The COVID-19 Crisis, the World Health Organization, and China’s Strategy

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<https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/>

### Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has, by its very nature as a medical crisis of global proportion, placed the World Health Organization (WHO) under an international magnifying glass.

The WHO, a UN specialized agency, is the international body whose constitutional mandate and objective is “the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health.”[1](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn1)

The WHO constitution indeed lists such activities as directing and coordinating authority on international health work, establishing and maintaining effective collaboration with the governments, international organizations, professional groups and such other institutions as may be deemed appropriate; assisting governments, upon request, in strengthening health services: and furnishing technical assistance and, in emergencies, necessary aid upon the request or acceptance of governments.

The performance of the WHO in the present corona crisis, and specifically that of its director-general, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, constitute perhaps the major factor in the global administration and regulation of the  international struggle to contain the virus, to reduce the amount of victims, and to generate, encourage and coordinate efforts to find the medical response to the challenge.

As time goes by since the initial appearance of the virus in China in late November 2019, the performance and functioning of Dr. Tedros, as the chief international health official responsible for directing the international community in its dealing with the virus, has come under considerable international criticism, and even demands that he be indicted for criminal liability.

In a 13-language petition launched on January 31, 2020, by Osuka Yip, a Canadian, evidently of Taiwanese origin, and addressed to the UN, almost one million signatories have called for Tedros’ resignation.[2](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn2)

The petition asserts that the United Nations health official and the organization’s actions in dealing with the coronavirus outbreak have been unacceptable, adding that Tedros is “unfit” for his role as head of the organization.

The petition lists as the main reasons for the demand for the resignation:

* On January 23, 2020, Tedros failed to declare the coronavirus outbreak in China as a global health emergency.
* Tedros underestimated the coronavirus. Instead of investigating and independently verifying the number of deaths and those infected within the Chinese provinces, Tedros simply relied on the word of the Chinese government, which initially downplayed the outbreak within their country in order to stave off the negative economic effects that were to come with the viral spread, apathetic to worldwide public health implications.
* While required to be politically neutral, Tedros accepted without verification the statistics provided by the Chinese government regarding numbers of deaths and persons infected by corona.
* The exclusion of Taiwan from the WHO, and refusal to cooperate with it, at the behest of China and supported by Tedros, was political, and prejudicial to efforts to combat the virus. This violates the neutral and professional nature of the organization, despite the fact that Taiwan’s technologies are far more advanced than some of the countries on the “selected WHO list.”

### Tedros’ Background

Articles published on March 25, 2020, by the website “roughestimate.org” and on April 8, 2020, by “Hnews wire.com,” a U.S. Christian-sponsored website, seemingly emanating from Ethiopian opposition sources, call for the indictment of Tedros.

They trace Tedros’ history as a senior government official and member of the “Tigray People’s Liberation Front” (TPLF).[3](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn3)

According to these reports, the TPLF was founded as a communist revolutionary party that came to power in 1991 and led a guerrilla campaign against the Mengistu dictatorship in Ethiopia, ultimately forming a coalition with two other ethnic parties after Mengistu’s exile.

The TPLF was listed as a terrorist organization by the U.S. government in the 1990s and is [still so listed](https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=2127) by the Global Terror Database.[4](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn4)

Tedros was a senior member of the party and became involved with the TPLF after the removal of Mengistu.

Media sources in Ethiopia listed Tedros as the 3rd most important member of the politburo standing committee.[5](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn5)

During his term as Ethiopian Minister of Health from 2002 to 2012, Human Rights Watch, in a report published in 2010, referred to systematic discrimination and human rights abuses, repression and political intolerance by the government, including the withholding of food and fertilizer from local Amhara villagers because of their affiliations with the opposition party and the Tedros ministry of health refusal of emergency healthcare.[6](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn6)

Tedros was health minister at a time when the regime was accused of covering up epidemics.

As reported by the Washington Post in May 2017, on the eve of Tedros’ election as Director General of WHO, a cholera outbreak spread in the region in 2007, infecting thousands in neighboring countries. When it spread to Ethiopia, the government simply renamed the outbreak and called it Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD).

According to the Washington Post, international organizations were urged not to call it cholera (despite the UN testing the infected and finding cholera), and Ethiopian health ministry officials under Tedros refused to reveal the number of infected.[7](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn7)

In 2012 Tedros became Ethiopia’s foreign minister at the time of a crackdown on journalists and government opponents in the country, and Tedros led negotiations with neighboring Yemen to extradite back to Ethiopia those who had fled to Yemen.

### Behind Tedros’ Election to Lead the WHO

A report published on March 22, 2020, by the Canadian Global News uncovered a murky history behind Tedros’ election to the post of director-general of the WHO.[8](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn8)

The report covers the period from 2012 to 2016 during which Tedros served as Ethiopia’s foreign minister and the reputation he gained as being a pro-Beijing human rights violator.

Once when Human Rights Watch presented a report documenting egregious human rights violations during the Ethiopian government’s brutal crackdown of opposition protests, Dr. Tedros reacted angrily, accusing the respected human rights organization of “encouraging opposition violence in Ethiopia.”[9](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn9)

Dr. Tedros is also accused of covering up Ethiopia’s cholera epidemic during his time as the African country’s health minister by refusing to refer to the disease by its name and instead calling it “acute watery diarrhea” (AWD).[10](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn10)

The report also recalls that Dr. Tedros’ election to the post of WHO director-general, with the active support of China, was disrupted by international pro-democracy activists.

### Tedros, China, and the COVID-19 Outbreak

Very serious allegations are appearing in the international community and through international media regarding Tedros’ alleged collusion with China’s efforts to conceal the seriousness of the corona outbreak and to delay declaring the outbreak a pandemic. Such allegations refer to the immense damage that Tedros’ collusion has caused in terms of human casualties.

The allegations claim inter alia that the world impact of the organization’s pandemic declaratory delay, and early complacency towards China, should be considered potentially as crimes against humanity.

Indeed, after having maintained, during multiple prior press briefings since December 2019, that the COVID-19 epidemic had “pandemic potential,” the WHO stopped short of declaring it one, preferring to consider it to be a “public health emergency of international concern” (PHEIC), which is a slightly different label that refers to an “extraordinary event” that “constitute[s] a public health risk to other states through the international spread of disease.”

Only on March 11, 2020, the WHO declared it to have developed into a pandemic, considering its global spread.[11](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn11)

Tedros tried to justify himself on March 11, claiming:

Pandemic is not a word to use lightly or carelessly. It is a word that, if misused, can cause unreasonable fear, or unjustified acceptance that the fight is over, leading to unnecessary suffering and death…. Describing the situation as a pandemic does not change WHO’s assessment of the threat posed by this coronavirus. It doesn’t change what WHO is doing, and it doesn’t change what countries should do.

In an article published on April 10, 2020, by the Gatestone Institute entitled, “It is Time for the WHO Pro-China Chief to Resign,”[12](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn12) Con Coughlin, defense and foreign affairs editor of the Telegraph (UK), writes:

Much of the blame…for the WHO’s dire performance during the outbreak is being blamed on [Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-51720184), the WHO’s director-general. A former Ethiopian health minister, he first came to prominence in his home country when he served on the politburo of the Marxist-Leninist Tigray People’s Liberation Front.

Dr. Tedros was previously a great admirer of former Rhodesian dictator Robert Mugabe, even appointing him as a goodwill ambassador for the WHO, a decision he was forced to revoke following an international outcry.

Like Mr. Mugabe, Dr. Tedros has enjoyed a good relationship with China’s ruling communist party, and he won election to his current position after receiving [backing from China](https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/china-helped-put-man-charge-world-health-organization%E2%80%94-it-paying-136002) in the May 2017 election.

His long-standing relationship with Beijing might help to explain why the WHO has been so accommodating to China, even though the coronavirus pandemic originated in Wuhan.

Rather than criticizing Beijing for its initial attempts to cover up the outbreak, Dr. Tedros instead [praised](https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/china-helped-put-man-charge-world-health-organization%E2%80%94-it-paying-136002) Chinese President Xi Jinping for his “very rare leadership,” and China for showing “transparency” in its response to the virus.

Many nations, including the U.S. and Britain, believe that Dr. Tedros’ reluctance to confront China over its handling of the coronavirus outbreak is the reason it has now become a pandemic, with most Western countries being forced to introduce lockdown measures in a belated attempt to limit the spread of the virus.

Not surprisingly, Dr. Tedros is facing widespread [calls to resign](https://www.foxnews.com/politics/who-director-faces-growing-calls-to-resign-over-handling-of-coronavirus-china), not least in the U.S., where American politicians say he placed too much trust in Beijing’s reporting about the extent of the spread of the disease.

On March 24, 2020, Taiwan’s Foreign Ministry confirmed that on December 31, 2019, it had warned the WHO about human-to-human transmission of COVID-19. However, evidently in light of his close relationship with China, and the fact that the WHO under Tedros did not accept Taiwan within the organization, and his own personal animosity against Taiwan, Tedros did not publish the requested information on the WHO website, rather preferring, a few days later, on January 8, 2020, to [praise](https://www.nationalreview.com/the-morning-jolt/chinas-devastating-lies/amp/?__twitter_impression=true) China’s identification of the virus, but  not recommending any specific travel limitations.[13](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn13)

Despite the deliberate Chinese concealment of the outbreak of the virus since the end of December 2019, Tedros repeated his praise of China’s management of the epidemic, [saying](https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-statement-on-ihr-emergency-committee-on-novel-coronavirus) on January 22 that he was “very impressed by the detail and depth of China’s presentation.”

As stated by the Taiwan News Agency:

Nearly a month after Taiwan’s warning, a WHO delegation traveling to Wuhan [finally concluded](https://www.who.int/china/news/detail/22-01-2020-field-visit-wuhan-china-jan-2020) that “human-to-human transmission is taking place in Wuhan.”

It was not until Jan. 30 that Tedros [finally declared](https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/30-01-2020-statement-on-the-second-meeting-of-the-international-health-regulations-(2005)-emergency-committee-regarding-the-outbreak-of-novel-coronavirus-(2019-ncov)) the outbreak to be a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). Incredibly, Tedros waited until the virus had infected 118,000 people and killed 4,291 patients in 114 countries to finally declare a [global pandemic](https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---11-march-2020).

### Allegations as to China’s Strategic Motives

Following serious allegations by President Trump as to collaboration by the WHO with China in enabling the Chinese concealment of the spread of the virus, Republican Senator Tom Cotton is quoted by Fox News on April 11, 2020, as follows:

Let me give you one example of Beijing’s treachery. On January 23rd, they shut down air travel from Wuhan to every other Chinese city, couldn’t go to Beijing, couldn’t go to Shanghai, couldn’t go to Shenzhen, but you could still travel to any city around the world, with direct flights from Wuhan to include New York and San Francisco. That meant that thousands of cases were being seeded all around the world before the WHO and China were even acknowledging human-to-human transmission. China was looking out for its own people by shutting down domestic travel, while continuing to let this virus spread all around the world.[14](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn14)

In an article entitled “China Did This” in the Times of Israel on April 12, 2020, Canadian human rights experts Irwin Cotler and Judith Arbitan, allege:

There is authoritative and compelling evidence  – including a study from the University of Southampton – that if interventions in China had been conducted three weeks earlier, transmission of COVID-19 could have been reduced by 95 percent.

For 40 days, President Xi Jinping’s CPC concealed, destroyed, falsified, and fabricated information about the rampant spread of COVID-19 through its state-sanctioned massive surveillance and suppression of data; its misrepresentation of information; its silencing and criminalizing of its dissent; and its disappearance of its whistleblowers.[15](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn15)

In a comprehensive timeline detailing the Chinese concealment from the world of the COVID-19 virus and WHO collusion, published on April 13, 2020, Jim Geraghty notes in the National Review:

The coronavirus jumped from some animal species to a human being at some point in late 2019, and as early as the second week of December, Wuhan doctors were finding cases that indicated the virus was spreading from one human to another.[16](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn16)

On January 3, China’s National Health Commission (NHC), the nation’s top health authority, ordered institutions not to publish any information related to the unknown disease, and ordered labs to transfer any samples they had to designated testing institutions, or to destroy them.*[17](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn17)*

On January 5, after being informed by the WHO China Country Office on December 31, 2019, of “cases of pneumonia of unknown etiology detected in Wuhan City,” WHO issued an “Emergencies preparedness response,” in which it advised:

WHO does not recommend any specific measures for travelers. In case of symptoms suggestive of respiratory illness either during or after travel, travelers are encouraged to seek medical attention and share travel history with their healthcare provider.

WHO advises against the application of any travel or trade restrictions on China based on the current information available on this event.[18](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn18)

On January 14, the WHO tweeted:

Preliminary investigations conducted by the Chinese authorities have found no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission of the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) identified in Wuhan, China.[19](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn19)

In a media statement **on January 22**, WHO Director-General Tedros praised China’s handling of the outbreak:

[I was very impressed by the detail and depth of China’s presentation.](https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-statement-on-ihr-emergency-committee-on-novel-coronavirus) I also appreciate the cooperation of China’s Minister of Health, who I have spoken with directly during the last few days and weeks. His leadership and the intervention of President Xi and Premier Li have been invaluable, and all the measures they have taken to respond to the outbreak.[20](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn20)

### Conspiracy Theories regarding China’s Strategy

This survey of WHO’s handling of the COVID-19 crisis, of WHO chief Tedros’s evident collusion with China, and of China’s deliberate concealment of the outbreak of the crisis would not be complete without reference to a growing number of “conspiracy” theories emanating mostly from anonymous sources among “China watchers.”

These sources are putting forward the hypothesis that the deadly virus escaped or was released from one of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA) bio-weapons laboratories, of which there are two in Wuhan. According to these sources, the P4 bio-lab in Wuhan was experimenting with deadly coronaviruses since the 2003 SARS epidemic. Such lethal corona viruses were also being studied at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, located in proximity to the Wuhan wet market, claimed to be the source of the virus.

Based on this hypothesis, they claim that China intentionally infected the world as part of a purposeful bio-attack against the U.S.A. and the other countries of the West, under cover of a worldwide pandemic.

Similarly, from documentary evidence emanating from Chinese government sources, no later than January 7, Xi Jinping became aware that a highly contagious epidemic had already broken out in Wuhan. On the same day he communicated to the Standing Committee of the Politburo of the Communist Party of China his instructions for the local authorities in Wuhan for dealing with the “epidemic situation” there.[21](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_edn21)

However, only on January 23 did he order that Wuhan be locked down into strict quarantine, after having enabled more than five million workers to depart Wuhan for their month-long Chinese New Year vacation.

As mentioned above by Senator Tom Cotton, China’s President Xi Jinping knowingly permitted more than five million potential virus-spreaders to leave Wuhan for every part of China, and also for so many overseas countries.

### Conclusion

Only after the spread of COVID-19 is halted, the casualties are buried, and immunization against any future outbreak of the virus is developed, and after life returns to some state of normalcy, will it be possible to analyze the true causes of the virus and its spread globally, the behavior of the Chinese government, and the functioning of the WHO and Director-General Tedros.

The very serious questions that have been raised regarding possible criminal liability of Tedros in his alleged collusion with China and the resultant delays in the efficient handling of the crisis will also need to be seriously examined.

The question remains if the international community institutions have the will and the capability to deal with such questions, and whether, as with most serious humanitarian issues, politics and partisan interests will ensure that the answers to such questions will remain buried for eternity.

Time will tell.

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Notes

[1](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref1) <https://www.who.int/governance/eb/who_constitution_en.pdf>; see also WHO website, <https://www.who.int/about/what-we-do>

[2](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref2) <https://www.change.org/p/united-nations-call-for-the-resignation-of-tedros-adhanom-ghebreyesus-who-director-general>; see also the report on the petition in the Jerusalem Post dated April 5, 2020, <https://www.jpost.com/international/petition-calling-for-resignation-of-who-director-general-nears-720k-signatures-623626>

[3](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref3) “Tedros Adhanom Should be Put on Trial for Crimes Against Humanity,” <https://hnewswire.com/whos-tedros-adhanom-should-be-put-on-trial-for-crimes-against-humanity/>; see also <https://www.roughestimate.org/roughestimate/the-crimes-of-tedros-adhanom>

[4](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref4) <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=2127>

[5](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref5) <http://www.tigraionline.com/cctplf.html>

[6](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref6) <https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/world_report_download/wr2010_0.pdf> at pages 118-121

[7](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref7) <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/05/18/ethiopias-candidate-for-the-world-health-organization-doesnt-like-mentioning-a-certain-disease/>

[8](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref8) <http://glbnews.com/url.html?p=https://thinkpol.ca/2020/03/22/nearly-half-million-sign-petition-calling-heads-resignation-kowtowing-china-bungling-covid-19-response/>

[9](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref9) <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/11/04/open-letter-government-ethiopia>

[10](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref10) <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/05/18/ethiopias-candidate-for-the-world-health-organization-doesnt-like-mentioning-a-certain-disease/>

[11](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref11) [https://time.com/5791661/who-COVID-19virus-pandemic-declaration/](https://time.com/5791661/who-coronavirus-pandemic-declaration/)

[12](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref12) <https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/15869/who-tedros-resign>

[13](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref13) <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3904702>

[14](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref14) <https://www.dailywire.com/news/senator-cotton-on-china-its-time-to-start-delinking-our-two-economies>?

[15](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref15) <https://www.timesofisrael.com/criminality-and-corruption-reign-in-xi-pings-china/>

[16](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref16) <https://www.nationalreview.com/the-morning-jolt/chinas-devastating-lies/>

[17](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref17) <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/east-asia/how-early-signs-of-the-coronavirus-were-spotted-spread-and-throttled-in-china>

[18](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref18) <https://www.who.int/csr/don/05-january-2020-pneumonia-of-unkown-cause-china/en/>

[19](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref19) <https://twitter.com/WHO/status/1217043229427761152?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.foxnews.com%2Fworld%2Fworld-health-organization-january-tweet-china-human-transmission-coronavirus>

[20](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref20) <https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-statement-on-ihr-emergency-committee-on-novel-coronavirus>

[21](https://jcpa.org/the-covid-19-crisis-the-world-health-organization-and-chinas-strategy/" \l "_ednref21)[http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2020-02/24/content\_5482502.htm](https://nam01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.cn%2Fxinwen%2F2020-02%2F24%2Fcontent_5482502.htm&data=02%7C01%7C%7C2ae39d474b5d4ade22ed08d7db1406c7%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637218751365773961&sdata=4w5KKpdV2jeeaFJaRG6uxZxcYtot0K4XVFIEdQ0P7Pk%3D&reserved=0). “After the outbreak of the New Coronary Pneumonia, the Party Central Committee attached great importance to it and quickly made arrangements to comprehensively strengthen the centralized leadership of the prevention and control of the outbreak. When I presided over the meeting of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee on January 7, I put forward requirements for the prevention and control of the epidemic situation.”