municipal and district governments, as well as hospitals run by companies, private hospitals and mobile hospitals, a small number of these institutions did not register with or report cases timely to the established information network.

Fourth, the information of some fatal cases was incomplete. Some of them were reported repeatedly or inaccurately.

◆To ensure the accuracy of the revised numbers, Wuhan set up a task force to look into the big data and epidemiology of the epidemic. Through on-line means, it carefully compared the number of confirmed and fatal cases to de-duplicate and complete the information by making full use of the city's epidemic big data system, funeral service information system, medical administration information system, and nucleic acid testing system for COVID-19. Through off-line means, it collected the full data from all places related to the disease without missing anyone, including fever clinics, hospitals, mobile hospitals, quarantine stations, communities having confirmed cases, as well as prisons, detention facilities, nursing homes and other special sites administered by government agencies of public security, judiciary and civil affairs. The information of every case was collected, and it was cross-checked with medical institutions, communities, community-level police stations, and patients' employers and families to ensure that the information of every individual case is accurate.

◆Revising statistical standards is a common international practice. For example, on 29 April, the UK government began to count fatal cases outside hospitals, and revised their figures accordingly. On 17 April, the Spanish government published an order for its autonomous regions to harmonize how they collect data and stated that the published numbers

would be revised.

13. Allegation: China has been spreading disinformation about COVID-19.

Reality Check: China has all along been open and transparent in information release. On the contrary, some US politicians, scholars and media outlets that are hostile to China have kept slandering and attacking China. China is a victim of disinformation.

◆The Chinese government, in an open, transparent and responsible manner, has shared with the world updates on the disease and its response experience, and has pursued international cooperation. What China has done is highly commended by the international community.

As of 8 May, President Xi Jinping has attended the Extraordinary G20 Leaders' Summit on COVID-19 and has had 49 phone calls with 39 heads of state and government and leaders of international organizations; Premier Li Keqiang has had 13 phone calls with 11 foreign leaders and heads of international organizations, and attended the Special ASEAN Plus Three Summit on COVID-19; State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi has spoken with 48 foreign ministers and heads of international

organizations through 80 phone calls.

China's openness in sharing its response experience and its important contribution to the international cooperation against COVID-19 have been applauded and fully recognized internationally.

◆On 27 April, Richard Horton, editor-in-chief of the medical journal The Lancet, said in an online interview with CNN that when China got the information of the coronavirus, it immediately informed the World Health Organization on 31 December 2019. Mr. Horton also added that, "we should be grateful to the authorities in China and we should be grateful to the World Health Organization, because they did all they could to alert the world as to the seriousness of this pandemic."

◆Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, President of the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, when attending the 33rd African Union Summit in Ethiopia, told the press that China's Permanent Mission to the United Nations had provided a well-covered briefing to the UN on COVID-19. President Bande went further to point out that the timely and transparent COVID-19 information release by the Chinese government has helped the world be informed about the situation in China and facilitated multilateral cooperation against the virus.

◆On 20 April, The Grayzone, an independent news website based in the US, disclosed how the conservative journalists were collaborating with the US administration in a disinformation campaign against China: The Washington Post journalist Josh Rogin, who has made a career out of making fake news, fabricated a dubious article on 14 April. In the article, he cherry-picked a cable from the US embassy in Beijing and deceptively identified an anti-China element as "research scientist". On the evening of 15 April, Republican Senator Tom Cotton floated the conspiracy theory, and claimed that the Chinese government must be made to pay the price for all the losses caused by COVID-19. On 17 April, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo took the baseless theory to the global stage, demanding access to the Wuhan Institute of Virology for investigation.

https://thegrayzone.com/2020/04/20/trump-media-chinese-lab-coronaviruss-conspiracy/amp/?__twitter_impression=true

14. Allegation: The Chinese political system is the root cause of the problem.

Reality Check: Virus does not distinguish between ideology or social system. The Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Chinese

government have played a decisive and critical role in leading the Chinese people in the successful fight against COVID-19. China's political system, which has effectively united and mobilized 1.4 billion people on a vast land of 9.6 million square kilometers, provided a strong political guarantee for China to overcome the difficulties faced by a developing country and pool all available strengths and resources in winning the battle against the virus. What has happened shows that the social system and development path chosen by the Chinese people suit China's national conditions and that the CPC enjoys firm and broad support of the Chinese people. And China has no intention to export its political system.

◆On 23 January, Wuhan municipal command on COVID-19 response announced the temporary suspension of outbound travel from the city of Wuhan. Two days later, 30 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities of China activated the highest-level disease response. Starting from 24 January, 42,000 medical workers from across China, rallying in over 330 medical teams, set out to the front line in Hubei Province. On the eve of 25 January, three medical teams from the People's Liberation Army flew to Wuhan from Shanghai, Chongqing and Xi'an. Nineteen provinces were paired up with 16 Hubei cities and prefectures except Wuhan in the battle against the virus. From across the

country, key medical supplies and daily necessities were delivered to Hubei steadily.

◆China pooled massive human and material resources to build the 1,000-bed Huoshenshan Hospital in 10 days and the 1,600-bed Leishenshan Hospital in 15 days. At an average speed of building one hospital at one day and a half, a total of 16 mobile hospitals were put in place to accommodate over 13,000 patients.

◆Right from the early stage of its COVID-19 response, China has managed to ensure early detection, reporting, quarantine and treatment for COVID-19 cases. The best human and material resources were concentrated on treating patients with severe conditions. Blanket case screening was implemented at each and every residential communities, and grid-based management was adopted to ensure that all in need had access to testing, quarantine, and hospital treatment.

◆In COVID-19 response in Wuhan, over 44,500 primary-level Party officials were sent to 13,800 residential communities, building up a strong line of defense against the virus. Social distancing measures have been supported and strictly observed nationwide, effectively curbing the spread of the virus.

◆China's COVID-19 response efforts have been highly commended by the international community. When meeting with President Xi Jinping on 28 January, WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros noted that the high speed and massive scale of China's response have been rarely seen in the world, demonstrating China's speed, scale and efficiency. China's experience is worth learning for other countries. During the press conference at the AU headquarters on 8 February, UN Secretary-General António Guterres also commended China for its "remarkable" efforts to contain the virus.

◆At the press conference of WHO-China Joint Mission on COVID-19 on 24 February, Dr. Bruce Aylward, Senior Advisor to WHO Director-General, said that China has rolled out probably the most ambitious, agile and aggressive disease containment effort in history. China's bold approach has changed the course of the disease and is the only successful measures we know so far to contain COVID-19.

◆On 6 May, a Singapore-based insights agency, Blackbox Research, released a joint online survey it conducted together with the market research agency Toluna on 12,500 people across 23 economies. The respondents were asked to rate their governments' coronavirus containment measures on four key indicators: political leadership,

corporate leadership, community and media. The Chinese mainland ranked the highest in the survey with a score of 85 out of 100. Eighty-five percent of respondents in the Chinese mainland expressed confidence that China will emerge stronger from the crisis.

<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/05/07/coronavirus-china-vietnam-uae-top-list-as-citizens-rank-government-response.html>

15. Allegation: China expelled US journalists to hide the truth about COVID-19.

Reality Check: China's measure was a response to the US long-term oppression of Chinese media in the US, especially the recent expulsion of 60 Chinese journalists. China has released information in an open, transparent, responsible and timely manner.

◆The US has been escalating its political bashing against Chinese media outlets in the US. In December 2018, the US Department of Justice required CGTN America to register as a "foreign agent". On 18 February 2020, the US State Department designated five Chinese media entities in

the US, including Xinhua News Agency, as "foreign missions".

◆The US has adopted a discriminatory visa policy toward Chinese journalists. For example, it gives only single-entry visas to Chinese journalists based in the US. Since 2018, the visa applications of over 30 Chinese journalists have been indefinitely delayed or even denied by the US.

◆On 2 March 2020, the US State Department instituted a personnel cap on the five Chinese media organizations designated as "foreign missions", intending to slash the number of Chinese staff by about 40 percent by 13 March. This amounts to the de facto expulsion of 60 Chinese journalists.

◆Since COVID-19 began, China has been updating relevant data online on a daily basis in an open, transparent and responsible manner. Every workday, foreign journalists based in China can attend press conferences held by the State Council inter-agency task force, the State Council Information Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where they can raise any virus-related questions of their interest. They have had interviews with officials from both central and local governments as well as experts and scholars. Many foreign journalists went to Wuhan to gather first-hand information and have published many reports. All these facts

show that the world has unimpeded access to information about the situation in China.

◆China always welcomes interviews and reporting conducted by foreign media and journalists in the country in accordance with laws and regulations. We will continue to provide them with facilitation and assistance. What we oppose is ideological bias against China, fake news fabricated under the pretext of freedom of press, and acts that violate the ethics of journalism.

16. Allegation: China controls and bribes WHO.

Reality Check: China firmly supports multilateralism. We have all along been in good communication and cooperation with WHO. But we have never attempted to manipulate the organization. The suspension of funding by the US, the largest contributor to WHO, has been widely opposed by the international community.

◆WHO is a specialized UN agency responsible for public health security. It has 194 member states. Eleven members on its 21-strong headquarters leadership team are from the US, the EU, Canada and Australia, and only one is from China. They are all trained or practicing doctors,

epidemiologists, rescue workers and public health experts.

<https://www.who.int/dg/who-headquarters-leadership-team>

◆In 2018 and 2019, China was the third biggest donor to WHO's assessed contributions, after the US and Japan. According to WHO, assessed contributions only account for less than a quarter of its total funding, with the rest being voluntary contributions. With both sources of funding counted, China is the ninth biggest contributor. And if donations from businesses and NGOs are also factored in, China's ranking would be even lower.

17. Allegation: Taiwan gave warning to WHO about human-to-human transmission of COVID-19 as early as 31 December 2019, but it was not taken seriously.

Reality Check: The Taiwan region of China did not send any warning to WHO. What it did was asking for more information from the organization after the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission reported the disease.

◆After Wuhan reported cases of pneumonia of unknown cause on 31 December 2019, the local health department in Taiwan sent a letter to the

National Health Commission (NHC) inquiring about the information released by the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission. The NHC promptly made a written reply through the designated contact points specified in the Cross-Strait Cooperation Agreement on Medicine and Public Health Affairs. On the same day, the health department in Taiwan sent the so-called "warning email" to WHO. The email made no reference to human-to-human transmission. It was primarily an inquiry about information from WHO. The facts are clear. It was the mainland of China who first released the information, and the health department in Taiwan merely relayed the message. There is no such thing as "Taiwan reported to WHO first".

◆WHO has made it clear time and again that the Taiwan region of China did not give it "warning", but was purely requesting relevant information. WHO had already received multiple inquiry emails from other sides before Taiwan sent the email. On 20 April, WHO again clarified the matter at its press briefing, noting that it was not until 21 January that the first COVID-19 case was confirmed in China's Taiwan region. Prior to that, Taiwan did not have any first-hand information on clinical cases, let alone the ability to determine whether there was human-to-human

transmission.

18. Allegation: China has blocked Taiwan's bid to join WHO, putting the health of the people in Taiwan at risk.

Reality Check: Taiwan, being part of China, has no right to join WHO, whose membership requires sovereign statehood. The technical cooperation channel between China's Taiwan and WHO is unimpeded.

◆Only UN Member States are eligible to join WHO, a specialized UN agency composed of sovereign states. Taiwan, being part of China, has no right to apply for WHO membership.

◆Upon its accession to the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR), China stated that the IHR applies to the entire territory of the People's Republic of China, including the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the Macao Special Administrative Region and the Taiwan Province.

◆As agreed upon by the Chinese government and WHO, a WHO IHR Contact Point has been set up in China's Taiwan and the region has an account to access the WHO Event Information Site for the timely updates

on global public health emergencies released by WHO. There is no barrier to technical cooperation between China's Taiwan and WHO. Between early 2019 and early May 2020, 24 person times from 16 expert groups of Taiwan attended the technical conferences held by WHO.

◆Since the start of COVID-19, China's National Health Commission has provided timely information to the Taiwan region. As of 6 May, China's mainland had updated Taiwan on the situation 148 times. In mid-January, the mainland arranged a field visit to Wuhan for experts from Taiwan to help them learn more about the diagnosis and treatment of confirmed cases and COVID-19 response measures.

19. Allegation: China is responsible for the global spread of COVID-19. There must be investigations and lawsuits against China to hold it accountable and make it pay for COVID-19.

Reality Check: There is zero legal basis for holding China accountable and making it pay for COVID-19. Essentially, some US politicians are trying to shift the blame out of domestic political agenda.

◆COVID-19 is a natural, not man-made, disaster. China, like other countries, is a victim, not a culprit.

◆A pandemic is a global public health emergency. There is no such a thing as "state responsibility" of the first country to report cases. HIV/AIDS was first detected in the US in the 1980s and has since spread to the whole world, but the international community has never demanded that the US take responsibility or pay reparations.

◆The US has no legal ground to demand that China be held accountable and pay for COVID-19. According to international law, state responsibility occurs when acts of the responsible state constitute a breach of international law and there is a causal link between such acts and losses suffered by the injured state. China's COVID-19 response does not breach any international law, nor does it have any causal relationship with any losses the US may suffer due to the massive outbreak of the virus. The US attempt at the so-called investigations into China's response is based on the presumption of guilt.

◆There is no bilateral treaty or agreement between China and the US on public health and emergency events. As such, there can be no breach of any bilateral obligation. Although the International Health Regulations (IHR) only requires the state party to notify WHO of a public health event, China still provided the US with timely and continuous updates on

the virus. The US was among the first countries to be informed about the virus in China and has since received continuous updates. In the face of COVID-19, China has all along acted with openness, transparency and a sense of responsibility. It has promptly released information and notified WHO of the virus, taken the most comprehensive, rigorous and thorough measures, and faithfully fulfilled its duties and obligations under the IHR.

◆The so-called lawsuits in the US are ill-intended and groundless. They are also against general principles of law. According to the principle of sovereign equality under international law, sovereign acts by governments at all levels in China in response to COVID-19 are not subject to the jurisdiction of US courts. Those unwarranted lawsuits not only undermine the US response to the disease, but also run counter to international cooperation on fighting COVID-19.

◆On 4 May, one of the world's top magazines, Nature, published a study by experts from China, the US, and the UK, according to whose modeling framework that the three major groups of non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) (inter-city travel restrictions, early identification and isolation of cases, and contact restrictions and social distancing) taken by China not only contained the spread of COVID-19 in China, but also bought precious time for the world. The study points out that without the

combined NPIs, the COVID-19 cases in China would likely have shown a 67-fold increase to over 7 million.

20. Allegation: China has been hoarding medical supplies and profiteering from COVID-19. It has increased screening of medical exports and restricted export of supplies, especially ventilators, causing a shortage of supplies in the US.

Reality Check: Despite a still formidable task of combating COVID-19 at home, China has been providing medical supplies to other countries to the best of its ability.

◆The Chinese government and people have provided many shipments of much-needed medical supplies to over 150 countries and international organizations, and these efforts are still ongoing. China has also leveraged its strong production capacity and promptly opened up its medical supplies market and export channels.

◆According to the Ministry of Commerce of China, between 1 March and 6 May, China has met export orders for anti-epidemic supplies from 194 countries and regions. Among them, 77 countries and regions as well as six international organizations have signed commercial procurement

agreements with China through official channels for 216 shipments of medical supplies. Discussions are under way between Chinese companies and 71 countries and regions as well as eight international organizations to procure 128 shipments of supplies.

◆According to statistics from the General Administration of Customs, from 1 March to 30 April, China exported 71.2 billion yuan worth of anti-epidemic supplies, including 27.8 billion masks, 130 million protective suits, 73.41 million nucleic acid testing kits, 12.57 million infrared thermometers, 49,100 ventilators, 124,000 patient monitors, 43.63 million goggles and 854 million surgical gloves.

◆Statistics from China's General Administration of Customs show that between 1 March and 5 May, China exported to the US 6.6 billion masks, 344 million pairs of surgical gloves, 44.09 million protective suits, 6.75 million goggles, and nearly 7,500 ventilators.

◆Preliminary statistics indicate that by 6 May, Chinese provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities, institutions and companies donated, to 30 US states and 55 cities, more than 9.6 million masks, 500,000 testing kits, 305,900 pairs of medical and other gloves, and 133,500 goggles.

◆China has no restrictions on the export of medical supplies. Policy measures such as the announcement on further strengthening quality control of anti-epidemic supplies are introduced not to limit export, but to further strengthen quality control of medical supplies and ensure orderly and well-regulated export.

◆China's capacity to produce invasive ventilators is not unlimited, and some parts have to be imported and are under-supplied. That said, companies are still in discussion with importers in a market-based manner, and the Chinese government has never restricted the export of these ventilators.

21. Allegation: China's anti-epidemic assistance to other countries is to serve its political and propaganda purposes.

Reality Check: China's assistance to other countries is a return of their kindness in helping China with COVID-19 response. It is also a concrete step to put into action the vision of building a community with a shared future for mankind.

◆China has been sharing its control experience extensively, providing

medical and protective supplies and sending medical teams to other countries. As of mid-May, China has launched an online knowledge center, published seven editions of diagnostic and therapeutic protocols and six editions of containment plans, and set up a two-billion-yuan fund for COVID-19 cooperation. Chinese medical experts have had over 120 video conferences with their counterparts from more than 160 countries and international organizations. China has sent medical supplies to over 150 countries and international organizations and 21 medical teams to 19 countries. It has established a joint expert team with the EU and a joint response and cooperation mechanism with the Republic of Korea. China has donated US\$50 million in cash to WHO. And in response to the debt service suspension initiative for the poorest countries adopted at a recent G20 meeting, China has agreed to suspend principal and interest repayment for 77 developing countries' debts due between 1 May and the end of 2020. These actions of support and assistance have been widely recognized by the international community, as they displayed China's spirit of solidarity and mutual help in difficult times and highlighted the importance of building a community with a shared future for mankind.

22. Allegation: China is interfering in the US election and is trying every means to stop Trump from being re-elected.

Reality Check: China follows the principle of not interfering in the internal affairs of other countries. If anything, it is some US politicians that capitalize on China-bashing as their election tactics.

◆China pursues an independent foreign policy of peace, and adheres to the principle of non-interference in other countries' internal affairs. The US election is its internal matter. China has never meddled in it, and has no interest in doing so.

◆The Politico disclosed that the National Republican Senatorial Committee has sent campaigns a 57-page memo, advising GOP candidates to address the coronavirus crisis by aggressively attacking China. The memo stresses three main lines of assault: that China caused the virus "by covering it up", that Democrats are "soft on China", and that Republicans will "push for sanctions on China for its role in spreading this pandemic". Republicans have indicated in the memo that they plan to make China a centerpiece of the 2020 campaign. All these show that framing and attacking China has become a "whole-of-government approach" of the Republican campaign.

<https://www.politico.com/news/2020/04/24/gop-memo-anti-china-coronavirus-207244>

23. Allegation: By requiring exporters of masks, testing kits and ventilators to submit a statement upon customs declaration, China is in effect banning export of supplies for COVID-19.

Reality Check: The purpose of this requirement is for better quality control.

◆Strict quality control is of vital importance in the production and supply of anti-epidemic items, as the lives of people in affected countries and regions are at stake.

◆The Chinese government attaches great importance to the quality and safety of medical supplies. The relevant authorities have stepped up joint actions to tighten quality control over medical exports and ensure proper export procedures. By cracking down on sub-standard goods and bad faith and illicit behaviors, China has ensured the quality of medical exports to better support the global response to the virus.

◆These measures have produced good results and received positive comments from the international community. China does not impose restriction on its exports, and has no intention to do so. While ensuring

the quality of these exports, China's customs authorities have taken steps to speed up customs clearance and further improve facilitation.

24. Allegation: China's Guangdong Province took discriminatory measures against Africans there.

Reality Check: China's COVID-19 response measures apply to both Chinese and foreigners without discrimination. China follows a zero-tolerance policy on discriminatory words and actions.

◆Despite its own difficulties, China has given care and protection to all Africans in China, especially African students. The more than 3,000 African students in Hubei Province including Wuhan are all safe and sound, except for one student who contracted the virus but was quickly cured.

◆ As of 13 April, Guangzhou had reported a total of 26 imported cases among foreign nationals, including 19 Africans. The enhanced testing and control measures taken by China are for both Chinese citizens and all foreign nationals in China. They are not targeted at any nationality or race. Their purpose is to protect public health and people's wellbeing. A few isolated incidents that occurred in this process due to miscommunications

or misunderstanding have been timely and properly handled through close communication between the relevant Chinese authorities and government officials of the African countries concerned. On 18 April, the dean of the African Consulate Corps in Guangzhou confirmed that Guangdong Province and Guangzhou City have taken multiple steps to protect the rights and interests of African expatriates there.

◆On 13 April, Chairperson of the AU Commission Moussa Faki Mahamat said that Africa and China are friends and, more importantly, comrades-in-arms whose destinies are closely linked. He believes that China is not a country that would take discriminatory actions. Some African envoys in China have noted that the profound friendship between Africa and China has stood the test of vicissitudes and that no external force can stop it from growing further.

◆According to a BBC report on 17 April, a video widely shared on social media showing a Kenyan couple being attacked in the streets of Wuhan as a result of COVID-19 stigma was actually taken in New York.