

## **Briefing on China's Response to COVID-19 Outbreak**

Facing the COVID-19 outbreak that caught us all by surprise, the Chinese government and people consistently followed a people-centered approach and put the life and health of all people front and center. China has adhered to the principle of openness and transparency, fulfilled its commitment to global public health, adopted the most comprehensive, rigorous, and thorough measures to contain the spread of the disease, and actively participated in relevant international cooperation. China put up a strenuous struggle and made tremendous sacrifices. China's fight provided valuable experience and significantly contributed to the global response against the pandemic.

First, in the spirit of openness and transparency, China established a joint prevention and control mechanism in the shortest time possible and mobilized all its people in the war against the disease. To break the chain of transmission, the government made the courageous and momentous decision to suspend outbound travels from the city of Wuhan and Hubei Province. President Xi Jinping has been personally directing and planning China's response efforts. He repeatedly emphasized that people's safety and health are of paramount importance and governments at all levels should act according to the overall principle of shoring up confidence, strengthening unity, ensuring science-based control and treatment and imposing targeted measures, and meet the specific requirements of early detection, early reporting, early quarantine, and early treatment. Under a unified leadership, China has fought and is still fighting an all-out war against the virus. The central government mobilized all medical resources within its capacity from other areas of China and deployed more than 42,600 health care workers to support Wuhan and other priority areas of Hubei Province and improve the medical capability in the COVID-19 epicenter. China has built the Huoshenshan Hospital and Leishenshan Hospital and launched them into operation at an unprecedented speed. Governments in different sectors and at all levels have coordinated with each other in facilitating enterprises to switch their lines of production to urgently-needed medical equipment, maintaining the supply of basic living materials and safeguarding China's overall economic and social stability. Millions of Chinese volunteered to support the fight in the frontline and the duration of their service exceeded 100 million hours. Major web portals in China provided real-time updates on the number of confirmed cases and the development of the work to prevent and contain the disease.

Second, China has treated the infected in dedicated facilities by senior medical professionals and with all necessary resources. Within a short time after the outbreak, the government set up dozens of temporary treatment centers in Wuhan, providing nearly ten thousand hospital beds, to provide hospital care for all all suspected and

confirmed cases. China also organized its top scientists to conduct COVID-19-related studies. These experts have improved the accuracy of COVID-19 detection reagent, the speed of testing, the efficiency of diagnosis, and the effectiveness of treatments and by creatively combining the use of traditional Chinese and Western medicines, they have successfully increased the recovery rate and reduced the death toll. Hospitals have provided psychological counseling for COVID-19 patients to safeguard their recovery both physically and psychologically.

Third, China is opening its economy and restoring normal economic and social operations in a stepwise fashion. The re-opening strategy utilized in China is primarily risk-based and tailored to specific regions of different risk levels. Many local governments have enacted new policies to alleviate the operational difficulties of enterprises, such as providing subsidized loans, reducing taxes, and increasing government subsidies for rent reductions and enterprises' payment for social insurance premium, and coordinated the resumption of different components of the industrial chain. Essential industries related to medical supplies, daily necessities, logistics, etc., have been restored first. Up to April 14<sup>th</sup>, 99 percent of large industrial plants have resumed production, and 95 percent of employees on average are already back to work. In March, China's manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI ) rallied 16.3 percentage points from February. Restoring normal economic operations in a targeted and orderly fashion has shown positive early results in China.

Through massive and all-round efforts, China has brought the domestic outbreak well under control. Domestic transmission has been largely stopped. China has managed to restore its economy and society step by step to a normal order.

The virus respects no borders, and can only be defeated when the international community fights in unity. China always pays high attention to international health cooperation and plays its part as a major and responsible economy. On March 26<sup>th</sup>, at the Extraordinary G20 Leader's Summit, President Xi Jinping put forward four important proposals:

- to be resolute in fighting an all-out global war against the COVID-19 outbreak;
- to make collective response for control and treatment at the international level;
- to support international organizations in playing their active roles; and
- to enhance international macro-economic policy coordination,

In addition to a range of practical cooperation initiatives these proposals were widely welcomed by the international community.

First, China has raced against time to contain the spread of the virus and provided timely updates on the disease for the rest of the world. From January 3<sup>rd</sup>, information on COVID-19 cases has been reported to the WHO and relevant

economies and regions at regular intervals; on January 8<sup>th</sup>, the pathogen that causes COVID-19 was preliminarily identified; on January 12<sup>th</sup>, full genome sequences of the new virus were shared with WHO and submitted to the Global Initiative of Sharing All Influenza Data (GISAID) platform for the world to download; at the end of January, the research team from the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention published papers on world-renowned medical journals like *The New England Journal of Medicine* and *Lancet* to introduce their research findings on the epidemiological features of the novel coronavirus pneumonia. In addition, China has established two platforms, i.e. the Global COVID-19 Omics Data Sharing and Analysis System and the 2019 Novel Coronavirus Resource (2019-nCoV) Database, to publicize related data in real-time.

Second, China has actively shared its guidelines on COVID-19 prevention, control, diagnosis, and treatment with the international community. To date, the online knowledge center for COVID-19 prevention and control built by China has already released seven editions of diagnostic and therapeutic protocols, and six editions of containment plans and the information provided is updated in real-time. China has set up a special expert base for the global response to the pandemic and has intensively organized experts to share useful information about the prevention, control, diagnosis, and treatment of COVID-19 that had already been tested in China with 180 economies and more than 10 international and regional organizations.

Third, China has offered medical supplies and financial assistance to international organizations and other economies. The Chinese government, together with Chinese enterprises, civil organizations, and localities, has provided or is providing urgently-needed medical supplies to more than 150 economies and international organizations and facilitated other economies' commercial purchase in China. Between March 1<sup>st</sup> and April 23<sup>rd</sup>, China exported around 19 billion face masks, 100 million protective suits, 32,000 ventilators, 30.55 million goggles, and 7.94 million infrared thermometers. China supports the WHO's leading position in public health affairs and has donated a total of \$50 million to WHO to support the global fight against COVID-19 and strengthen developing economies' health systems.

Fourth, China has sent out teams of medical experts to some economies upon invitation. As of April 20, the Chinese government has sent out nearly 200 medical experts to 17 economies and instructed its long-term medical assistance teams in 56 developing economies to facilitate their response to the disease and provide technical consultation and health education, through either online or offline channels.

The virus is a common enemy of all human beings. The world is, after all, a common community with a shared future and we can only win this global fight by pulling together. We sincerely hope all economies could share the vision of building a community with a shared future for humankind, shore up confidence, work in unity,

deepen cooperation in an all-round way, and pool our strength together to win this global fight against the unprecedented infectious disease.