

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
From: Peter Daszak <daszak@ecohealthalliance.org>
To: Ralph Baric (rbaric@email.unc.edu) <rbaric@email.unc.edu>, Saif, Linda <saif.2@osu.edu>, JMHUGHE@emory.edu <jmhughe@emory.edu>, Rita Colwell <[REDACTED]>, Rita Colwell <rcolwell@g.umd.edu>, rcolwell@umd.edu, Wang Linfa <linfa.wang@duke-nus.edu.sg>, Hume Field <hume.field@ecohealthalliance.org>
Cc: Alison Andre <andre@ecohealthalliance.org>, Aleksei Chmura <chmura@ecohealthalliance.org>, Hongying Li <li@ecohealthalliance.org>, William B. Karesh <karesh@ecohealthalliance.org>, Robert Kessler <kessler@ecohealthalliance.org>
Sent: February 6, 2020 12:43:40 AM EST
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

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street – 17th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Tel. +1 212-380-4474

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: [@PeterDaszak](https://twitter.com/PeterDaszak)

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

1. P. Zhou *et al.*, A pneumonia outbreak associated with a new coronavirus of probable bat origin. *Nature*, (2020).
2. R. Lu *et al.*, Genomic characterisation and epidemiology of 2019 novel coronavirus: implications for virus origins and receptor binding. *The Lancet*, (2020).
3. N. Zhu *et al.*, A Novel Coronavirus from Patients with Pneumonia in China, 2019. *New England Journal of Medicine*, (2020).
4. L. Ren *et al.*, Identification of a novel coronavirus causing severe pneumonia in human: a descriptive study. *Chin Med J. Epub ahead of print*, (2020).

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

Subject: RE: A Statement in support of the scientists, public health and medical professionals of China
From: Peter Daszak <daszak@ecohealthalliance.org>
To: Saif, Linda <saif.2@osu.edu>, Hume Field <hume.field@ecohealthalliance.org>
Cc: JMHUGHE@emory.edu <jmhughe@emory.edu>, Rita Colwell <[REDACTED]>
Rita Colwell <rcolwell@g.umd.edu>, rcolwell@umd.edu, Alison Andre
<andre@ecohealthalliance.org>, Aleksei Chmura <chmura@ecohealthalliance.org>,
Hongying Li <li@ecohealthalliance.org>, William B. Karesh <karesh@ecohealthalliance.org>,
Robert Kessler <kessler@ecohealthalliance.org>
Sent: February 6, 2020 10:23:12 PM EST
Attachments: Statement of support 2019nCoV China Final.docx

Thank you very much Linda, Jim, Billy and Hume for signing on to this rapidly. Rita called today but was in a meeting and we haven't had time to talk, but I'll make sure we connect tomorrow.

Hume – I've taken some of your comments and lightly edited, and I've attached the revised version here. Linda – you're right it would be good to be specific about the bioengineered virus conspiracy theory, but we I think we should probably stick to a broad statement. The Presidents of the US National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine have drafted a letter that I expect will be released Friday or Monday. I've not seen the final version yet, but the draft version that we (and expert group that met last week) edited has the following sentence: "The initial views of the experts is that the available genomic data are consistent with natural evolution and that there is currently no evidence that the virus was engineered to spread more quickly among humans." I think this is a bit too specific, because there are other conspiracy theories out there.

Our current statment neatly refutes most of them by saying that "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". Let me know if you want to change specific wording using 'track changes' above.

The plans now are to wait for Rita to give a Yes or No, then include a reference to the NASEM letter when that comes out, then circulate to some other eminent scientists. I've come up with an initial list below.

Please suggest names of your colleagues that you think might also be willing to support this (I'm sure some of these people are too busy right now to respond):

Dr. Rob Grenfell, Health Director, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)
Dr. W. Ian Lipkin, Professor, Columbia University
Dr. Christian Drosten, Professor, German Center for Infection Research
Dr. Juan Lubroth, Chief Veterinary Officer, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Dr. Malik Peiris, Professor, The University of Hong Kong
Dr. Leo Poon, Professor, The University of Hong Kong
Dr. Keiji Fukuda, Professor, The University of Hong Kong
Dr. Jeremy Farrar, Director, The Wellcome Trust
Dr. Richard Hatchett, Chief Executive Officer, Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI)
Dr. Richard Webby, Director, World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Studies on the Ecology of Influenza in Animals and Birds
Dr. Peter Palese, Professor & Head, Dept Microbiology, Icahn School of Medicine, Mt Sinai Hospital
Dr. John Mackenzie, Professor Emeritus, Curtin University
Dato' Prof. Lam Sai Kit, University of Malaya
Dr. Stanley Perlman, University of Iowa, Carver College of Medicine
Dr. Larry Madoff, Editor, ProMED-mail

Once we've got a good group of around 20 well-known people, I will then circulate this via social media and email, with a link to a webserver for others in the greater science community (and interested public) to sign on to this statement. I will then present this to the ISID meeting in KL, Malaysia in 2 weeks and I think we'll get a big impact from that community and it should then take off.

Please note that this statement will not have EcoHealth Alliance logo on it and will not be identifiable as coming from any one organization or person, the idea is to have this as a community supporting our colleagues.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 6, 2020, at 4:12 AM, Hume Field <hume.field@ecohealthalliance.org> wrote:

Peter, some suggested edits to the statement for consideration, with the benefit of time..

Hume

From: Hume Field <hume.field@ecohealthalliance.org>
Sent: Thursday, 6 February 2020 4:35 PM
To: 'Peter Daszak' <daszak@ecohealthalliance.org>; 'Ralph Baric (rbaric@email.unc.edu)' <rbaric@email.unc.edu>; 'Saif, Linda' <saif.2@osu.edu>; 'jmhughe@emory.edu' <jmhughe@emory.edu>; 'Rita Colwell' <rcolwell@umiacs.umd.edu>; 'rcolwell@umiacs.umd.edu' <rcolwell@umiacs.umd.edu>; 'rcolwell@umd.edu' <rcolwell@umd.edu>; 'Wang Linfa' <linfa.wang@duke-nus.edu.sg>
Cc: Alison Andre <andre@ecohealthalliance.org>; Aleksei Chmura <chmura@ecohealthalliance.org>; Hongying Li <li@ecohealthalliance.org>; William B. Karesh <karesh@ecohealthalliance.org>; Robert Kessler <kessler@ecohealthalliance.org>
Subject: RE: A Statement in support of the scientists, public health and medical professionals of China

Count me in Peter. I had thought/hoped that this conspiracy stuff would fade, but clearly not. So yes, I agree it's time to actively counter it, and express peer support for the world class Chinese scientists doing such great work, yet being publicly and professionally impugned.

Well done mate.
Hume

Hume Field BVSc MSc PhD MACVS
Honorary Professor | **University of Queensland** | Australia
Science & Policy Advisor | **EcoHealth Alliance** | USA
Director | **Jeppesen Field Consulting** | Australia.

Ph: +61448582311

From: Peter Daszak <daszak@ecohealthalliance.org>
Sent: Thursday, 6 February 2020 3:44 PM
To: Ralph Baric (rbaric@email.unc.edu) <rbaric@email.unc.edu>; Saif, Linda <saif.2@osu.edu>; 'jmhughe@emory.edu' <jmhughe@emory.edu>; Rita Colwell <rcolwell@umiacs.umd.edu>; 'rcolwell@umd.edu' <rcolwell@umd.edu>; Wang Linfa <linfa.wang@duke-nus.edu.sg>; Hume Field <hume.field@ecohealthalliance.org>
Cc: Alison Andre <andre@ecohealthalliance.org>; Aleksei Chmura <chmura@ecohealthalliance.org>; Hongying Li <li@ecohealthalliance.org>; William B. Karesh <karesh@ecohealthalliance.org>; Robert Kessler <kessler@ecohealthalliance.org>
Subject: A Statement in support of the scientists, public health and medical professionals of China
Importance: High

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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<Statement of support 2019nCoV China Final_HF.docx>

Revised Statement of support re. 2019nCoV

Subject: Revised Statement of support re. 2019nCoV
From: Peter Daszak <daszak@ecohealthalliance.org>
To: Rita Colwell <[REDACTED]> Rita Colwell <rcolwell@g.umd.edu>, rcolwell@umd.edu
Cc: Alison Andre <andre@ecohealthalliance.org>, Aleksei Chmura <chmura@ecohealthalliance.org>, Hongying Li <li@ecohealthalliance.org>
Sent: February 7, 2020 9:00:38 PM EST
Attachments: Statement of support 2019nCoV China Final revised.docx, Suggested list for further signatures.docx

Rita,

It was a pleasure to talk with you and thank you for your suggestions. We've revised the letter as you suggested, inserting references that conclude a natural origin in wildlife for this virus published by scientists from outside China (USA, Greece), and splitting the sentence so that it's clear which citations are to that point, and which are to the point that other EIDs tend to originate in wildlife.

I've attached the draft, with the current signatories, as well as a list of the people we intend to send it to for the next round of signatures. Our goal is to secure 20 or so signatures of well-known researchers/public health scientists, and then open up a webpage for others to sign on to.

Would you be willing to endorse this statement? If so, please could you check the affiliation we've given for you (former Director of the US NSF), and let me know what would be appropriate.

I do hope you'll be able to support this, the openness of science and public health is under intense pressure right now given the conspiracy theorists spreading rumors here in the West, and within China. This letter is carefully worded to avoid political statements, and we have been told would go a long way to supporting continued collaboration in this outbreak.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance
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We, the undersigned, are public health scientists who have closely followed the emergence of 2019-nCoV, and are deeply concerned about its impact on global health and well-being. We have watched as the scientists, public health and medical professionals of China, in particular, have worked diligently and effectively 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. This effort has been remarkable.

We sign this statement in solidarity with all scientists, public health, and medical professionals in China who continue to save lives and protect global human health during the challenge of this novel coronavirus outbreak. We are all in this together, with our Chinese counterparts in the forefront, against this new viral threat.

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. Scientists from multiple countries have analyzed the 2019-nCoV sequence, and overwhelmingly conclude that this virus originated in wildlife ¹⁻⁷, as have so many other emerging diseases ^{8,9}. 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 ¹⁰. Conspiracy theories do nothing but create fear, rumors, and prejudice that jeopardize our global collaboration in the fight against this virus. We need to promote scientific evidence and unity over misinformation and conjecture. We want you, the science and health professionals of China, to know that **we stand with you** 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!

Signatories

Dr. James Hughes, Professor Emeritus, Emory University School of Medicine
Dr. Rita Colwell, former Director of the US National Science Foundation
Dr. Linda Saif, Distinguished University Professor, The Ohio State University
Dr. Billy Karesh, Executive Vice President, EcoHealth Alliance
Dr. Peter Daszak, President, EcoHealth Alliance
Dr. Hume Field, Honorary Professor, School of Veterinary Science, The University of Queensland

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

References

- 1 Zhou, P. *et al.* A pneumonia outbreak associated with a new coronavirus of probable bat origin. *Nature*, doi:10.1038/s41586-020-2012-7 (2020).

- 2 Lu, R. *et al.* Genomic characterisation and epidemiology of 2019 novel coronavirus: implications for virus origins and receptor binding. *The Lancet*, doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30251-8 (2020).
- 3 Zhu, N. *et al.* A Novel Coronavirus from Patients with Pneumonia in China, 2019. *New England Journal of Medicine*, doi:10.1056/NEJMoa2001017 (2020).
- 4 Ren, L. *et al.* Identification of a novel coronavirus causing severe pneumonia in human: a descriptive study. *Chin Med J. Epub ahead of print* (2020).
- 5 Paraskevis, D., Kostaki, E. G., Magiorkinis, G., Panayiotakopoulos, G. & Tsiodras, S. Full-genome evolutionary analysis of the novel corona virus (2019-nCoV) rejects the hypothesis of emergence as a result of a recent recombination event. *bioRxiv*, doi:10.1101/2020.01.26.920249 (2020).
- 6 Benvenuto, D. *et al.* The 2019-new coronavirus epidemic: Evidence for virus evolution. *J. Med. Virol.* **1-5**, doi:10.1002/jmv.25688 (2020).
- 7 Wan, Y., Shang, J., Graham, R., Baric, R. S. & Li, F. Receptor recognition by novel coronavirus from Wuhan: An analysis based on decade-long structural studies of SARS. *Journal of Virology*, doi:10.1128/jvi.00127-20 (2020).
- 8 Bengis, R. *et al.* The role of wildlife in emerging and re-emerging zoonoses. *Revue scientifique et technique-office international des epizooties* **23**, 497-512 (2004).
- 9 Woolhouse, M. E. & Gowtage-Sequeria, S. Host range and emerging and reemerging pathogens. *Emerg Infect Dis* **11**, 1842-1847, doi:10.3201/eid1112.050997 (2005).
- 10 NAS, NAE, and NAM Presidents' letter to the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). (2020).
<[https://www.nationalacademies.org/includes/NASEM%20Response%20to%20OSTP%20re%200Coronavirus February%206,%202020.pdf](https://www.nationalacademies.org/includes/NASEM%20Response%20to%20OSTP%20re%200Coronavirus%20February%206,%202020.pdf)>.

- Dr. Jim Hughes, Professor, Emory University -- **agreed**
- Dr. Rita Colwell, former Director of National Science Foundation -- **pending**
- Dr. Linda Saif, Distinguished University Professor, The Ohio State University -- **agreed**
- Dr. Billy Karesh, Vice President, EcoHealth Alliance – **agreed**
- Dr. Peter Daszak, President, EcoHealth Alliance -- **agreed**
- Dr. Hume Field, Honorary Professor, The University of Queensland – **agreed**
- Dr. Rob Grenfell, Health Director, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)
- Dr. W. Ian Lipkin, Professor, Columbia University
- Dr. Christian Drosten, Professor, German Center for Infection Research, Germany
- Dr. Juan Lubroth, Chief Veterinary Officer, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
- Dr. Malik Peiris, Professor, The University of Hong Kong
- Dr. Leo Poon, Professor, The University of Hong Kong
- Dr. Keiji Fukuda, Professor, The University of Hong Kong
- Dr. Jeremy Farrar, Director, The Wellcome Trust
- Dr. Richard Hatchett, Chief Executive Officer, Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI)
- Dr. Richard Webby, Director, World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Studies on the Ecology of Influenza in Animals and Birds
- Dr. Peter Palese, Professor & Head, Dept Microbiology, Icahn School of Medicine, Mt Sinai Hospital
- Dr. John Mackenzie, Professor Emeritus, Curtin University
- Dato' Prof. Lam Sai Kit, University of Malaya
- Dr. Stanley Perlman, University of Iowa, Carver College of Medicine
- Dr. Larry Madoff, Editor, ProMED-mail
- From Kevin
- Dr. John Brownstein, Harvard University, HealthMap?
- Dr. Dennis Carroll, former USAID?
- Dr. Charles Calisher, Colorado State University
- Dr. Vincent Munster, NIH Rocky Mountain Laboratories
- Dr. Supaporn Wacharapluesadee, Chulalongkorn University
- From Linda Saif
- Dr. Marion Koopmans, Erasmus Medical Center, The Netherlands
- Dr. Bart Haagmans, Erasmus Medical Center, The Netherlands
- Dr. Luis Enjuanes, National Center of Biotechnology, Madrid, Spain
- Dr. Eric Snijder, Leiden University Medical Center, The Netherlands
- Dr. Alexander Gobalenya, Leiden University Medical Center, The Netherlands
- Dr. Mark Denison, Professor, Vanderbilt University, USA
- Dr. Yoshi Kawaoka, Professor, University of Wisconsin, USA
- From Jon
- Dr. Tony Schountz, Professor, Colorado State University
- Dr. Jonna Mazet. Professor, University of California, Davis
- Dr. Stephen Morse, Professor, Columbia University
- Dr. Christopher Broder, Professor, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences
- Dr. Marion Koopmans, Professor, Erasmus University Medical Center
- Dr. Ab Osterhaus, Emeritus Professor, Erasmus University Rotterdam
- Dr. Susan Lau, Hong Kong University?
- Dr. Charles Calisher, Emeritus Professor, Colorado State University
- Dr. Wanda Markotter, Professor, University of Pretoria

- Dr. Janus Paweska, Director, Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases at the National Institute for Communicable Diseases of the National Health Laboratory Service (NICD-NHLS) Sandringham, South Africa (WHO testing center for CoV)

RE: coronavirus statement

Subject: RE: coronavirus statement
From: Rita Colwell <RCOLWELL@umd.edu>
To: Peter Daszak <daszak@ecohealthalliance.org>
Cc: Aleksei Chmura <chmura@ecohealthalliance.org>, Hongying Li <li@ecohealthalliance.org>, Rita Colwell <rcolwell@g.umd.edu>
Sent: February 8, 2020 8:59:57 PM EST

Peter:

I will sign on but my affiliation must read as Distinguished University Professor, University of Maryland College Park. It should not read as former director of the National Science Foundation as I have not had clearance from NSF.

Thank you for addressing my concerns.

Best wishes,

Rita

From: Peter Daszak <daszak@ecohealthalliance.org>

Sent: Saturday, February 08, 2020 8:52 PM

To: Rita Colwell <rcolwell@umiacs.umd.edu>

Cc: Rita Colwell <rcolwell@umiacs.umd.edu>; Aleksei Chmura <chmura@ecohealthalliance.org>; Hongying Li <li@ecohealthalliance.org>

Subject: RE: coronavirus statement

Importance: High

Hi Rita,

I appreciate your comments and I think at this point, that work has already been done, with >50 genomes published from 12 countries, and phylogenetic analyses published by authors from multiple countries. I've tried to make this a bit more clear, and have edited the letter as follows, so it hopefully addresses your comments:

1) I've inserted a reference to the GISAID webpage where 57 (to date) full genome sequences of 2019-nCoV from 12 countries are published and analyzed

2) I've inserted a reference to the CDC webpage on 2019-nCoV which makes the following statement, completely in concurrence with our letter:

"2019-nCoV is a betacoronavirus, like MERS and SARs, both of which have their origins in bats. The sequences from U.S. patients are similar to the one that China initially posted, suggesting a likely single, recent emergence of this virus from an animal reservoir."

In addition, please note that we will not be referring to this as a 'petition' but as a 'statement in support of' – This is in the title and will be in all materials we send out. This is to avoid the appearance of a political statement – this is simply a letter from leading scientists in support of other scientists and health professionals who are under serious pressure right now.

I hope you are willing to sign on to this - your voice will be very influential, particularly in keeping these critical bridges open between the USA and China. You should know that the conspiracy theorists have been very active, targeting our collaborators with some extremely unpleasant web pages in China, and some have now received death threats to themselves and their families. They have asked for any show of support we can give them.

As soon as we hear back from you we'll get ready to send this to our larger list (attached), but of course if you don't feel comfortable, I'll make sure your name is not associated with this.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street – 17th Floor

New York, NY 10001

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

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From: Peter Daszak <daszak@ecohealthalliance.org>
To: Saif, Linda <saif.2@osu.edu>, Hume Field <hume.field@ecohealthalliance.org>, William B. Karesh <karesh@ecohealthalliance.org>, JMHUGHE@emory.edu <jmhughe@emory.edu>, Rita Colwell <[REDACTED]>, Rita Colwell <rcolwell@g.umd.edu>, rcolwell@umd.edu
Cc: Alison Andre <andre@ecohealthalliance.org>, Aleksei Chmura <chmura@ecohealthalliance.org>, Hongying Li <li@ecohealthalliance.org>, Robert Kessler <kessler@ecohealthalliance.org>
Sent: February 9, 2020 11:56:02 PM EST
Attachments: Statement of support 2019nCoV China Final 020920.docx, Statement of support 2019nCoV China signatory list 020920.docx

Dear All,

I want to thank you all for agreeing to act as a signatory on this statement of support for scientists and health professionals in China.

I have attached a final version of the statement that I will now circulate to a list of further proposed signatories (also attached). Once we have a sizeable number of these eminent public health scientists signing on to this statement, we'll then make it public and have a link to a webpage for people to sign in support.

As you can see, I added further references and text to this statement in response to really good comments from Rita Colwell. These include:

- 1) A reference to the GISAID webpage where 57 (to date) full genome sequences of 2019-nCoV from 12 countries are published and analyzed. This helps clarify that significant information has been made available to help people analyze the origins of this virus.
- 2) I've inserted a reference to the CDC webpage on 2019-nCoV which makes the following statement, completely in concurrence with our letter:
"2019-nCoV is a betacoronavirus, like MERS and SARs, both of which have their origins in bats. The sequences from U.S. patients are similar to the one that China initially posted, suggesting a likely single, recent emergence of this virus from an animal reservoir."
- 3) I've cited the statement from the WHO DG which was released today saying *"At WHO, we're not just battling the virus; we're also battling the trolls and conspiracy theorists that push misinformation and undermine the outbreak response."*
- 4) In addition, I've tried to make it clear that we will not be referring to this as a 'petition' but as a 'statement in support of' – This is in the title and will be in all materials we send out. This is to avoid the appearance of a political statement and make sure this is recognized as simply a letter from leading scientists in support of other scientists and health professionals who are under serious pressure right now.

Please let me know if anything further needs to be changed – I can do this before we release this publicly (probably by Wednesday or so this week).

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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