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Cover caption

April 26, 2020: A couple of lovers walk past a mural depicting a medical worker wearing a mask in London, Britain. by Han Yan/Xinhua



by Ju Peng/Xinhua

Xi Applauds E-commerce

April 20, Shangluo, Shaanxi Province: Chinese President Xi Jinping inspects poverty alleviation efforts in Jinmi Village of Xiaoling Township in Zhashui County.

“E-commerce is an emerging sector with great potential,” declared Xi during the inspection tour. “It can

promote sales of agricultural products, help rural residents shake off poverty, and facilitate rural vitalization.”

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, China is determined to realize the goal of reducing the nation’s impoverished population to zero this year.

Stay Home

April 18, Giza, Egypt: One of the Giza pyramids is illuminated with words “STAY HOME” on World Heritage Day amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

As of April 27, global confirmed COVID-19 cases have topped 3 million, with the death toll reaching 208,131 according to statistics from U.S.-based Johns Hopkins University. Dozens of countries have declared a state of emergency, and some have taken drastic measures to lock down cities or even the whole country.



by Ahmed Gomaa/Xinhua

Streaming Concerts

April 14, Xi'an, Shaanxi Province: Musicians of the Xi'an Symphony Orchestra rehearse for a concert to be livestreamed.

Joining many other performers in finding creative ways to engage with the public amid the COVID-19 outbreak, the Xi'an Symphony Orchestra launched a series of online streaming concerts featuring visuals of artwork in Xi'an museums.

Titled *When Museums Meets XSO*, the online series kicked off with an hour-long concert at 8 p.m. on April 18 broadcast from the Shaanxi History Museum. Over 3 million people watched the concert online through social media platforms.



by Li Yibo/Xinhua

Leishenshan Hospital Retired

April 15, Wuhan, Hubei Province: A medical worker seals wards after Leishenshan Hospital was thoroughly disinfected.

The provisional hospital closed that day after the coronavirus epidemic had waned. Retirement of the hospital was a landmark development in Wuhan's months-long battle against the epidemic, indicating that the city's COVID-19 treatment was "back to normal," said Jiao Yahui, an official with the National Health Commission of China.




by Xu Xun/China Pictorial

National Mourning for COVID-19 Victims

April 4, Wuhan, Hubei Province: A man bows in silence to mourn lives lost to the coronavirus outbreak.

A national mourning was held to pay tribute to the heroes who sacrificed their lives fighting the outbreak and all those who perished. The 1.4 billion people in China came to a halt for a full three minutes starting from 10 a.m. on April 4.

In Beijing, flags in Tian'anmen Square were flown at half-mast, as were those flying above the central leadership organs of the Party, the national legislature, the central government, national political advisory body, military bases, court houses and top procuratorate. Across the nation, air raid sirens blared. Cars, trains, and ships blew their horns. Public recreational activities were suspended for the day. Flags also flew at half-mast at Chinese embassies and consulates around the world.

In Wuhan, the city hit hardest by the epidemic on the Chinese mainland, mourning activities were also held to commemorate those who succumbed to the disease. 



by Chen Jian/China Pictorial

Imbalanced Criticism

Text by Xu Feibiao

Unfair and hostile reports on China and its motives for offering aid to other countries demonstrate that some Western media outlets and politicians still harbor resentment about China even during a crisis demanding concerted global effort.

As China's COVID-19 fight resulted in encouraging numbers after mid-March, the virus spread around the whole world, with the epicenter shifting to Europe and the United States. The virus knows no borders. To address the crisis threatening humanity, China has provided aid for other countries by sending medics and donating masks, testing reagents and protective suits, while maintaining its own epidemic prevention and control domestically.

China's aid has received high acclaim worldwide. But misunderstanding and rumors of the quality of medical supplies donated by China have also been spread in some countries.

On March 26, 2020, some Spanish media reports claimed that China's rapid test kits had only 30 percent accuracy. On March 28, the Health Ministry of the Netherlands declared that 1.3 million Chinese-made KN95 masks did not cling to faces tightly and failed to filter the virus. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued an Emergency Use Authorization which listed manufacturers of respirators designed and approved by six countries and regions. No Chinese products made the list.

Biased Reporting

Clearly, such news reports leave a negative impact on Chinese-made products as they hinder China's aid efforts. Most of the reports about the low quality of medical supplies from China feature biased and misleading information. The truth is complex.

First, some products were bought from unqualified Chinese enterprises. After reading Spanish media reports, the Chinese Embassy in Spain immediately investigated the incident. As it turned out, the problematic reagents were not donated by the Chinese government, but bought by the Spanish side from ineligible Chinese manufacturers.

The second factor is faulty operation. The problems reported by the Netherlands resulted from inappropriate usage. A joint investigation by China's Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Foreign Affairs showed that Dutch staff mistook common protective masks for surgical masks.

Third, various countries adopt different standards. Problems reported by the United States, Canada and Denmark resulted from varying standards among nations. The FDA later changed its policy to allow import of some protective products that comply with China's standards to make up for the shortage of medical



April 24, 2020: Workers in a mask plant in Tangshan City, northern China's Hebei Province, are busy fulfilling domestic and overseas orders to help prevent and control the pandemic.
by Yang Shiyao/Xinhua

supplies in the country.


Considering the rising demand for medical supplies worldwide and continuous shortage of related commodities in China, Chinese enterprises are overcoming various difficulties to accelerate manufacturing. Indeed, some defective products did reach target recipients. But solving such problems demands timely communication rather than a rush to criticism. As Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying noted, when China was immersed in its own war against COVID-19, some products donated by foreign countries were lacking in quality, but China turned to the goodwill of donors and still showed gratitude. Most Chinese products have high quality and are in great demand.

Tipped Scale

The fact that some Western media outlets rushed to criticize the quality of products donated by China is expected by Chinese people by now. But the quality problems with Chinese products was overblown and slanted by some media organizations, and some Western politicians even smeared China's aid activities as "political propaganda" and "mask diplomacy." Such biased reports shine light on the motives of accusers to stigmatize and politicize China's goodwill.

Several Western media organizations have deemed China's aid as part of some "grand conspiracy." A German media outlet declared that China is playing a role as a timely helper while conquering state after state of the European Union (EU). A British newspaper called China's assistance "predatory aid." The U.S. media took an even more aggressive stance by calling China's aid "Chinese-style political propaganda." Some politicians are known to habitually attack China such as Josep Borrell, the EU's top diplomat and foreign policy chief, who lashed out at China's aid as "politics of generosity."

The changing faces of some Western media outlets since the outbreak of the pandemic say a lot. When China was the epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak, their reports were full of satire, gloating and even racism. And when China's fight against the epidemic showed positive signs and the country began to help others, Western narrative-makers got to work on stigmatizing China and reviving the "China threat theory." Such unfair and hostile reports about China lead to misunderstanding among people with little knowledge of China and widen the disconnection between Chinese and Western peoples. The hostility against China by some Western media outlets and politicians are hardly softened even during a time demanding concerted global efforts.

The virus knows no borders. Only collaboration between countries will defeat the pandemic. To build a community with a shared future for humanity, all countries need to put aside prejudices and stand united to safeguard our common home. 

The author is a researcher at the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations.

雄安新区起步区 Start-up Area of Xiong'an New Area

Edited by Li Zhuoxi



March 27, 2020: The construction site of the Xiong'an station of the Beijing-Xiong'an intercity railway. Xinhua

Xiong'an New Area, about 100 kilometers southwest of downtown Beijing, spans the three Hebei counties of Xiongxian, Rongcheng and Anxin, situated at the center of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region. The establishment of Xiong'an New Area is expected to help phase out some non-capital functions of Beijing, explore a new model of optimized development in densely-populated areas, and restructure the urban layout of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region.

In January 2020, two plans for construction of a start-up area of Xiong'an New Area in Hebei Province were approved by the State Council of China, bringing development of the new economic zone near Beijing to a new stage.

The start-up area will cover 198 square kilometers in the city proper of Xiong'an New Area. Designed to host Beijing's functions outside its role as the national capital, it will become the new home for many of Beijing's colleges, research institutes, hospitals, business headquarters, and financial and public institutions.

人类卫生健康共同体 A Community of Common Health for Mankind


Edited by Li Zhuoxi



April 8, 2020: Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro (left) meets with Chinese medical experts who came to help his country combat the COVID-19 pandemic at the presidential palace in Caracas, Venezuela. Xinhua

Chinese President Xi Jinping is using head-of-state diplomacy to call for building a community of common health for mankind amid the mounting global public health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through meetings, telephone conversations and correspondence with foreign leaders, Xi has underlined the importance of building a community with a shared future for humanity against the backdrop of this global public health crisis. In times of crisis, China's head-of-state diplomacy has played a big role in promoting cooperation between China and other countries in a pragmatic and efficient manner and deepening the friendship between Chinese people and other peoples around the world.

During this global public health crisis, China's head-of-state diplomacy has continued sending the message urging the world to build a community with a shared future for humanity, work hand in hand to cope with risks and challenges, and make the planet a better home for mankind. It is also a consensus that countries around the world should continuously accelerate the process of helping and supporting each other. 



Better Together

Text by Zhao Yue

Only solidarity and concerted efforts will create the power human beings need to prevail over the outbreak and embrace a shared brighter future.



March 22, 2020: Medical workers use a cart to transfer a COVID-19 patient in Mulhouse, France. On March 16, French President Emmanuel Macron declared in a televised speech that France was just at the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, putting the country on a wartime footing. He asked people to stay at home as much as they can and to avoid contact with others. Xinhua

On a chilly early April night, Dr. Mangala Narasimhan left the office where she oversees intensive care at six major hospitals in New York, America's first battle ground in the war against COVID-19.

Laura Lupi, a 24-year-old Italian nurse, cares for 34 patients during seven or ten-hour shifts at a COVID-19 hospital in Teramo, in the Abruzzo region of Italy. She has pleaded with locals to stay at home while pledging to continue working alongside her colleagues.



March 31, 2020: A worker cleans the Milan Cathedral, which has been closed following the explosion of COVID-19 cases in Italy. The country imposed a nationwide lockdown that went into effect on March 10. With the escalation of the pandemic, the Italian government has ordered the closure of all non-essential production activities since March 23. Xinhua



- ❶ April 11, 2020: Locals line up to receive food after the area was locked down by the government to curb the spread of the coronavirus in Ahmadi Governorate, Kuwait. Xinhua
- ❷ March 31, 2020: Residents are waiting to get into a supermarket near Durban, South Africa. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, many African countries have strengthened their prevention and control efforts. Xinhua
- ❸ April 7, 2020: An outdoor examination held by the Busan marine police force requires candidates to sit a certain distance away from each other to ensure social distancing in Busan, South Korea. Xinhua

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COVID-19 will certainly not be the last enemy in the era of globalization — human beings will continually be forced to confront a variety of traditional and non-traditional challenges. ”



April 7, 2020: Due to the coronavirus outbreak, much fewer people are spotted in Ginza, one of the oldest and busiest entertainment and shopping districts in Tokyo, Japan. Xinhua

The birth of the daughter of COVID-19 patient Li Qing brought tears of joy to all people in the operating room in Wuhan Union Hospital West Campus on March 7 this year. The hospital was once deep inside the epicenter of the coronavirus crisis in China. Li stayed in the hospital to continue treatment before finally taking her baby home at the end of March.

Although social distancing measures have created considerable inconvenience, South Koreans are considering extending the measures. According to a survey conducted by the Seoul Metropolitan Government from April 10 to 12 among 1,000 local residents, more than 60 percent supported an extension of social distancing measures after the nationwide policies expired as scheduled on April 19.

The virus respects no borders or races. Right now, people all over the world are at war with the same enemy. This is a time for international collaboration, openness, and transparency.

Eliminating the highly contagious



① Photos of the cherry blossoms at Ueno Park in Tokyo, Japan, on March 22 (above) and March 28 (below), 2020. As cherry blossom season kicked off in many places of Japan in March, local authorities urged people to avoid unnecessary outings on weekends to slow the spread of the coronavirus. Xinhua

② Photos of the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. on July 3, 2018 (above) and April 1, 2020 (below). by Liu Jie/Xinhua

③ Photos of a main street in the old city of Dubrovnik, one of the most popular tourist destinations in Croatia, on October 21, 2018 (above) and March 19, 2020 (below). Xinhua

④ Photos of the Hagia Sophia, a great architectural beauty and an important monument both for the Byzantine Empire and the Ottoman Empire, in Istanbul, Turkey, on March 11 (above) and March 30 (below), 2020. by Xu Suhui/Xinhua



March 28, 2020: French tenor Stephane Senechal sings from his window for the inhabitants of his street in Paris, France. Since France went into lockdown at noon on March 17, many musicians have begun to sing for their neighbors from windows and balconies. Xinhua



March 24, 2020: A national circus troupe performs for people practicing social distancing in Caracas, capital of Venezuela. A social quarantine began on March 16 in Capital District, where Caracas is located, and six other Venezuelan states to contain the spread of the coronavirus. Xinhua



March 29, 2020: A pandemic prevention staffer disinfects the stairs to prevent the spread of the coronavirus at a subway station in Brasilia, Brazil. Xinhua

● **SPECIAL REPORT**



April 23, 2020: Medical workers applaud outside Royal Berkshire Hospital during the weekly “Clap for Our Carers” campaign in the town of Reading, Britain. The British people are being called on to take part in applause at eight o’clock every Thursday night for frontline healthcare workers battling the novel coronavirus pandemic as part of the “Clap for Our Carers” campaign. Xinhua



April 8, 2020: A medical worker in a protective suit is about to enter a building under quarantine due to the COVID-19 outbreak in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Xinhua



March 27, 2020: Healthcare workers tending COVID-19 patients put on personal protective equipment before starting to work in a hospital in Brussels, Belgium. Belgium began to take lockdown measures to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus on March 18. Xinhua



April 8, 2020: A military medical worker asks her patient's condition in a provisional hospital, New York. New York State is one of the hardest-hit areas by the pandemic in the United States. Xinhua



The virus respects no borders or races. Right now, people all over the world are at war with the same enemy. This is a time for international collaboration, openness, and transparency. ”

virus with a relatively high mortality rate and its severe impact on the global economy requires all countries to join hands to reduce uncertainty and risk of economic recession. New technologies facilitating online education, remote work, virtual meetings and smart medical consultation that have exploded during the social distancing period present new opportunities for economic globalization, as predicted by many experts.

The world will only improve through higher-level global cooperation while de-globalization will only force every economy to adopt “social distancing.” Blame-shifting and stigmatization will not help anyone solve the crisis faced by the

whole of mankind, but will only divide the international community and jeopardize joint efforts against the pandemic.

COVID-19 will certainly not be the last enemy in the era of globalization — human beings will continually be forced to confront a variety of traditional and non-traditional challenges. This global public health emergency has intensely highlighted the urgency of building a community with a shared future for humanity. Only solidarity and concerted efforts will create the power human beings need to prevail over the outbreak and embrace a shared brighter future. ”

A Real Test of Humanitarianism

Text by Bao Gangsheng

As developing countries get sucked into the whirlpool of the epidemic storm, developed economies and major powers need to extend helping hands quickly while controlling their own epidemic problems.

The novel coronavirus pneumonia is not only highly infectious, but also has a high death rate due to a long incubation period and tricky symptoms. Before an effective vaccine and treatment for symptoms can be developed, the world will continue to face epidemic problems and challenges during a long-term battle with the virus.

China's Approach

When the outbreak started gaining steam, China sounded the alarm about the novel coronavirus on January 20, 2020, when the whole country entered a state of emergency.

In general, China's anti-epidemic approach has been a series of government-led lockdown and quarantine measures based on four pillars.

First, at the peak of the epidemic, the Chinese government took resolute measures to lock down the worst-hit city, Wuhan, and suspend the operation of schools and factories. Such isolation measures effectively cut off the spread of the virus.

Second, the national medical and health system was widely mobilized to successfully treat COVID-19 patients including providing adequate medical treatment for patients with severe conditions and providing



April 7, 2020: A woman wearing a mask walks on a street in Moscow, Russia. Before the effective drugs and vaccine for COVID-19 are developed, the world may have to still face the threat of the virus. Xinhua



April 27, 2020: A father and his son take a break near the ancient Roman ruins of the Colosseum in Rome, Italy. Since the middle of March, most European countries have started to take active actions against COVID-19. by Cheng Tingting/Xinhua



April 24, 2020: A man wearing a mask walks through a street market in Tehran, Iran. The pandemic has also spread rapidly in many developing countries. Xinhua

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Before an effective vaccine and treatment for symptoms can be developed, the world will continue to face epidemic problems and challenges during a long-term battle with the virus. ”

quarantine, medical observation, and auxiliary help for patients with light and common symptoms.

Third, close contacts, suspected cases, and travelers from epidemic hotspots have been quarantined and observed in various ways including in hospitals, at home, in quarantine centers, and in other isolated areas.

Fourth, the central government optimally coordinated and allocated medical resources including the rapid construction of specialized hospitals and temporary treatment centers while organizing other provinces and municipalities in China to provide support to designated places in Hubei Province.

At the height of the epidemic,

this approach brought remarkable results. After two months of effort at huge cost, China had essentially controlled the spread of the epidemic.

However, the global outbreak of COVID-19 hardly leaves China as a haven. How to resume the normal operation of the economy and society as much as possible while effectively preventing and controlling imported cases and cooperating with the world to fight the pandemic has become an urgent task for China today.

Developed Countries' Changing Responses

Developed countries in Europe

and the United States demonstrated poor judgment, sluggishness, and lack of leadership in their respective responses to the COVID-19 outbreak at the early stage. As it worsened, they began to adopt greater crisis awareness and engage in extensive internal coordination to implement countermeasures in mid-March.

Since the middle of March, governments of those countries have taken more effective actions. Their approach was gradually improved and adjusted with the development of the epidemic situation.

Developed countries began distributing test kits en masse and innovating methods of convenient testing to identify the infected while actively treating severe cases and requiring isolation for patients with light symptoms.

With the surge of infections, developed countries including the United States have adopted

tough measures of closing schools, shopping malls, sports, and entertainment in key epidemic areas, urging people to stay at home and avoid going out if unnecessary.

Meanwhile, public transportation, supermarkets, logistics systems and other key public systems and facilities are operating as usual as essential businesses to keep society running.

During this process, technological and organizational innovations to fight the pandemic in developed countries have been impressive. For example, the United States and Britain greatly improved the testing capability of COVID-19 nucleic acid detection kits in just a few days, achieving shorter detection time and more accurate results.

The White House launched cooperation with major chain supermarkets to bring fast nucleic acid detection channels to parking lots across the country. Letting people

stay in their cars effectively reduces the risk of stampedes and mass infections that could happen from crowds flocking to hospitals.

Furthermore, major biological research institutions, large pharmaceutical companies and university virus labs in Europe and the United States are operating at full capacity. Once a vaccine or effective drugs to treat COVID-19 symptoms are successfully developed, the epidemic problem will be solved.

Impending Storm in the Developing World

From March to early April, COVID-19 was spreading rapidly in many major developing countries.

It is estimated that Latin America, Africa, and Asia (except for East Asia) will probably become new epicenters of the pandemic by April or May.

Considering the limited capacity of governments, social governance



April 14, 2020: A poster showing gratitude to people who have contributed hard work during the outbreak in Paris, France. Xinhua

and medical systems in developing countries as well as the economic slump, crashing oil prices and increasing social chaos caused by the pandemic, developing countries could become squeezed with mounting pressure in coming weeks.

Facing a once-in-a-century global crisis, the World Health Organization, the United Nations, the World Bank and other international institutions need to invest more funds, materials, and human resources to help the developing world fight the pandemic.

Providing a set of anti-epidemic principles, guidelines, operational plans, and specific methods for developing countries is a crucial step because many local institutions lack knowledge on how to prepare for the pandemic. At the same time, practical actions such as dispatching doctors and medical supplies directly to epidemic-stricken developing countries with scarce medical resources will be just as important.

After developed countries and China solve their own problems, they should set an agenda to aid the developing world and start work as soon as possible. This requires both humanitarian spirit and effective leadership and resource coordination capabilities.

Large global medical enterprises should also prepare for the impending epidemic situation in the developing world.

Various large foundations, charities and non-profit organizations should launch aid projects to help countries that may face the epidemic storm by providing knowledge, technology, materials, human resources and funds.

Theoretically, it should be possible to eliminate the virus completely through strict social distancing, but the likelihood of containing it absolutely is dropping as it creeps into every corner of the globe.

A more pragmatic strategy to



March 28, 2020: A researcher at the University of Pittsburgh conducts a COVID-19 vaccine study. In order to defeat the novel coronavirus, global efforts have been jointly made to accelerate the development of the vaccine. Xinhua




February 11, 2020: Vaccines for the novel coronavirus could be available in 18 months, said WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus at a news conference in Geneva, Switzerland. by Chen Junxia/Xinhua

fight COVID-19 requires more science-based measures and effective actions alongside gradually resuming as much normal societal operation as possible to reduce the economic impact of the pandemic.

Before developing countries get sucked into the whirlpool of the epidemic storm, developed

economies and major powers should make big moves to help them brace for potential impact.

The time for real humanitarianism is now. 

The author is an associate professor at the School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Fudan University.

Global Crisis Demands Global Response

Text by Zhang Guihong

Now is the critical time to seize a second “window of opportunity” to prevent further spread of the pandemic to the most vulnerable countries and people in the developing world.

The COVID-19 pandemic has spread to more than 200 countries within three months. Confirmed infections and deaths continue to

increase with each passing day.

The disease has not only swept through almost every country in the world but also the United Nations (UN) and other international

organizations. On March 12, 2020, a delegate from the Permanent Mission of the Philippines to the UN tested positive for the novel coronavirus, the first confirmed case at the



April 22, 2020: Members of the Chinese anti-epidemic medical expert team attend a video conference on China's experiences in applying traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) to treat COVID-19 patients with Malaysia's TCM associations, practitioners and companies in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. by Zhu Wei/Xinhua

UN headquarters in New York. At the time of writing, a total of more than 200 cases of COVID-19 including three deaths had been reported within the UN system. UN Secretary-General António Guterres issued a work-at-home order for all non-essential personnel from March 16 to April 12. Telecommuting arrangements at the UN headquarters, the first in its 75-year history, have been extended through May 31.

As proclaimed by Guterres, the pandemic is the most challenging crisis the world has faced since the end of World War II. A global crisis demands a global response. As the most inclusive, representative, and authoritative international organization, the UN has stepped into a leadership role in organizing global cooperation to fight the pandemic. Since the COVID-19 outbreak, the UN has monitored the development of the pandemic, and it began taking swift global action when the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a global pandemic on March 12. All international organizations have been mobilized to facilitate joint efforts to address the unprecedented challenge. The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution calling for intensified international cooperation to contain, mitigate and defeat the pandemic. UN Secretary-General Guterres launched a series of initiatives including a global humanitarian response plan to help the most vulnerable countries and groups, an appeal for a global ceasefire, an appeal to prevent and redress violence against women during the epidemic, and a new communications response initiative to distribute facts and science on the internet.

With a little hindsight, at least two lessons can be learned already. The first involves the consequences of failing to take preventative measures after early warnings. The



With a little hindsight, at least two lessons can be learned already. The first involves the consequences of failing to take preventative measures after early warnings. The other lesson relates to the lack of unity and cooperation. ”

epidemic could have been contained entirely before it spread in Europe and America. Unfortunately, many countries missed the “window of opportunity.” The other lesson relates to the lack of unity and cooperation. Since the WHO declared the epidemic a “Public Health Emergency of International Concern” at the end of January, most countries moved unilaterally, if at all. Senior officials in some countries insist on blaming others to pander to domestic politics. This is why we lack real global solutions.

Now is the critical time to seize the second “window of opportunity” to prevent the spread of the pandemic to the most vulnerable countries and people in the developing world. The UN and the WHO need to take bold and meaningful global action to fight the pandemic. Five key words are guiding UN and WHO global action on the



April 12, 2020: Members of the Chinese medical team move CT equipment in Baghdad, Iraq. Imaging examination is a crucial means for screening and diagnosis of COVID-19 cases, a valuable lesson drawn in China's epidemic prevention and control practice. The Chinese medical team sent by the Red Cross Society of China to Iraq to help fight COVID-19 seeks to replicate this method by setting up CT equipment at the novel coronavirus rehabilitation center in eastern Baghdad. by Zhang Miao/Xinhua



April 18, 2020: A worker unloads medical supplies brought by an anti-epidemic medical team from China to Malaysia at Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Sepang, Malaysia. by Zhu Wei/Xinhua

pandemic in the coming days:

Humanitarianism. Humanitarianism is the key to global consensus. The virus knows no border, ideology or race. It threatens the health and safety of all people.

The pandemic has caused and will continue to cause illness, death, poverty, homelessness, unemployment and more social problems, making it a serious human crisis rather than an issue of national

security. Humanitarian aid can help the vulnerable overcome difficulties and minimize troubles. Humanitarian cooperation, regardless of national interests, ideology or political system, is necessary



and more urgent than ever before. A humanitarian spirit respecting life should be both the bottom line and the highest standard of global consensus. The UN needs to highlight the importance of

humanitarianism in global cooperation on the pandemic.

Unity. The virus is the common enemy for every country and every person. If any country has confirmed cases, the pandemic is not over. Helping others benefits the giver. Unity is a prerequisite for any substantial international cooperation. The weak international cooperation on epidemic response can be attributed to lack of mutual trust among member states, particularly major countries. For this reason, UN Secretary-General António Guterres has repeatedly called for unity, and the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution titled “Global solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)” in early April. The UN has the unique responsibility of uniting the international community to produce joint efforts to fight the virus.

Science. We will use science, not politics, to defeat the virus. Science and technology are the most powerful weapons to overcome a health crisis. As the specialized agency in charge of public health affairs within the UN system, the role of WHO in the fight against COVID-19 is unique, central, and irreplaceable. Accelerating scientific research is the only way to pinpoint the origin of the virus and develop vaccines against COVID-19. Trust in science is the vaccine for another epidemic—a dangerous wave of misinformation ranging from conspiracy theories to brazen falsehoods, harmful medical advice, and bigotry. Battling the virus requires not only natural science but also humanities and social science. The WHO is responsible for disseminating facts and science to counter the growing scourge of misinformation.

Non-traditional. Like climate change and terrorism, COVID-19 is a typical non-traditional

threat to international society. In contrast with traditional security issues, non-traditional challenges demand innovative responses. In this case, every state and non-state actor is part of the global solution to the pandemic. Staying home and practicing social distancing are two of the easiest and most effective ways of minimizing the spread of the virus. Such strategies require cooperation and compliance from every citizen. Coordination and cooperation among international organizations need to be strengthened to mobilize global and regional resources to tackle the non-traditional security threat. The UN along with the WHO can play a lead role in this regard.

Symbiosis. The pandemic is predicted to end someday. However, the virus may not disappear and could persist forever in asymptomatic humans. The virus is a member of the natural world. The concept of “herd immunity” proposed by top scientists in the UK and Germany reflects part of symbiosis. The core idea is “live and let live.” The concept of symbiosis is closely related to the UN75 initiative—the largest and most inclusive conversation on the world’s future, launched on January 1, 2020. It also has unique value for global health governance led by the WHO in the post COVID-19 era. The concept of symbiosis is consistent with the idea of “a community with a shared future for humanity.” It may become more easily accepted worldwide because it says so much about the human-nature relationship in just one word. 

The author is a professor and director of the Center for UN and International Organizations Studies at Fudan University.

Combating COVID-19 Together

Text by Wang Haifeng

To overcome the pandemic, countries around the world need to find the courage to unite together and strengthen cooperation rather than blaming and pointing fingers at each other. This is the only way to seize the earliest opportunity to defeat the disease.

By March 2020, China's fight against COVID-19 had achieved early success. Economic activities and daily life have gradually returned to normal. However, the virus is

now making its way throughout the world, with numerous infections reported in many countries and regions including Italy, Iran, Europe and North America. The pandemic triggered panic in the

global market. Oil prices and stock prices plummeted, which forced major economies to inject liquidity into the market and introduce fiscal policies to spur economic growth. Against this backdrop,



April 1, 2020: Medical workers are transferring a COVID-19 patient in critical condition in the Gare de Paris-Austerlitz, Paris, France. Xinhua

China's economic development is facing unprecedented challenges and uncertainty. History has shown that China's strongest weapons to address crises and overcome difficulties are expanding the reform and opening up, strengthening international cooperation, actively participating in globalization, and building a community with a shared future for humanity. These have also been China's most effective weapons in the war with the coronavirus.

Globalization has helped the international community strengthen coordination and pool resources to address public health emergencies of international concern. Since the turn of the 21st century, humans have suffered outbreaks of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), avian influenza A (H5N1), Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), swine flu (H1N1) and Ebola. Global multi-polarity, trade liberalization, investment facilitation, financial internationalization, social informatization and cultural diversity have enabled the production, supply, consumption, and services of various economies to be closely interconnected, with all countries sharing the dividends of globalization. At the same time, different economies need to face global risks together in realms such as politics, economics, finance, society, environment and public health.

Globalization requires international organizations such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, and the World Health Organization (WHO) to enhance overall coordination. All countries, especially major economies, should strengthen dialogue, coordination and cooperation based on equality and mutual benefits. Globalization, informatization, digitization, and artificial intelligence have significantly

enhanced human ability to cope with public health emergencies of international concern.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which broke out in early 2020, has caused more destructive impact on the world than any other public health

emergency since World War II. The whole world is now at war with a hidden enemy. Facing a common foe, all countries need to become allies to address the great challenge. Wuhan successfully contained the spread of the virus in the first



February 24, 2020: UN Secretary-General António Guterres (left) gives an update on the situation regarding the COVID-19 pandemic at the World Health Organization (WHO) headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. In the global fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, the WHO has been playing a key role in leadership and coordination. Xinhua



April 12, 2020: Lao Minister of Health Bounkong Sihavong (second left) sees off the Chinese medical team to assist Laos in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic at the Wattay International Airport in Vientiane, Laos. Arriving at Laos on March 29, the Chinese medical team consisted of experts in various fields such as infection prevention and control, intensive care, epidemiology, and laboratory testing. They also brought medical supplies. Xinhua



① A temporary treatment center for COVID-19 patients under construction on the outskirts of Moscow, Russia. To treat the infected in dedicated facilities, Russia set up its first temporary treatment center for COVID-19 patients in the suburbs of Moscow, using China's experience as a reference point. by Sergey Mikheev/*Russian Gazette*

③ March 22, 2020: Medical workers are preparing beds for an emergency field hospital for COVID-19 patients being constructed in the Madrid Exhibition Center, Spain. Xinhua

② March 23, 2020: Construction workers are converting the Pacaembu Stadium into a temporary treatment center for COVID-19 patients in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The state of Sao Paulo was one of the hardest-hit areas during the country's COVID-19 outbreak. Xinhua

④ March 26, 2020: A 2,000-bed temporary hospital for COVID-19 patients is set up at the International Exhibition Center in northern Tehran, Iran. It is used for mild COVID-19 cases and patients who are recovering from the illness. Xinhua

quarter of 2020 thanks to strong overall coordination by China's central government and solid support from all local governments and people as well as considerable help from the international community, international organizations and overseas Chinese people.

Now, several economies including Italy, the United States, Spain and Germany need both strong

internal measures and international coordination and support. While strengthening domestic epidemic control efforts, China has enhanced its cooperation with the WHO. It has provided robust assistance for other hard-hit countries by dispatching expert teams, providing technological support and shipping testing kits and protective gear. Such moves testify to China's open mind

towards promoting the building of a community with a shared future for humanity.

The coronavirus pandemic has forced every major economy to take measures to restrain flow of people to the greatest extent. Many countries have issued travel warnings, strengthened border controls and asked residents to stay home. Some countries have



April 4, 2020: Volunteer nurses arrive at Bologna Guglielmo Marconi Airport, Italy. They are destined for hospitals and health facilities in Emilia-Romagna to help curb the spread of the novel coronavirus. Xinhua


“

Globalization has helped the international community strengthen coordination and pool resources to address public health emergencies of international concern. ”

shut down international flights. Private consumption and the service sector, two major drivers of the global economy, have been hit hard. Countless enterprises are facing existential crises, and jobless claims have surged. While revenues of many governments have shrunk, they are increasing financial assistance and support for economic development and continue injecting

liquidity into the market. The debt ratios of both the public and private sectors will continue to rise. A global economic recession appears inevitable after the pandemic spread around the world.

More than a decade has passed since the 2008 global financial crisis. The disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic may force the global economy to endure a

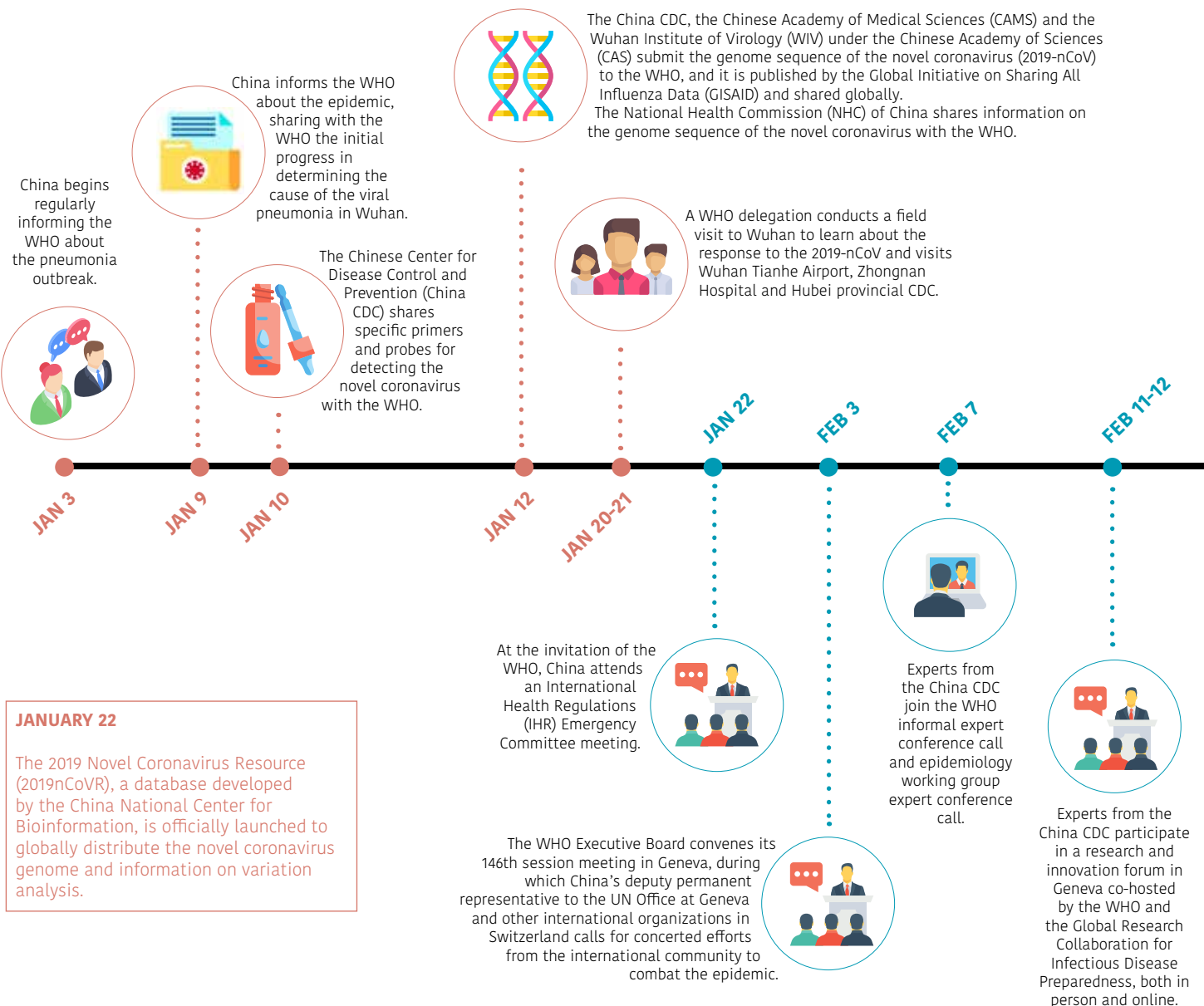
hard landing. The world economy in 2020 may be even more precarious than in 2008 and 2009 and face more uncertainties. International cooperation played a central role in lifting the world out of the once-in-a-century financial crisis in 2008. In the face of the pandemic, countries around the world need to find the courage to unite together and strengthen cooperation rather than blaming and pointing fingers at each other. This is the only way to seize the earliest opportunity to defeat the disease. 

■ The author is director of the Trade and Investment Research Office of the Foreign Economic Research Institute under China's National Development and Reform Commission.

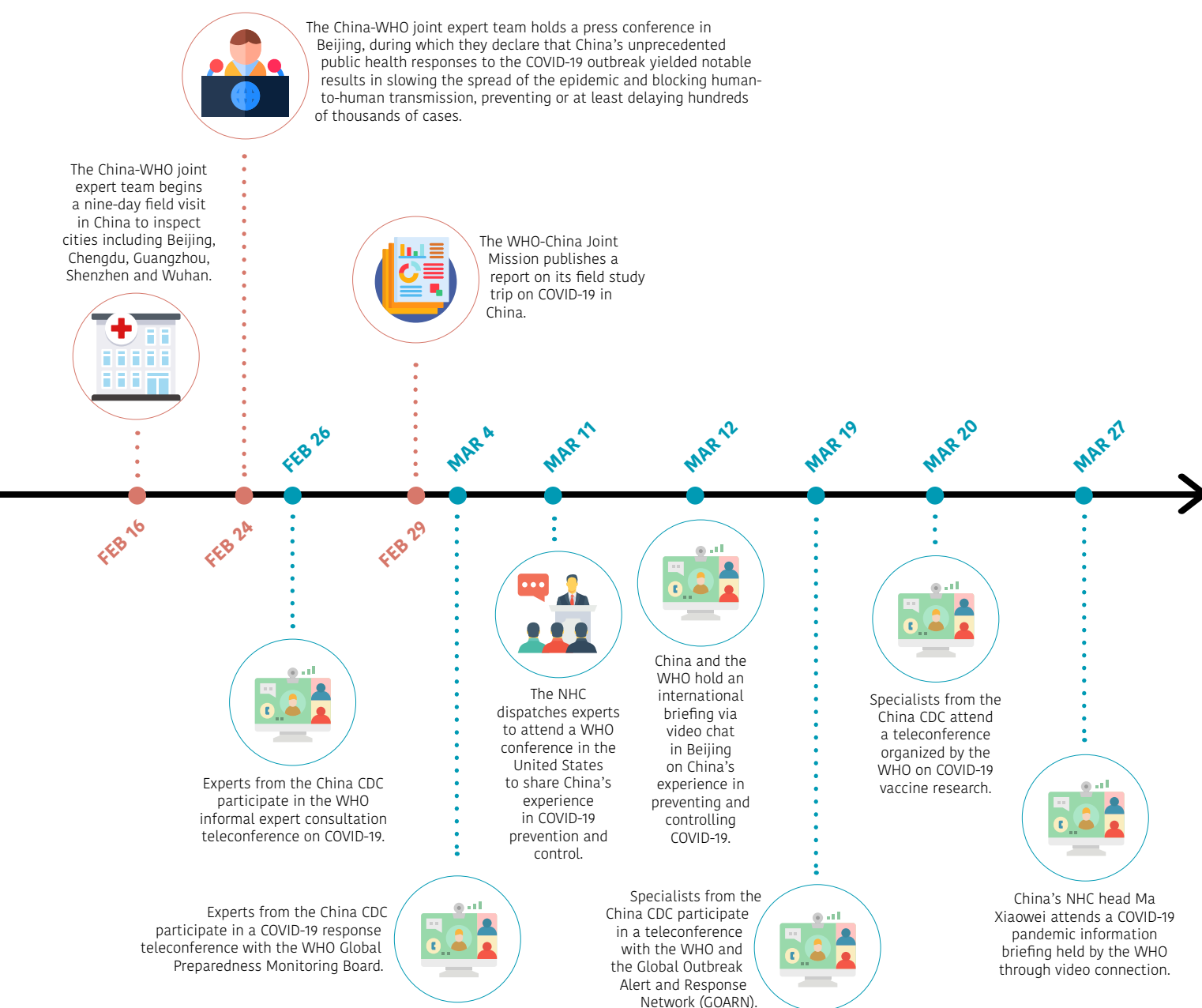
International Cooperation Speeds Up

Edited by Hu Zhoumeng Designed by Cecile Zehnacker

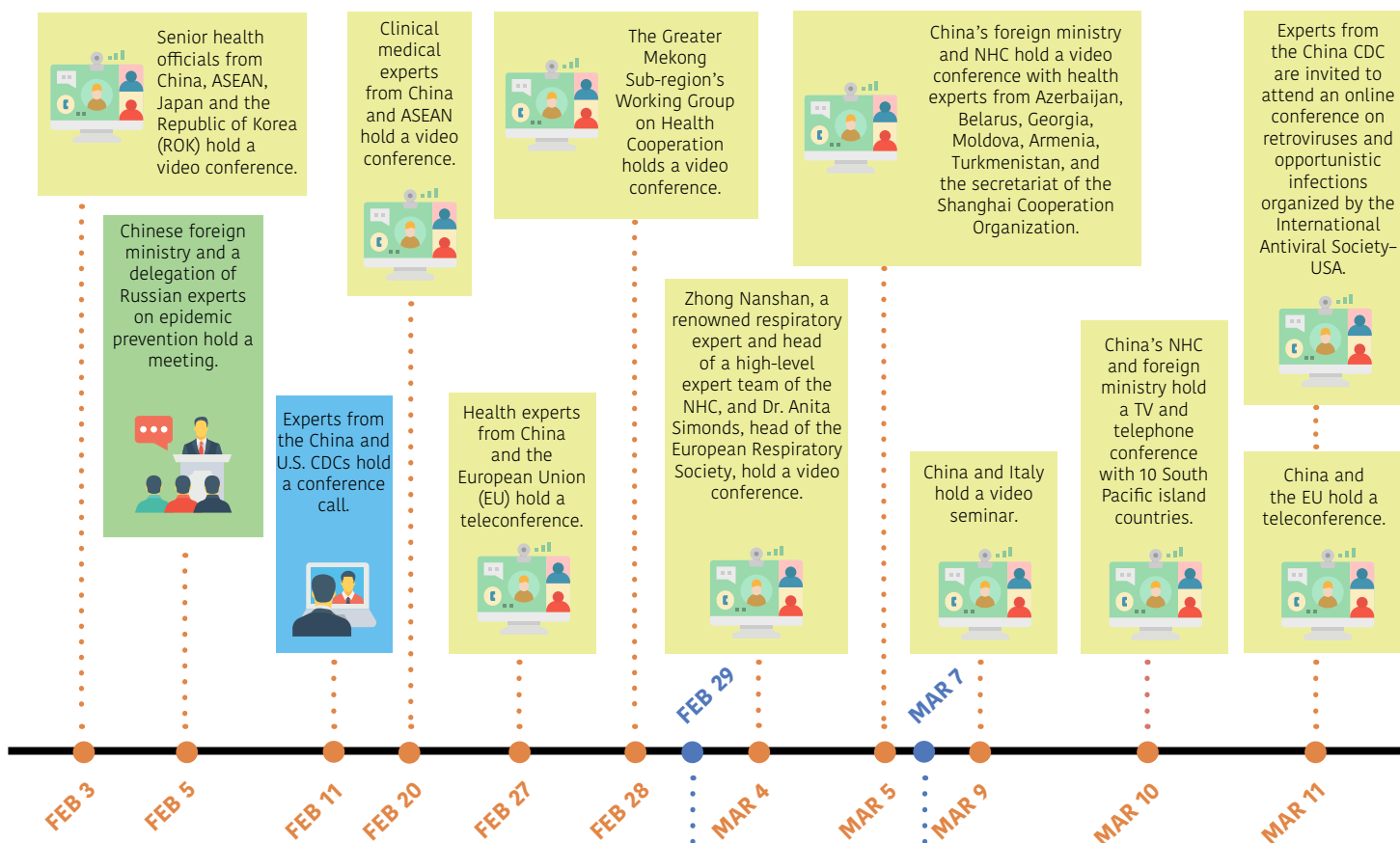
China Closely Cooperates with the WHO



China has been releasing information on COVID-19 quickly since the onset of the pandemic, sharing with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the international community its experience in epidemic response and medical treatment, and strengthening cooperation on scientific research. It has assisted all parties to the best of its abilities.



China Shares Experience and Technologies with Governments and Medical Experts around the World



March 7: China announces a donation of US\$20 million to the WHO to support international cooperation in the fight against COVID-19.

As of March 31, the Chinese government had provided material assistance including medical masks, N95 masks, protective suits, nucleic acid testing kits and ventilators to 120 countries and four international organizations.

Local governments of China had donated medical supplies to more than 50 countries.

Chinese enterprises had donated medical supplies to more than 100 countries and international organizations.

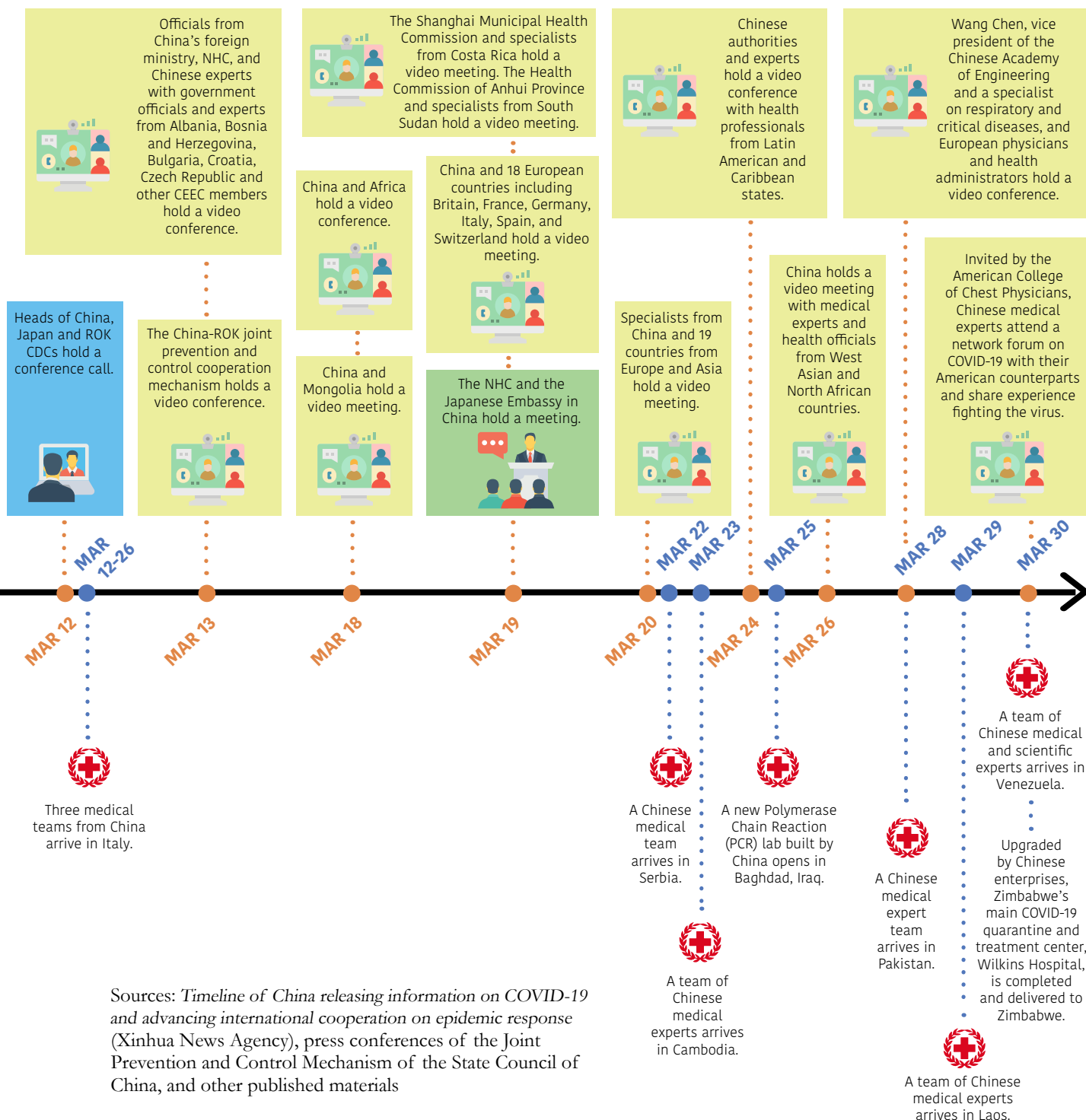


A volunteer team of medical experts from the Red Cross Society of China arrives in Iran.



A Chinese medical team dispatched by the Red Cross Society of China arrives in Iraq.

China's Medical Experts and Material Assistance Reach Countries around the World





March 24, 2020: A Russian An-124 military transport aircraft is parked at Xiaoshan Airport of China's Hangzhou City, ready to carry medical supplies donated by the Alibaba Foundation and the Jack Ma Foundation back to Russia. On the packages of the donated materials read the words "All things are momentary, all things will pass," a famous line by the Russian poet Pushkin. courtesy of the Alibaba Foundation

Alibaba Shows More Than Heart

Text by Li Zhuoxi

"We need not only love in our hearts to work on public welfare, but also the 'ability to love' to work practically and efficiently."



million yuan (US\$14.1 million) for scientific research projects, donating over 100 million pieces of emergency epidemic prevention supplies to more than 150 countries and regions across five continents, and establishing a global COVID-19 information sharing platform covering 233 countries and regions. On April 21, the Jack Ma Foundation and the Alibaba Foundation donated 100 million medical masks, a million N95 masks, and a million nucleic acid reagent test kits to the World Health Organization (WHO) to support its anti-pandemic efforts worldwide.

The director-general of the WHO, prime ministers of Canada, Ethiopia and Somalia, presidents

is our only chance to win,” declared Jack Ma, the founder of the Jack Ma Foundation.

Quick Response

In late February, the battlefield of the world's pandemic fight changed dramatically. After the outbreak of the international pandemic, the first shipment of aid materials from the Alibaba Foundation and the Jack Ma Foundation arrived in Japan on March 2. Subsequently, the organizations quickly sent emergency pandemic prevention materials to countries with severe situations in Asia, Europe and the Americas as well as donating medical supplies to all 54 countries in Africa.

Many countries and regions now have urgent needs for emergency supplies. Prioritizing and responding to the needs of various countries is the first checkpoint for the team. “Alibaba has many channels for receiving calls for materials,” explained Wang Ruihe, secretary-general of the Alibaba Foundation. “We get information from enterprises and government departments in other countries and receive many personal help requests. Some embassies and international organizations even reach us by calling the Taobao customer service hotline.”

Countries around the world are now experiencing the precise difficulties China endured over the past two months. Because Alibaba was so deeply involved in China's domestic fight against the epidemic, it can predict the needs of various countries and adjust and increase the supply of emergency supplies according to the development and changes of the world pandemic situation. For example, as the virus spread, ventilators became a scarce and vital medical device, so Alibaba urgently dispatched shipments of



At this moment,
sharing resources,
experience and
lessons with everyone
regardless of identity
is our only chance
to win. ”

On April 21, 2020, *Fortune* magazine published a list of the world's 25 greatest anti-epidemic leaders of the year. Jack Ma, the founder of Alibaba Group, ranked third.

As COVID-19 continues to spread globally, the Alibaba Foundation and the Jack Ma Foundation have launched a series of initiatives to confront the pandemic including allocating 100

of Rwanda, Kenya and Madagascar, and leaders of international organizations all expressed gratitude to Jack Ma and the foundations for their support of global anti-epidemic efforts. In times of crisis, Chinese companies and charitable organizations have become important forces in the global fight against the pandemic. “At this moment, sharing resources, experience and lessons with everyone regardless of identity

ventilators to Europe and Africa. For some underdeveloped countries in Latin America and Africa with limited capacities to respond to the pandemic, Alibaba prepared appropriate emergency supplies in advance before an outbreak even erupted. Some African countries had no COVID-19 detection abilities whatsoever. The foundation donated virus detection equipment and cold chain transportation devices to comprehensively solve practical problems.

“Thank you for the generous donation of reagents and protective materials!” declared Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa on social media. “This is a true manifestation of friendship, and unity is the only way to win!” New York Governor Andrew Cuomo thanked Alibaba specifically in an interview.

The international mobilization and distribution of anti-epidemic materials has also been a major challenge. Reports show that the pandemic has caused more than 50 airlines worldwide to suspend flights, with tens of thousands of flights cancelled. The luggage cabins of passenger aircraft carry nearly 50 percent of international cargo. Every suspended passenger flight eliminates corresponding cargo capacity. In such circumstances, Alibaba’s long-running Cainiao international logistics network has become a “lifeline” to ensure distribution of global emergency supplies.

“We use multiple logistics trunk lines developed by the e-WTP electronic world trade platform to deliver materials to hub warehouses around the world and then achieve secondary distribution through the Cainiao logistics network,” explained Wang. “For example, emergency materials bound for Europe will be shipped to the Liege warehouse in Belgium. More than 100 trucks are on standby in Europe

to transport materials from the Liege warehouse to places determined by the logistics big data system. Many European countries have closed their borders, making it extremely difficult to move throughout the continent. Thanks to our early establishment of a complete logistics network, we can ensure that even during the pandemic, materials will reach the front lines quickly. The more quickly we deliver, the more lives we will save.”

Building on Past Work

Alongside donating emergency medical materials, the Alibaba Foundation and the Jack Ma Foundation jointly launched the Global MediXchange for Combating COVID-19 (GMCC).

The GMCC covers 233 countries and regions through four centers: The Resources Sharing Center, International Medical Expert Communication Center, COVID-19 Overseas Chinese Consultation Center, and Fighting COVID-19 Technology Center. The centers

collaborate with China’s front-line hospitals and medical staff to share Chinese anti-epidemic experience and provide available technical support through internet technology. With help from the First Affiliated Hospital of the College of Medicine of Zhejiang University, GMCC compiled a *Handbook of COVID-19 Prevention and Treatment*. The handbook outlining China’s epidemic control experience was translated into 21 languages, so that medical personnel in other countries would not need to start from scratch. Downloads for the handbook have reached 600,000, most from overseas.

Soon after the handbook was released, the platform received consulting requests from more than 440 hospitals around the world. To help overseas medical professionals better exchange experience with Chinese doctors on the front lines of the fight against COVID-19, Alibaba quickly put online an International Medical Expert Communication Center. It supports real-time



March 26, 2020: A handover ceremony is held in Thailand’s Ministry of Health after the first shipment of 17 tons of medical materials donated by the Alibaba Foundation and the Jack Ma Foundation arrived in Thailand. Xinhua



March 18, 2020: The plane carrying the first batch of medical supplies donated by the Alibaba Foundation to France, Slovenia and Belgium arrives at Liege Airport in Belgium, receiving a salute involving two firefighting rigs spraying arcs of water over it. The ceremony is a sign of respect, honor and gratitude. courtesy of the Alibaba Foundation


translation in 11 languages including English, Japanese and Spanish and provides free audio and video teleconferencing, live broadcasting and other functions to share information in complex scenarios. With the help of the online communication center, hospitals in various countries can conduct teleconferencing and engage in consultation with their Chinese counterparts. About 3,000 infectious disease doctors from nearly 120 countries and regions have already joined the world's largest online anti-epidemic public welfare campaign launched by China.

More Than Meets the Eye

Alongside the two foundations, multiple departments of the Alibaba

conglomerate have participated in the global anti-epidemic campaign. For example, international teams like Cainiao Network, Alibaba.com and Lazada became deeply involved as were divisions related to financial, legal and governmental affairs, AliHealth and Aliyun.

"Only about 40 people work in the Alibaba Foundation and the Jack Ma Foundation, and their average age is under 30," revealed Wang Ruihe. "Since this year's Spring Festival, no one has had a day off or even gone to bed before midnight. No one in the world was prepared for the outbreak, which has made the process of transnational donation even more complex than we imagined. We are doing far more than people have ever seen."

"I often encourage the team by mentioning that when this is all over, everyone can be capable of starting an import-export company," added Wang. "From procurement, warehousing, customs clearance and commodity inspection to international logistics and transportation, we know how to do them by heart now. Jack Ma once said that we need not only love in our hearts to work on public welfare, but also the 'ability to love' to work practically and efficiently. After the pandemic, we plan to compile a set of operation handbooks to deal with major disasters so that in emergencies, a system of communication, operation and implementation can be organized quickly, enabling Alibaba Group to play a greater role." 

Wuhan Is Back

Text by Wu Yankun

On April 8, 2020, Wuhan ended a 76-day lockdown with lifting of outbound travel restrictions enforced since January 23. After enduring such a long wait, the people of Wuhan have much to say about their deep love of the city, their excitement about the city's recovery, and their sincere gratitude to all who have lent a helping hand to the city.



April 8, 2020: A bird's-eye view of the Wuhan Railway Station. Wuhan, the city hardest hit by the novel coronavirus outbreak in China, lifted outbound travel restrictions, dismantled traffic control checkpoints, and resumed operation of railways, airports, waterways, highways and buses in an orderly way that day.
by Xu Xun/China Pictorial



March 17, 2020: A member of a medical team waves goodbye to locals before leaving Wuhan, Hubei Province. As the outbreak in the hard-hit city has been subdued, medical teams from other parts of China have started leaving Wuhan. Thanks to the tireless efforts of medical workers in Wuhan and those from across the country, the number of hospitalized COVID-19 patients in the city dropped to zero on April 26. by Xu Xun/*China Pictorial*

I am a teacher at Rose No. 2 Kindergarten in Hanyang District of Wuhan, capital of central China's Hubei Province. On March 14, I received a message from the mother of my student Yiyi that they would return to Wuhan soon. They were the first of the 21 families with children in my class to return after being stranded outside Wuhan because of the coronavirus lockdown.

After teaching Yiyi for three years, her parents had become some of my best friends. For a moment, I was speechless because a simple

“welcome home” was even too emotional to enunciate.

Two days later, when she sent me a short video of Yiyi playing happily at home, I was as excited as they were. I found out from her

that returning home was not easy. Even with proper certifications to return and resume work from both their residential community and employers, they still had to navigate many roadblocks and checkpoints

“ However, the roaring wind and the fluttering snowflakes are already in the past, and trees have begun to sprout with the unstoppable vigor of spring. ”



April 8, 2020: Passengers walk into the Wuhan Railway Station to take trains. After 76 days of lockdown, the Wuhan Railway Station reopened to passengers. by Ma Gengping/China Pictorial



April 7, 2020: Passengers wait in line at the Wuchang Railway Station in Wuhan. With Wuhan lifting outbound travel restrictions, the century-old railway station once again welcomed huge passenger flows. by Duan Wei/China Pictorial

April 4, 2020: Local residents relax on the riverside in Wuhan. People who have stayed at home for more than two months have long waited for the moment to walk along the Yangtze River again. by Xu Xun/*China Pictorial*

along the way.

Upon arriving in Wuhan, still no pedestrians could be seen on the streets—only gray buildings and slow epidemic prevention vehicles. I'm sure it was far from an inviting welcome.

However, the roaring wind and the fluttering snowflakes are already in the past, and trees have begun to sprout with the unstoppable vigor of spring. After March 16, many children in our class returned to Wuhan, where they were born and are growing up.

As the weather warmed, an increasing number of supermarkets in Wuhan gradually reopened. On March 20, I received several messages from my neighbors and friends asking about protective measures and whether the supermarkets had become overcrowded.

To ensure the livelihood of shut-in residents during the epidemic prevention and control period, I have been engaged in community service as a volunteer by delivering fish, vegetables and other daily necessities to the elderly and needy families. I established contact with many neighbors through WeChat whom I hardly knew before, and now they're indispensable friends.

Thanks to the efforts of community workers and volunteers, my community has become one of the certified infection-free residential communities of Hanyang District. Nevertheless, I still told my neighbors and friends to stay at home and that I could help buy what they need. However, after two months of quarantine at home, they do want to have a look outside.

Every time they went out, they would share what they saw and heard on WeChat after returning, just like in travelogues. Such posts described in great detail where the locations of the supermarket



April 8, 2020: Traffic police officers remove barricades near an expressway toll station to release the outbound traffic when lockdown was lifted in Wuhan, central China's Hubei Province. by Chen Jian/China Pictorial

entrances and exits are, and more importantly, how to return with a full load of goods within the two-hour time limit. Although many people were eager to get to the supermarkets, their entrances were strictly controlled for epidemic prevention, which is quite different from usual operating procedures.

When they returned home from outside, it felt like a generation had passed. The past more than two months since Wuhan's lockdown were like a nightmare for every resident in the city. Fortunately, we finally woke up after the lockdown was lifted.

On March 31, I was officially "laid off" from volunteer work as we ran out of requests from community residents. This left me with more time to read stories for kids via "Good Night Story Hub," a WeChat account I launched two years ago. I shared stories with them like the origin of Tomb-Sweeping Day and stories about medical aid teams to Hubei Province and their heroic deeds.



April 8, 2020: Passengers on Train K81 wave goodbye to a station staffer. The train, heading for Guangzhou in southern China's Guangdong Province, made a stop at the Wuchang Railway Station in Wuhan, the first one since the city lifted its outbound travel restrictions. by Ma Gengping/China Pictorial

As children started understanding what was happening in Wuhan, they wanted to do something. So I encouraged the kids in my class to draw the most beautiful flowers possible with heartfelt words and

hang them on their windows to express gratitude to the volunteers, medical teams and tens of thousands of people who put their lives on the line to fight for the city.

On April 6, I went to the airport



April 2, 2020: A woman buys fruit at a convenience store in Yanma Community, Wuhan. With the epidemic situation under control, more diversified kinds of fruit are available to customers. by Ma Gengping/*China Pictorial*

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Some people were fishing under umbrellas and others were barbecuing—it was a warm and cozy picture I hadn’t seen for a long time. Suddenly, Wuhan had come back to life. ”

as a volunteer to see off our “friends from afar”: medical workers from Beijing, Shanghai, Shaanxi Province, Jilin Province and other places who had supported Wuhan.

When I arrived at the airport, I couldn’t help getting emotional and loudly speaking out my thanks. I didn’t want them to leave, but they had already spent too many hard days in Wuhan.

They pledged to revisit Wuhan



March 31, 2020: People walk on the reopened Chuhehan Street as the epidemic wanes in Wuhan. by Chen Jian/China Pictorial



March 31, 2020: A girl rides a scooter on Chuhehan Street as the epidemic wanes in Wuhan. by Ma Gengping/China Pictorial

in the future. I couldn't count how many bows I made that day, but I knew they bowed more.


On the way back, I saw vehicles parked next to the reservoir near the airport expressway. Some people were fishing under umbrellas and others were barbecuing—it was a warm and cozy picture I hadn't seen for a long time. Suddenly, Wuhan had come back to life.

I had been to the airport on

January 23, the day Wuhan was locked down, to cancel a trip to Myanmar and get a refund. There were only a few pedestrians on the road that day and airport staff looked as stern as infantry in a foxhole. My mood was also sad and heavy. Contrasting that with the scene of picnic made an unspeakable thrill burst from my heart.

From January 23 to April 8, time flew! In the 76 days, 1,824 hours,

109,440 minutes, or 6,566,400 seconds, I shifted from quarantining at home and checking my temperature every day to venturing out to do volunteer service for epidemic prevention and control and then to finally welcoming children back to class and sending medical teams home. In the process I shared the weal and woe with my city.

Wuhan is back. 



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Opening Back Up

The COVID-19 pandemic is testing both China and the world.

For China, the world's second-largest economy, while remaining cautious about a possible second wave of an epidemic, it is imperative to resume work. Many international companies have supply chains running through this country's manufacturing centers and products of world-famous

Chinese brands are finished here. China's small and medium-sized companies are struggling to adapt to the "new normal" during the pandemic. The Chinese government is trying its best to provide favorable conditions for the resumption of work and production for all kinds of enterprises. Fortunately, new technologies – especially 5G networks – can help fill in the gaps.

The future is unclear, but citizens, companies, and nations must ask through planning and action for the kind of future they want. This month, let's find out what companies operating in China are doing to get back to work, both Chinese and international firms. We will not get it perfect, but we all must do what we can from wherever we are to get the world going again. 



March 20, 2020: Workers from Tongxing Technology Co., Ltd. pose for a group photo in one of the factory buildings. by Yang Zhu

All for the Exports

Text by Zhou Chenliang

As the coronavirus sweeps through the rest of the world, Chinese foreign trade companies that have resumed work are seeing some light at the end of the tunnel.

With various recent policies aiming to stabilize foreign trade starting to take effect, Chinese importers and exporters alike are accelerating resumption of work and production. *China Pictorial* checked in on foreign trade enterprises in Quanzhou City, Fujian Province and Hefei City, Anhui Province to see what they have done to ensure smooth operations amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Quanzhou: Gradual Return to Busy

On March 19, 2020, Li Biyu, general manager of Quanzhou Qufeng Trade Co., Ltd. based in Jinjiang of Quanzhou City, Fujian Province, was exceptionally busy. She had two short meetings with her team about foreign orders before a video call with Italian clients. Then, she rushed 10 kilometers to her factory to check production progress. Simultaneously, confirmed COVID-19 infections were spiking in Italy. Her Italian clients, who could work at the office two days before, were by that time working from home and practicing social distancing.

Way back in February, Li's company resumed work and production. A company mainly exporting shoes and apparel, it stays at the middle and high-end reaches of the

global industrial and supply chain by leveraging Quanzhou's complete and strong apparel manufacturing chain.

Before the COVID-19 outbreak, her company's order volume had increased by 70 percent over the same period of last year. After the outbreak in China, the company made extensive preparations for work and production to resume. It prepared masks, disinfectants, forehead thermometers, and COVID-19 insurance for its employees. Every worker was required to bring their own tableware and sit in a designated place to eat. The company even bought materials to build isolation areas just in case. After it reopened, some accessories were in short supply, so Li did what she could to find alternative suppliers. Since it also suffered a labor shortage, the company dispatched charter buses to pick up workers to make sure they could return in time.

“

Thanks to sales via online trading platforms and the country's strong export tax rebate policy, Li remains confident about her company's prospects. ”



Employees in a workshop of Tongxing Technology Co., Ltd. work hard to fulfill orders. by Yang Zhu

However, the rapid spread of the virus in other countries and regions has upended foreign trade. “The situation in Europe and the United



In a Tongxing Technology Co., Ltd. workshop, a technician is debugging a batch of CNC equipment for shipment to Brazil to ensure the quality of the products. Under the premise of employee safety and epidemic prevention, the company resumed production to fulfill overseas orders on time.
by Yang Zhu



Hu Liqin, head of international trade for Tongxing Technology Co., Ltd., makes a video call with a Russian customer. While the customer is practicing social distancing at home, his purchase order for Tongxing Technology has been completed and the products are ready for shipment.
by Yang Zhu

States is pretty bad,” sighed Li. By March 24, Li was even more anxious. For days, she had been receiving cancellations and suspensions of export orders. “Our orders took a dive by 50 percent,” she recalled. However, amidst anxieties and worries, she also received a

few pleasant surprises. A first-time South Korean customer placed an order for 10,000 pieces of sportswear through the company’s e-commerce platform. The company’s largest order from Europe, worth 200,000 euros, managed to survive.



March 19, 2020: Li Biyu (at the head of the table), general manager of Quanzhou Qufeng Trade Co., Ltd., and her sales team are having a meeting on export orders. The company specializes in shoes and apparel, and its products have mostly been exported to Europe, the United States, Japan, and South Korea. by Pan Deng



March 19, 2020: Workers are busy producing new sportswear for export to South Korea in a workshop of Quanzhou Qufeng Trade Co., Ltd. in Quanzhou City, Fujian Province. by Pan Deng

“The target we set for this year already seems impossible to reach,” groaned Li. “But we will do what we can to secure our share of the Southeast Asian market, which is the root of our overseas business.” Thanks to sales via online trading platforms and the country’s strong export tax rebate policy, Li remains confident about her company’s prospects.

China’s State Council announced that tax rebate rates for almost all exported goods would be adjusted to 13 percent. With an eye on the future, new retail is booming in China. “We are optimistic about our prospects for the domestic market,” said Li. “We are doing research and applying for domestic access right now. We want to seize the opportunity, get a good grasp of domestic fashion trends, and develop new products with cutting-edge fabrics and materials. Overall, we are switching focus from overseas to the domestic market.”

As of March 17, 2020, all industrial enterprises above designated size in Quanzhou had resumed business. By adjusting their order structures in a timely and flexible manner, enterprises gradually regained production capacity and accelerated pace of work resumption. Intelligent production lines of some enterprises helped immensely. Many orders from domestic and foreign markets were received, and products were delivered to international clients gradually. “Made in Quanzhou” is returning to its busy normal.

Hefei: Inland Exporters Guarantee Production

On the afternoon of March 20, Hu Liqin, head of international trade of Tongxing Technology Co., Ltd. in Changfeng County, Hefei City, Anhui Province, made a video call with a Russian customer. Because of the COVID-19 outbreak, Hu was



March 21, 2020: Workers take a break in a Zhengda Daily-use Commodity Co., Ltd. packaging workshop in Quanzhou City, Fujian Province. by Pan Deng

worried that the ordered optical laser cutting machines wouldn't be delivered on time.

Tongxing is an export-oriented enterprise offering computer numerical control (CNC) carving machines and optical laser cutting machines. It exports more than 2,000 units annually to countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative. With an annual output value of more than US\$71 million, the company is leading its peers in China. Chinese foreign trade enterprises like Tongxing were much less affected by the huge global impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

"At the height of the COVID-19 outbreak in China, we were very worried that our orders would get canceled if we couldn't deliver on time," recalled Hu. "Back then, we couldn't predict how the outbreak would develop, so we were quite anxious." After her company

resumed work, Hu and her team began contacting their international customers daily to assure them that their orders would be delivered on time. She visited the assembly workshop frequently to check on product quality.

"When the virus started getting contained in China, the international situation became an increasing concern," said Hu. "Our main markets such as Russia, Germany, Spain, and Portugal were under great threat from the pandemic. Compared with days ago, the situation has reversed. Now we can deliver the goods on time, but our customers have problems."

According to the company's sales department, some clients requested a delay in shipping their orders and others simply cancelled due to the pandemic. "I understand that the situation is really hard for them.

Some clients had to shut down their factories for social distancing," sighed Hu. Despite all the difficulties, Tongxing is now operating at full speed and capacity. Many of its long-time clients have pledged to return after the pandemic. "We will continue production, and we are confident our orders will come back."

Statistics from the Anhui Provincial Commission of Commerce show that as of March 15, 2020, all 110 key foreign trade enterprises in the province with an annual import-export volume exceeding US\$65 million had resumed work and production, and another 65 major cross-border e-commerce enterprises had reopened. As the coronavirus sweeps through the rest of the world, Chinese foreign trade companies that have resumed work are seeing some light at the end of the tunnel. 

Getting Through Lockdown with IT

Text by Nathan Bennett

For international companies, deciding to remain in China and carry on with business during the pandemic is not just a matter of public service; it is a matter of remaining in business.

Technology companies and companies employing information technology (IT) are well positioned to meet the challenge presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. The mainstay of their business uses exactly the technology required for remote work and study as demanded by health and safety requirements during lockdowns and quarantines. Their products make remote collaboration possible on multiple dimensions. Foreign companies operating in China gain three primary benefits as they help tackle the COVID-19 pandemic: increased data on usage of their products, greater consumer familiarity with their services, and higher prioritization of internet capacity in development. For companies like banks that have always been financial networks, the crisis stimulates their IT network implementation.

Although many companies are offering their online services for free or boosting the features available to lower-tier subscribers as a public service, they stand to concretely benefit from their continued engagement with China. Continued development of China's innovation capacities and network infrastructure will mean increased demand for high-tech products and services. Financial services

implementing IT are also key to ensuring the flow of cash to companies seeking to resume operations. Companies that continued operating in China during the worst parts of the COVID-19 outbreak will be in a good position when the economy goes back to normal.

Companies face many challenges and their operations in foreign countries stand or fall with the success or failure of their host countries. Foreign managers stuck abroad and office workers stuck at home must be able to communicate effectively with each other. Production lines must get back to work. Logistics must ensure

sanitary shipment of products. For the companies responding for this article, network infrastructure and IT implementation was at the core of their continued operations.

Passing Through the Storm

According to Ian Yang, president of Intel China, a subsidiary of American semiconductor chip giant Intel Corporation, there are a few areas in which firms will have to adapt both to get through the present COVID-19 outbreak and to preserve resilience in future crises or public health emergencies. Further, Yang expressed confidence in the value of long-term engagement in China.

Yang highlights the transition from labor-intensive manufacturing to intelligent value-added manufacturing. The demand for implementation of smart technologies in manufacturing is going up, and these technologies enable firms to respond more effectively to serious crises. Automated production lines would remove the human element: in future crises, fewer personnel would be required, so an epidemic would create fewer stoppages than in labor-intensive manufacturing. He further highlights the current priority for remote work and study



For the companies responding for this article, network infrastructure and IT implementation was at the core of their continued operations. ”



March 17, 2020: Chinese doctors offer free online consulting on protection from COVID-19 for overseas Chinese through the WeDoctor global platform. CFP

arrangements, and that this will continue into the future as a necessary domain for innovation. There will be increased demand for the ability to collaborate remotely in many fields of endeavor, and this will challenge infrastructure, operators, and providers of IT services.

Many services are being moved online, such as registration tasks, workplace collaboration, logistics, and shopping. This challenges IT firms to increase processing power in cloud computing, 5G and edge computing will have to support more devices online simultaneously, and internet speeds overall will have to rise. Yang asserts that the shift to online services will accelerate China's shift to higher-grade manufacturing and services and that the infrastructure in demand will further support innovation in the Chinese economy, not just alleviate slowdowns in internet speeds during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Noting the fact that some firms

are looking at moving manufacturing out of China, Yang declares that this country's swift response to the outbreak actually shows that China is a reliable place to stay long-term. China's capacities in industry and in stable governance cannot be replicated by other countries, asserts Yang, and so multinational corporations should formulate long-term strategies to remain engaged with China and have confidence in this country's long-term potential.

Stating that Intel has been in China for 35 years, Yang says that Intel has gone through many ups and downs with Chinese industry and will continue beyond the COVID-19 outbreak. The current crisis will challenge whether a company can "run a marathon" and not just a short "sprint." With its products and services being key supports for some of the key technologies in high demand among many people working or studying from home, Intel is in the game and its own corporate longevity is

tied up with guaranteeing future IT reliability for Chinese users and consumers.

Public Service Marketing

American IT company Cisco is helping keep Chinese remote workers connected. Cisco provided information about the usage of their service Webex, which allows for remote working. Traffic on China-based Webex connections has increased by a factor of 22, and in Japan, South Korea, and Singapore the number of users is going up by a factor of four to five and the average time spent on video meetings has doubled. Cisco is offering it for free in all 44 countries where it is available as a public service.

For companies like Cisco that are able to offer a critical service during the COVID-19 outbreak, greater public awareness of and familiarity with their products and services give them valuable brain real estate. Many people choose to go with what they know works. During these months of self isolation and social



February 18, 2020: Employees of a foreign-invested company in Huangpu District, Guangzhou, work while wearing full protective gear. Xinhua

distancing, Cisco is in effect offering a free trial of its products. At least some users who come to rely upon it will become paying customers. Cisco joins Chinese companies offering products free like WeChat Work and DingTalk, and so business competition continues all the way to who can offer a better public service. Competition is being made to serve public interest, and everyone may turn out to be a winner.

Banking on Tech

When Citi China, a subsidiary of American multinational bank Citigroup Inc., began to formulate responses to COVID-19, IT was a core component. They shared that their priority has been safeguarding the health and safety of their employees and their families and that of the communities they serve. As with many companies, this involves working from home. They invoked their “Continuity of Business (COB) protocols through remote access protocols and then through split operations to ensure that all critical operations can be performed from alternate locations as needed.” Through institutional planning and technological

integration, Citi China changed gears to sustain operations during the pandemic. They worked with WeDoctor, a network providing online consultations with doctors, to provide health and wellness support for their employees and clients.


Finance is a critical aspect of sustaining business. Even with guaranteed profits, businesses can’t reach the payoff if they can’t purchase materials and pay employees. Ready access to loans is key. Citi China reaffirmed its commitment to business in China and its readiness to support industries getting their supply chains back up and running. They have striven to assist liquidity management for clients worldwide, citing collaboration with the New York headquarters, Hong Kong, Singapore, and other locations. During the 2020 Spring Festival, they “urgently implement[ed] a telephone bank redemption process” for their customers to trade local securities. Under the challenging times, they have maintained online and offline channels for clients to access Citi services.

As China goes back to work with a “new normal” of pandemic control measures, financial services

both from abroad and within China are key for all companies ramping up operations. Citi China, as part of Citigroup’s multinational banking operation, is taking advantage of the full range of modern IT infrastructure to ensure reliable internal corporate communications and client access to services.

Problems and Solutions

Problems faced by all companies include travel restrictions, quarantines, supply chain and logistics stoppages and delays, and forced reexamination of ways of working. Intel, Cisco, and Citi China are some of the companies offering connectivity solutions, directly through IT or financial services powered by IT. As demand for internet services has risen and viability of working online is proven, China will continue to develop its already improving internet and IT infrastructure. Deciding to remain in China and carry on with business is not just a matter of public service; it is a matter of remaining in business. For now, enhanced remote collaboration and communication technologies will help companies manage the current conditions while the new normal is figured out.

COVID-19 strikes in the most critical place for business: the human element. Supply chains may shift, to where electronic devices are not manufactured across three continents any longer. Technology, methods, and materials may be copied, but culture and creativity cannot be copied. IT and related companies help keep the world connected to continue linking the human element in every corporation, even if manufacturing becomes more localized to limit the impact of supply chain disruptions. Intel, Cisco, and Citi are deeply integrated with China and look to help the rest of the world remain connected as well. 

“World’s Supermarket” Wading Through the Pandemic

Text by Qiu Yijiao Photographs by Gong Xianming

The dealers of the Yiwu International Trade City have managed to counteract the impact of the pandemic by actively transforming their business models to stabilize orders and expand in the global market.



The Yiwu International Trade City, a massive small commodities hub in China, is home to 75,000 stores and 200,000 dealers.

As the COVID-19 pandemic spreads around the world, 75,000 stores and 200,000 dealers in the Yiwu International Trade City (YITC) in

eastern China's Zhejiang Province suffer even more than those from other industries.

The YITC sells commodities to more than 200 countries and

regions every year and is therefore dubbed the “world’s supermarket.” Since the outbreak of the pandemic, overseas demand has plummeted, transactions have been delayed, the



Many vendors in the Yiwu International Trade City have moved business from offline to online and started doing livestreams.



An online celebrity does a livestream for a store in the Yiwu International Trade City.

flow of merchants has been limited, and new orders have severely dropped off.

Addressing the adverse effects of the pandemic head on, dealers in the YITC, operated by Zhejiang China Commodities City Group Co., Ltd., have managed to persist by actively transforming their business models to stabilize orders and expand in the global market.

Today, the “world’s supermarket” still maintains daily customer flow of 100,000 people including 30,000 purchasers, with 93 percent of its stores resuming operations and the export volume of standard containers reaching nearly 90 percent of the level of last year.

Necessary Change

Because the operation of the 75,000 stores in the YITC affects the fate of two million small and medium-sized enterprises (SME), the local government of Yiwu launched a series of 20 stimulus measures to boost the market on March 11, 2020, such as expanding the upstream industrial chain and promoting online-offline integration. The operator of the YITC has also applied for a billion yuan (about US\$141 million) in loans for stores and relevant SME owners.

In the YITC, survival has become a common goal of every tenant. The pandemic has shined intense light on the business owners’ role in the international small commodity trade and industrial chains, so they began to explore further.

Zhang Xiao’ai, owner of Snow White Toy Store, began to invest more time in product innovation and production management. Jin Jing of Haoran Clothing made “big moves” to launch eight new products and invested heavily in promotion. Wang Xuxue of Miaomiao Toy Store moved business

online and sent the latest samples to merchants.

Liu Pingjuan, who has been distributing kitchenware for 30 years, just started doing livestreaming to show the actual production state of her factory to potential partners. As Yiwu has continuously released new products, Liu testified to global business partners that it remains the “world’s supermarket” thanks to enough supply and reliable products.

After weathering countless battles in the market arena, these business owners have been quick to break through traditional modes and operational inertia.

Zhang Jiying, who supplies rain gear, abandoned a best-selling but less profitable umbrella and transformed it into a higher-markup boutique product. The

newly launched embroidered umbrella, priced at more than 1,000 yuan (about US\$141) each, has become a popular online purchase among young people. “New demand is emerging, and we are seizing the opportunity,” Zhang declared.

The “world’s supermarket” has recently resembled a movie lot, with online celebrities shuttling through stores to promote certain products and increasing numbers of dealers starting to try livestreams. Some stores invested in major decorations to attract customers with a brand-new image.

New distribution channels dug by e-commerce enterprises entering the market and selling Yiwu products online are promoting online-offline integration and accel-


erating market recovery. market will remain strong if we keep working to make trade more convenient and costs lower,” remarked Wang Dong, general manager of Zhejiang China Commodities City Group Co., Ltd. “The pandemic has accelerated our transformation into a trading service integrator.”

On March 13, the group announced the plan to form a wholly-owned subsidiary, China Small Commodity City Big Data Co., Ltd., as a comprehensive trading service platform for the YITC.

In recent years, some Yiwu merchants with a great sensitivity to market changes have begun expanding into Africa and South America, including those who sealed deals on Electronic World Trade Platform (eWTP) projects with partners in Rwanda and Ethiopia.

Future interactions between Yiwu and those two African countries will include not only small commodities, but also equipment and auxiliary materials for small commodities production. The aim is to help physical small commodity markets emerge in those countries alongside supply-chain facilities and commercial services such as logistics, customs clearance, trade, and finance.

Despite so few overseas merchants visiting because of the pandemic, business owners in Yiwu are managing to move the market forward by improving product exhibition and sales via overseas warehouses so overseas customers can conveniently buy from home.

When overseas demand plummeted, businesspeople in Yiwu organized many events on distributing epidemic prevention materials and launched various new products to meet new demands. The challenges brought by the pandemic have pushed the dealers of the YITC to become more sensitive to the global market and innovate business channels to get through the crisis. 

““

Whatever the crisis is, the market will remain strong if we keep working to make trade more convenient and costs lower. ””

erating market recovery.

New Market Access

“Trade never dies” is the common understanding of almost all merchants in Yiwu. But traditional trade modes and channels have to transform with an unprecedented speed. “Uncertainty” has become a “new normal” for business owners.

“Whatever the crisis is, the



A merchant sorts out goods in her store in the Yiwu International Trade City, which remains the “world’s supermarket” thanks to enough supply and reliable products.

Small Business Survival in the COVID-19 Era

Text by Zhang Peili

The Chinese government has introduced a wide range of policies to help businesses overcome the pandemic, but the sense of gain remains low because many enterprises have yet to figure them out.

The novel coronavirus pneumonia (COVID-19) outbreak in early 2020 is making a huge impact on the economy and people's lives. Small and medium-sized enterprises

(SMEs) have been hit the hardest because of their poor position in distribution of industries and poor risk tolerance. For SMEs that used to be under enormous pressure even during normal times, the pandemic

just made things worse. As many as 30 percent of enterprises in China are likely to see their revenues fall by more than 50 percent in the first half of this year, according to several reports. Devising strategies



April 1, 2020: A worker in a plant at Zhengtai Intelligent Electric Northwest Industrial Park in Xianyang City, Shaanxi Province. In order to ensure a safe, stable and orderly work resumption especially for small and medium-sized enterprises, coordination groups are set up across the country to support the resumption of work and production. On the premise of ensuring epidemic prevention and control work, those coordination groups organized workers to return to their posts, guaranteed the supply of production factors, and stepped up efforts to adopt innovative work measures. by Zhang Bowen/Xinhua

to survive the “long winter” has become a huge test for SMEs.

Severe Challenges on the Demand Side

The high infectivity of COVID-19 forced people to change behavioral habits drastically, which in turn changed market demand—both directly and indirectly.

First, consumer demand has declined significantly. The epidemic forced people to reduce going out and getting together, decreased personnel exchange and flow, and caused people to live and work at home as much as possible, directly leading to a sharp decline in consumption demand in some sectors, especially service industries. Catering and tourism have seen the most direct and obvious impact. Companies in these industries are mainly SMEs. For example, 80 percent of the catering industry is composed of SMEs. According to a report on the impact of the epidemic on China's catering industry released by the Chinese Cuisine Association on February 12, 78 percent of catering businesses lost all revenues during the 2020 Spring Festival holiday, nine percent lost more than 90 percent, seven percent lost 70 to 90 percent, and only five percent lost less than 70 percent, compared to numbers from 2019.

Second, international demand has declined significantly. Around mid-to-late March, COVID-19 quickly spread worldwide. To date, more than two million people have been diagnosed with COVID-19 outside China, and the number of cases is still rising rapidly. Countries are taking similar measures to promote isolation and quarantine, which will inevitably affect the international market demand. According to data from the Ministry of Commerce, China's export volume reached 3.33 trillion yuan (US\$471 billion) in the first quarter of this

year, down 11.4 percent, of which private enterprises' exports reached 1.71 trillion yuan (US\$242 billion), down 7.3 percent. In the first quarter, exports were basically fulfilling previous orders. With the continuous development of the pandemic overseas, China's foreign trade in the second quarter will likely further deteriorate, and small and medium-sized foreign trade enterprises will be hurt the most.

Third, consumption habits have changed. The pandemic is causing increased income uncertainty, which is leading to changes in consumption habits. The fierce consumer response to early price hikes by the major hotspot chain Haidilao and the noodle chain Xibei demonstrated that consumers have become more cautious about spending money. They are now less willing to pay higher prices to upgrade consumption. Enterprises are being forced to provide higher-quality and more affordable products and services. This trend will likely gain even more steam after the epidemic. SMEs have

been struggling with a supply-demand mismatch as their product structure is not able to meet the demand of consumption upgrading. Now, enterprises must cut costs while upgrading their products at the same time. This will further squeeze the living space of SMEs.

Supply-side Problems

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused profound changes in the flow of people, logistics and capital, but the supply-side problems plaguing SMEs are even more prominent.

First, the shutdown made it difficult for SMEs to endure cost pressure. When an enterprise stops production, its income source is cut off while costs such as wages, rents, loan interests and taxes continue to pile up. Enterprises must survive only with their available cash on hand.

Second, the price of raw materials has increased significantly. In the global market, due to rising costs caused by the pandemic, the prices of many products have risen rapidly. In the first quarter of 2020, China's



April 24, 2020: A staff member guiding a taxpayer to fill in the tax declaration form in the self-service tax office. Since the outbreak of the epidemic, the taxation administration of Hejian City, Hebei Province has actively promoted the modes of intelligent tax operation and independent network tax operation, further simplified the tax operation process, opened a “one-stop” green channel for tax service, actively interpreted the preferential tax policies during the epidemic period for taxpayers, and helped small and medium-sized enterprises resume work and production. by Zhu Xudong/Xinhua



February 15, 2020: A hot pot restaurant staff member checks takeout food order in southwestern China's Chongqing Municipality. Hot pot restaurants in Chongqing have started to provide consumers with zero-contact hot pot takeout services under the guidance of relevant departments amid the COVID-19 prevention and control efforts. by Wang Quanchao/Xinhua

CPI rose by 4.9 percent year-on-year, far higher than the increase of 1.8 percent in 2019. As consumer prices increased, the price of raw materials needed by enterprises also increased significantly. Resumption of production faced huge pressure due to rising production and operation costs. A survey of the central region, the Pearl River Delta and the Yangtze River Delta conducted by Zhongnan University of Economics and Law from March 24 to 27 showed that 10.69 percent of enterprises faced a sharp rise in the price of raw materials, and 55.2 percent saw a slight rise.

“The challenges faced by SMEs during the coronavirus outbreak not only threaten their own survival, but also affect the overall economic situation and social stability.”

About 28 percent of enterprises' raw material prices remained stable, and about six percent enjoyed a drop in raw material prices.

Third, the industrial chain cycle has become blocked and unstable. Due to a combination of the factors arising from the Spring Festival holiday and the epidemic, a vast number of SMEs stopped production. Changes in market demand, increases in production costs, difficulties in capital turnover and other reasons such as impeded flow of people and logistics are making it difficult for SMEs, especially

labor-intensive enterprises, to resume production. According to data from the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, by April 14, almost all industrial enterprises above designated size had resumed operations, with an average operating rate of 99 percent and a staff reinstatement rate of 94 percent. However, as of April 15, only 84 percent of China's SMEs had resumed production, a far lower percentage. According to a survey by Zhongnan University of Economics and Law, enterprises suffering insufficient inventory of raw materials face difficulties to find alternate suppliers. When supply is disrupted, 32.6 percent of enterprises find it difficult to secure alternate suppliers. Most enterprises lack a stable supply chain. About a quarter of enterprises cannot maintain stable production because of a lack of raw materials. Failure of supply and industrial chains is exerting a profound impact on SMEs' recovery and future operations.

Coping with Challenges

The challenges faced by SMEs during the coronavirus outbreak not only threaten their own survival, but also affect the overall economic situation and social stability. For this reason, governments at all levels in China responded quickly to launch a series of policies to support SMEs, including financial support, tax preferences, assistance in work resumption, social security support, cost reduction measures and service optimization.


Government support is crucial. China is not alone in its concern for SMEs. Countries around the world have also introduced economic assistance plans to support their SMEs. However, even after the central government and local governments in China introduced extensive policies, enterprises do not know much. The sense of support is

not strong. According to a survey by China Enterprise Reform and Development Research Institute, only 8.6 percent of enterprise managers reported strong familiarity with supportive measures issued by central and local governments, and 34.3 percent responded that they were relatively familiar. About 20 percent of businesses admitted they did not know much. About 38 percent of private enterprises and 49 percent of the self-employed said they had a general understanding. These numbers show that most supportive policies for enterprises have not been sufficiently implemented.

Support needs to effectively address problems plaguing SMEs and alleviate their acute pains. According to the survey, staff remuneration, loan repayment and rent costs are the heaviest burdens for enterprise operation. Except for the policy of exempting and cutting some social insurance fees, which can directly reduce operating costs of enterprises, most policies involve advocacy and are indirect, so they have little or relatively slow impact on reducing the costs of enterprises, leading to a weak sense of gain. At present, Britain, Canada, Australia and Denmark are directly subsidizing the payroll of enterprises seriously affected by the pandemic to help them retain employees, covering 75 to 80 percent of wages. China can learn from those countries on how to directly subsidize wages of employees and directly and quickly reduce the burdens on enterprises to enhance confidence.

At the same time, China should accelerate the implementation of supportive policies. Both relevant departments and local governments have been paying more attention to introduction of policies than to implementation. Many policies are mostly about principle and direction, and lack specific measures for implementation. The government needs to

change its working philosophies and strengthen and improve the implementation of those policies to make enterprises really benefit.

Considering the impact of the pandemic, SMEs need to strengthen and adjust as quickly as possible to adapt to the new market environment and new situation. First, SMEs should prepare to operate within tighter margins, focus on core business, tap new potential, simplify operations, control costs, end blind expansion, and ensure they retain enough capital flow to endure difficulties ahead. Second, SMEs need to accelerate the promotion of internet channels, adapt to market changes more quickly, implement the "enterprise + internet" action, smoothly shift procurement, sales and service links to online mode, and actively use the internet for business model innovation. Third, SMEs must adapt to changing consumer habits, actively adjust their product structure, improve product quality, enhance production creativity, and endeavor to provide high-quality and low-cost products. Fourth, SMEs should enhance the construction of corporate credit. When enterprises encounter difficulties, credit becomes particularly important because it directly determines the financing ability of enterprises, the stability of the supply chain and the trust of consumers. SMEs should transform the sudden impact of the pandemic into an opportunity, monitor credit development, and constantly accumulate and improve their corporate credit quality. 

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Building a New Global Industrial Chain with 5G

Text by Bian Yongzu

Leveraging the advantages of the next generation of information technology to accelerate the restructuring of the global industrial chain and re-activate the world economy is in the interest of all countries and conducive to building a community with a shared future for humanity.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global economy is growing and causing increasing concern.

After testing different prevention and control strategies, countries around the world have gradually adopted similar approaches involving restraining the flow of people to slow the spread of the virus. China now has the virus essentially under control, but many countries and regions, including Europe and the United States, are still struggling with the ongoing pandemic and have little hope of returning to normal quickly.

The coronavirus crisis has already dealt a heavy blow to the global economy and will profoundly change the current globalization landscape. With the pandemic exploding, major Western countries have been unable to carry out normal economic activities, which has catastrophically interrupted the global supply chain system. As the world's largest goods trading nation, China has been affected enormously. External demand has weakened significantly. Many export-oriented enterprises in China have no new orders, and even already-placed orders risk cancellation. At the same time, export logistics costs and risks are mounting. Due to the substantial reduction in international flights, freight

rates have soared. Many customers cannot cover such high logistics costs, and flights could be cancelled at any time due to the pandemic. As the pandemic continues to ravage humanity on a global scale, many enterprises will likely go out of business, which greatly increases the risk of Chinese export enterprises getting stiffed on payment.

The pandemic's remaining impact on China's economy is mainly in the field of foreign trade, with gradual recovery of China's investment and consumption underway. However, the impact on developed Western countries is comprehensive. Statistics show that the current hardest-hit countries have been the United States and those in Europe, which show no signs of bringing the virus under control in the short term. Most countries are now facing the dilemma of choosing between epidemic control and economic development. Containing the virus as quickly as possible demands strict social distancing measures. However, such measures heavily impact regular economic activities and order. Most experts agree that complete control of the pandemic cannot be realized within a short time, leaving them pessimistic about the prospects for the global economy. Recently, Kristalina Georgieva, managing

director of the International Monetary Fund, predicted that global growth would veer sharply negative in 2020, adding that "we anticipate the worst economic fallout since the Great Depression." The World Bank also downgraded global growth forecasts.

The pandemic has weakened multinational corporations' ability to manage the entire industrial chain and may deprive them of capabilities in global R&D, sales, and services. When it faced the pandemic, China flattened the curve and turned the tide in a short period of time rather than drawing out the decision-making process. Many multinational corporations are realizing that when major natural disasters strike, China can maintain a safer and more stable business environment and continue to provide the products and services that Western countries need. Therefore, quite opposite to many early predictions that the outbreak would cause factories to move out of China, many multinational companies are now accelerating transfer of more high value-added production to China to ensure normal business operations. Recently, Volkswagen CEO Herbert Diess revealed that the pandemic left his company without any sales or revenues outside the Chinese market. In fact, China's comprehensive industrial support



April 8, 2020: The online launching ceremony for “new infrastructure” projects, which are expected to bring new drivers for the economy, is held in Tianxin District of Changsha, capital of Hunan Province. A number of project managers are connected to the spot through 5G video calls. Since some expect the COVID-19 pandemic to accelerate the fourth industrial revolution, China has the potential and ability to lead the new industrial revolution with its advantages in 5G. Xinhua

system will further reduce logistics costs for international enterprises, and the effect of aggregation of the whole industrial chain will become more evident.

Multinational enterprises from Western countries have played a lead role in globalization. They have determined the global layout of factories and formulated industrial standards such as product specifications and business rules to create a large and closely interconnected industrial chain. Chinese companies seeking to climb up the industrial value chain still have plenty of hard work ahead. The most important task remains to accelerate the construction of a 5G-based new global industrial chain.

The impact of the pandemic on globalization has been seen most clearly in impeding flow of logistics and people, which is demonstrating the greater importance of the next generation of information technology. At the G20 Extraordinary Virtual

Leaders’ Summit on COVID-19 on March 26, 2020, Chinese President Xi Jinping emphasized the importance of information sharing and building a unified information platform. During the outbreak, students of China’s primary and secondary schools as well as universities attended classes from home. For the first time, online education has been embraced on a large scale. Many Chinese people are working online. They attend teleconferences, carry out online discussions and even conduct business negotiations virtually. Various economic activities are increasingly moving online. China’s domestic economic activities have essentially maintained normal operation largely because China built a relatively developed and comprehensive network ecosystem. Some expect the COVID-19 pandemic to accelerate the fourth industrial revolution and usher in a new era.

With its advantages in 5G,

China has the potential and ability to lead the new industrial revolution. Chinese manufacturers such as Huawei, Xiaomi, OPPO, Vivo, and ZTE are becoming leading providers of 5G terminals. Chinese companies contribute 38 percent of the world’s 5G standard patents, far higher than the 25 percent of South Korea and the 14 percent each of the United States and Finland. Leveraging the advantages of next-generation information technology to accelerate the restructuring of the global industrial chain and re-activate the world economy is in the interest of all countries and conducive to building a community with a shared future for humanity. 

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Full of Heat

Text by Zhou Xin Photographs courtesy of Sinopec Green Energy Geothermal Development Co., Ltd.

Natural earth cycles create clean and renewable energy as well as cooperation opportunities for China and Iceland.

A large, dark blue lake with a winding path along its shore, surrounded by dense green forests. The lake is the central focus of the image, with a small island visible on the left side.

“The combined scale of our geothermal cooperation projects in China is much larger than the entire heating system of Iceland,” revealed Ragnar Baldursson, a former Icelandic diplomat now serving as Marketing Director of Sinopec Green Energy Geothermal Development Co., Ltd. (hereinafter “Sinopec Green Energy”). “It is now the largest geothermal heating system in the world. This is what my country of only 360,000 people was able to contribute to the sustainable development of the world.”

The China-Iceland joint venture had been fully staffed in early 2020 to ensure a “warm winter” by providing clean geothermal energy for people in many places of China during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Earthly Cycles Connecting Two Countries

The surface of the earth may often seem cold, but the planet has a warm heart. The inner temperature can reach as high as 7,000 degrees Celsius. Even places only 80 to 100 kilometers below the surface can be as hot as 1,200 degrees Celsius. Hot underground water can seep into the earth’s crust and eventually reach the surface. Geothermal energy is harnessed in places where hot underground water can be found less than five kilometers from the surface.

“You must be able to dig wells to harness geothermal energy,” stressed Baldursson. “So, investment in the early phase has to be huge. China was not equipped to use this energy in the past.” Baldursson left Iceland for China in the 1970s and studied in Beijing. He always dreamed of helping with the heavy winter pollution from so many people burning coal for heat with technology from Iceland on geothermal heating.

Iceland is situated on volcanic

September 2019: A bird’s-eye view of Baiyangdian Lake. On April 1, 2017, Xiong’an New Area was set up in Hebei Province. The lake is included into the new area as an important water body.



2011: A drilling well of Sinopec Green Energy in Xiongxi County, Hebei Province.

rock. It is home to a wealth of geothermal energy, with the most hot springs in the world. “Even in the 1970s, Iceland’s heating system was already mostly powered by geothermal energy, so there is no pollution from winter heating.”

However, he had no knowledge of the distribution of geothermal energy in China, which happens to also have rich geothermal energy resources, accounting for 7.9 percent of the world’s total. Some regions in China including Tibet are famous for plentiful high-temperature geothermal energy, and the rest of China has an even distribution

of medium- and low-temperature geothermal energy.

Zhao Xin, Chief Financial Officer of Sinopec Green Energy, believes that China has the richest medium- and low-temperature geothermal energy in the world.

Earthly cycles create clean and renewable energy as well as cooperation opportunities for China and Iceland. China Petrochemical Corporation (Sinopec Group) is committed to green and low-carbon development, while Arctic Green Energy Corporation is a cutting-edge provider of power and heating with geothermal energy. Their

development strategies considerably overlap.

As a diplomat for Iceland, Baldursson eventually helped facilitate cooperation between the two nations in 2006. That year, the China-Iceland joint venture Sinopec Green Energy was founded in Xianyang City, Shaanxi Province.

Smog-Free Town

Around 2000, a giant “hot spring lake” emerged in southwestern Xiongxi County, Hebei Province. It was originally a small natural lake that was enlarged and warmed by diverted underground geothermal water.

Xiongxi is rich in geothermal energy, so many locals have long utilized geothermal energy for heating. The temperature of geothermal water there is very high, 60 to 80 degrees Celsius year-round. Institutions, communities, and individuals were all been digging to find heat. However, when they broke through to hot water, they lacked the technology to recycle the water back into the ground. So, much of the continuously running hot water ended up being diverted into the lake. The lake is warm and does not freeze during winter. Steam often hovers five to six meters above the surface.

As the underground water level dropped, many hot water wells stopped self-erupting, leaving many communities without hot water for heating. Gradually, the county realized that it wasn’t using its geothermal energy sustainably.

“Without returning used water into the ground, geothermal energy risks exhaustion,” said Zhao.

In August 2009, Sinopec Green Energy began to cooperate with the local government to streamline and standardize the usage of geothermal energy and make the process sustainable with the company’s

advanced technology.

“We don’t stop after securing geothermal water,” noted Zhao. “We return used water into the ground according to an effective plan to ensure a general balance of resources. Get the heat and reinject the same year. This is one of the core technologies of our company.”

Because of technological and economic obstacles, many enterprises choose not to reinject. Some companies return the water to a different aquifer, which does not help the environment.

Sinopec Green Energy cooperated with the government of Xiongxian County to create the “Xiongxian Mode” featuring market operations, joint utilization, advanced technology, environmental friendliness, and benefits to the people. After years of effort, Xiongxian County has become the first smog-free town in northern China. Geothermal energy has powered over seven million square meters, 95 percent of the

total heating areas in the county, eliminating the need to burn 650,000 tons of standard coal. The “Xiongxian Mode” has been widely recognized by the National Energy Administration of China and industry insiders. It was a highlight of China’s geothermal energy industry during the 12th Five-Year Plan Period (2011-2015) and has driven the rise of the industry during the 13th Five-Year Plan Period (2016-2020).

As an old Chinese saying goes, “paying back a loan on time makes it easier to borrow the next time.” This just conforms to the concept of sustainable usage of geothermal energy.

Beautiful China: Opportunities for the World

“We have cut carbon dioxide emissions by 7.5 million tons,” according to the website of Sinopec Green Energy.


“Although the price of coal-fueled heating seems lower, it doesn’t include

the cost of pollution.” Zhao added that due to proper design, the area can achieve energy self-sufficiency. Everything it needs is underground. After major investment in the initial stage, the subsequent cost of operation is very low.

Geothermal heating projects by Sinopec Green Energy, a leading company in the industry, can be found in seven provinces in China. It has signed cooperation framework agreements with over 40 cities and towns, and projects have already been launched in over 30 of them. “The company plans to double its scale in the next five years,” stated Zhao. “This project transcends cooperation between companies. We’re working to promote the development of the entire industry.”

“When I first arrived in China, the country was still exploring its own path for development, and the idea of sustainable development hadn’t been formed yet.” Since his first visit to China in the 1970s, Baldursson has witnessed the transformation of China’s development ideas. “When developed countries started calling for sustainable development and exploring renewable energy, China listened earnestly and acted quickly. And it ended up moving ahead of many of the staunchest advocates.”

“Our cooperation demonstrates that during the process of China’s modernization, any country, big or small, can find areas for win-win cooperation with China based on their own natural endowment,” said Baldursson. “Many countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative have geothermal energy under their soil. Our company can help them harness that energy.”

Thanks to the joint efforts of China and Iceland, more places in China and the world will be able to embrace greener and cleaner winters in the future. 



February 2020: Workers at Sinopec Green Energy’s branch in Xianyang City, Shaanxi Province are repairing a geothermal well to guarantee winter heating during the pandemic.



The Second Half of the Coronavirus Battle

Text by Zhou Xin

A Chinese businessman in Tunisia battles the coronavirus on two fronts.



April 5, 2020: An empty street in Tunis, capital and the largest city of Tunisia, during the COVID-19 outbreak. Xinhua

For the first time in nine years in Tunisia, Huang Cong didn't return home to Wuhan for Chinese New Year.

In 2011, at age 26, Huang ventured to Tunisia to start a business. After five years of painstaking effort, his business finally became profitable. Now, he manages five companies including

a restaurant, a supermarket, a food processing facility and a travel agency that collectively earn revenues of two million Tunisian dinars (around US\$680,000) a year. "In the past, the only private Chinese business you could find here was Huawei," he recounted. "Tunisia has a free trade agreement with Europe, so I hoped to establish a business in Tunisia before expanding towards Europe."

In early January 2020, Huang heard about an unknown pneumonia plaguing his hometown. Spring Festival is particularly important for nostalgic overseas Chinese people, and the news from home only became increasingly disturbing. The messages from his family quickly shifted from polite suggestions to forgo coming back to a stern warnings.

On January 23, lockdown measures were imposed in Wuhan. Agitated about the situation in China and his hometown, Huang, who is also chairman of the association of overseas Chinese there, scrambled to help the motherland fight the epidemic. He contacted a local factory that makes face masks. The factory manager had frequently visited Guangzhou and immediately agreed to donate masks to China. The factory with around 30 employees worked day and night in rotating shifts to produce masks. Huang even visited the plant to thank the staff and check production. They recorded a video to encourage Wuhan and China in the battle against the coronavirus. After painstaking efforts, the factory donated 100,000 masks to China. When the melt-blown cloth, a necessary



March 23, 2020: Huang Cong distributes masks and disinfectants to police officers on duty in Tunis, capital of Tunisia. courtesy of Huang Cong



February 5, 2020: Huang Cong checks production in a mask plant in Sfax, Tunisia. courtesy of Huang Cong

material needed to make masks, ran out, Huang bought 20,000 masks from retail stores such as pharmacies to donate to China. When all of his sources for buying masks were exhausted, he donated 10,000 Tunisian dinars (about US\$3,400) to the Red Cross Society of China through the Chinese Embassy in Tunisia.

China's situation has gradually improved. When he was busy supporting China's fight, Huang didn't realize it was only the first half of his battle against the virus.

A grim joke about the fight against the pandemic has circulated noting that China played the first

half, other countries are playing the second half, but overseas Chinese play the whole game. On March 2, the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed in Tunisia. On March 30, the president of Tunisia gave an amnesty, releasing 1,420 prisoners to help flatten the curve. By April 20, the country had 901 identified cases and a death toll of 38. The whole nation has been in lockdown since late March. Many Tunisians frequent Italy, and the flow of people between the two countries is normally heavy, which caused greater pressure on local leaders to contain the disease.

Huang's second half had already

kicked off by late March. In 2015, he met a woman in Tunisia who eventually became his wife. Their four-year-old child was enrolled in a local kindergarten and is now taking two hours of online classes at home every day after all schools were suspended on March 20. His business also came to a stop.

After two months of the outbreak, the donor and the recipient had switched roles. Huang remains busy fighting the pandemic, but now facilitating inbound customs clearance instead of shipping outbound. Instead of donating to compatriots far away, donations are now being distributed locally. And the coronavirus is no longer news from remote places, but a danger lurking around the corner. Even after the country was locked down, Huang continued to go outdoors to clear customs, collect goods, and distribute personal protective equipment. Not many Chinese people live in Tunisia, so he usually distributes things himself.

Upon noticing that police officers and customs personnel lacked basic protective gear, he bought masks and other equipment from China. He not only donated many masks to the local customs authority, but also hit the streets to distribute masks and disinfectants to police officers. Locals have been moved by his actions. "Police officers saluted when I passed." He has donated 20,000 masks as well as disinfectants, protective gowns, and goggles to locals.

To deter panic buying, local authorities are rationing daily necessities. Although Huang's business came to a halt, he still offered low-priced necessities to Chinese visitors and employees stranded in Tunisia.

On April 8, the lockdown in Wuhan was lifted. Huang was



March 21, 2020: Lei Xiaozhen (second right), an obstetrician with the 24th Chinese medical team sent to Tunisia, discusses a case with local doctors in Sidi Bouzid. Xinhua



April 16, 2020: A woman passes by a closed store in Tunis, capital of Tunisia. Xinhua

relieved because his parents remained safe during the outbreak. He was also encouraged by China's ability to win the battle. However, he remains knee-deep in the second half. "Never give up" is Huang's mantra.

In Huang's eyes, Tunisians are straightforward, kind-hearted, and open-minded. Locals are very friendly to Chinese people. He is frequently greeted on the streets with "Ni Hao" ("Hello" in Chinese). And locals have always been happy to help during every process acquiring local licenses for his business. The heartwarming help from Tunisians when the outbreak in China began moved Huang a lot. He is resolved to stay with locals during the fight and remains confident in a total victory. 



A poster for the online movie *Snake II*. During the COVID-19 outbreak, *Snake II* led the box office in China's online film industry in the first quarter of 2020 with over 30 million yuan (US\$4 million).

Streaming Opportunity

Text by Gong Haiying Photographs courtesy of Tmeng Group unless otherwise credited

The coronavirus epidemic drastically expanded online movie viewership in China, bringing new opportunities to the industry.



The *Huang Feihong* series released by Tmeng in 2018 has already been licensed to online platforms serving over 100 countries and performed well in both ratings and views.

The COVID-19 epidemic has created new opportunities for producers of online movies. According to statistics, nearly 200 movies were released through online platforms in China in the first quarter of 2020, including 22 with revenues exceeding 10

million yuan (US\$1.4 million). In the first half of 2019, only 15 online movies managed to earn that much.

Due to the epidemic, seven theatrical releases scheduled for the Spring Festival holiday were canceled. On January 25, 2020, *Lost in Russia*, a movie expected to

perform exceptionally in cinemas, was released online for viewers to watch for free. It was viewed 180 million times in three days. Later, another two movies that had been scheduled for theatrical release also went online. More attractive choices in online viewing as millions



January 17, 2020: The premiere for the movie *Lost in Russia* is held in Beijing. On January 25, this movie which was expected to perform exceptionally in cinemas was released online to watch for free. It was viewed 180 million times in three days. IC

were stuck at home have helped the online entertainment industry develop by leaps and bounds.

The concept of “grand online movies” was first introduced in 2014 in China in reference to films released online that meet a series of standards such as a length longer than 60 minutes. Over the past seven years, the number of movies annually released online in China has increased rapidly from barely 200 to a peak of more than 2,000, with the market size surging from less than 100 million yuan (US\$ 14 million) to over three billion yuan (US\$423 million) in 2019. Since March 1, 2017, when the *Film Industry Promotion Law* went into

effect, movies released online and in theaters have been subject to the same laws to promote higher-quality entertainment products. In November 2019, the term “grand online movie” was officially trimmed to “online movie.”

Tmeng Pictures under Tmeng Group is a major producer of online films, with an annual output of around 40. Its 2018 movie *Snake* still holds the record for online movie box office with over 50 million yuan (US\$7 million). Its sequel, *Snake II*, led the box office in the first quarter of 2020 with over 30 million yuan (US\$4 million). Yin Chao, founder and CEO of Tmeng Group, remarked that although

monster and disaster films have long been popular choices of Hollywood, such films are rarely seen in Chinese movie theaters. “*Snake* was unlike anything else in the theaters during its run, which was a major factor in its high box office,” noted Yin.

Yin considers online movies a major part of China’s entertainment industry. The medium is creating new opportunities for the development of China’s film industry. “The development of online movies has dramatically expanded the potential subject matter for movie theaters and created careers for many excellent young directors and producers who will likely become major forces in China’s film industry,” Yin remarked.



Tmeng Pictures under Tmeng Group is a major producer of online films in China. On November 22, 2019, at the first Internet Film and TV Entertainment Festival, Yin Chao, founder and CEO of Tmeng Group, won the award "Best Online Movie Producer of the Year."



The development of online movies has dramatically expanded the potential subject matter for movie theaters and created careers for many excellent young directors and producers who will likely become major forces in China's film industry. ”

China Pictorial: What drew Tmeng Group to online movie production? How does Tmeng stand out among online movie companies?

Yin Chao: Tmeng was founded in 2012 and first ventured into online film production on short film platforms. As it began pioneering development of online films, it gradually transformed to an online film company.

Over the past eight years, Tmeng has become an innovative platform focused on the production of digital content. However,

producing movies is not all we do; we are also committed to building a standardized industrial system for film production including our own database to guide content creation. We organized a program to train promising talent. The development of Tmeng marks Chinese online movies evolving to a new phase.

China Pictorial: What needs to happen for China's online movie industry to rise to the next level?

Yin Chao: China's online movie production is just burgeoning. A

lot needs to be improved including human resources, subject matter and types of movies. The key lies in attractive content, which relates to both telling stories better and exploring various forms and topics. Alongside monster movies, which have already proven their market potential, films about war, heroic figures and true stories are worth exploring.

At the end of the day, I'm optimistic about China's online movie development. As more traditional production teams start working on online films, investment in a single production could reach as high as 100 million yuan (US\$14 million) in next five years as a larger audience is guaranteed. This is the trend.

China Pictorial: Online series from Europe and the United States are very popular in China. How can China's online content explore overseas markets?

Yin Chao: The topics of China's online films are attractive to foreign viewers, but the stories are not satisfying. As more talented people join the industry, the quality of stories will improve dramatically.

Tmeng has made progress in exploring overseas markets. For instance, the *Huang Feihong* series released by Tmeng in 2018 has already been licensed to online platforms serving over 100 countries and performed well in both ratings and views, which has boosted our confidence. Currently, Tmeng is looking mainly at markets in Southeast Asian countries such as Malaysia and Singapore and cooperating with their local providers. Such moves will popularize Chinese characters while at the same time facilitating cooperation with foreign actors and actresses on telling stories about China. 47



China, We Stand with You!—How Communication Professionals from 25 Nations See China's Coronavirus Fight, published by New Star Press in March 2020.

Responsibility, Trust and Love

This book records something special: a fusion of responsibility, trust and love.

This book features content from reports in forms of texts, photos and videos published by 35 foreign experts who decided to stay in or return to China after the outbreak of COVID-19. The group consists of media professionals from 25 countries who all work at China International Publishing Group (CIPG).

Among them, some experienced Peru's cholera outbreak in 1991, some witnessed Beijing's SARS outbreak in 2003, and others experienced the 2011 earthquake and tsunami that struck northeastern Japan. Such experiences have given them a keen understanding of what can and cannot be changed by disasters.

As media professionals, they strive to relay the actual situation in China and share "what is really going on in China." After the outbreak of COVID-19, these people opted to stay in China and some even returned from overseas. Such decisions were based on the idea that "China is where great

achievements and miracles happen."

Their choice to stay in China during its most difficult time demonstrated their deep respect and support for the country and its people.

This book documents something

special: a deft fusion of responsibility, trust and love. All participating authors continue to contribute to the battle against the pandemic.

Hosam Farouk El-Maghrabi from Egypt participated in the launch of an




A ceremony for the donation of masks by a South African company to China. When China faced the hardest time in its fight with the coronavirus outbreak, many countries including those in Africa extended their helping hands to assist China through the difficulties.



Some authors of the book. It features content from reports in forms of texts, photos and videos published by 35 foreign experts who decided to stay in or return to China after the outbreak of COVID-19.

online initiative to fight the epidemic and cheer for China that was widely acclaimed by Middle Eastern diplomats and regular folks alike.

Park Goeun from South Korea produced two videos about China that were reposted on many social media accounts in South Korea and the official accounts of the South Korean Embassy in China and other institutions.

CIPG is China's oldest and largest organization dedicated to international communication. It operates many subsidiaries that provide news, publishing, translation, research and international trade of cultural products. 



During the outbreak of COVID-19, more than 40,000 medical personnel from other parts of China have come to Wuhan, providing strong assistance in fighting against the epidemic.

Beijing Hutong Makeover

Text by Cecile Zehnacker

After nearly vanishing in recent decades, new life has been brought to the hutongs, which is helping preserve and keep them alive—in turn preserving the identity of Beijing.

I moved to Beijing in 2014, during my second visit to the city. I had traveled there in 2012 and promised myself never to return. It was winter, the city was gray and gloomy, and the language barrier complicated everything. But some promises are made to be broken, and when I got an opportunity to work in Beijing for six months, I decided to give the city a second chance and embrace the opportunity. The second attempt was much better than the first, and I fell in love with China, and Beijing specifically.

After six months of sharing an apartment, I landed another job and decided to look for my own place. After visiting numerous apartments, I finally chose a nice *hutong* (alley or lane) apartment near the Drum Tower, a landmark of old Beijing. I didn't know much about *hutongs* at the time, but as a culture enthusiast, the best way to discover Beijing seemed to live in a narrow alley that remains at the heart of the capital city. My apartment was newly renovated and comfortable with a private bathroom and a kitchen, but it was quite cold in winter. My landlord lived right next to me. I rented from an adorable Beijing couple—the husband was an actual descendant of Confucius.

I took some time to redecorate my new home sweet home and then spent a week planning a housewarming party for all my friends to celebrate my new Beijing life

with me. Only after some Chinese friends arrived did I realize how surprised they were that I chose to live in a *hutong*.

Many Chinese have some odd ideas about what life is like in a *hutong*. For some, it is synonymous with discomfort. To understand why, it is important to look at history. Beijing's *hutong* areas have a history of more than 700 years. They were built during the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), a Mongol empire founded by Kubilai Khan following the Song Dynasty (960-1279). The word “*hutong*” comes from a Mongol word that means “water well.” Because water is essential to support life, the

first *hutongs* were built around wells before gradually expanding. The main type of *hutong* housing at that time was the *siheyuan*, a square courtyard comprised of several one-floor, single-family abodes. Gradually *siheyuan* abodes were linked to each other until they shaped the entire city.

Over the centuries, the city's urban planning evolved, and *hutong* architecture changed. During the first half of the 20th century, many *siheyuan* residences that once housed a single family were divided in several smaller houses. The living conditions worsened as the capacity of *hutong* homes was pushed.



Beijing's *hutongs* are transforming from old-fashioned to trendy places. More and more young Chinese are injecting fresh vitality into the *hutongs* and helping preserve them and the identity of Beijing. illustrated by Liang Yu



An old bookstore in the Bada Hutong area (above) and one of the narrow alleys that shape the *hutong* area (below). courtesy of Cecile Zehnacker

With the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, urban planning evolved again, and many *hutongs* were demolished and replaced by larger roads with modern buildings offering improved living standards. People started to leave the traditional houses in search of more comfort. Without bathroom facilities inside the homes and the first public toilets appearing only after 1950, living in a *hutong* had clear disadvantages compared to residing in a modern facility.


To this day, many *hutong* abodes have never really been renovated. I lived in one of the oldest neighborhoods of Beijing, and most residents around me are native Beijing families who have been living in the neighborhood for generations. Many partially renovated their homes to install a bathroom, but some must

still use public restrooms which are now all over the *hutong* area. Furthermore, most *hutong* homes still have poor heating systems, leaving them quite cold during winter, while Beijing offers a very efficient public heating system to residents of apartment buildings. All these factors make apartment buildings more appealing residences to my Chinese friends.

However, many of the native Beijing families who still inhabit these homes do not want to leave. A Beijing-born friend of mine lives in a *hutong* near mine. He agrees that the comfort is limited but feels that living there is a family heritage and part of his identity as a native Beijinger. He also commented on the coziness and convenience of *hutong* life. Ideally located inside the 2nd Ring Road, the heart of

Beijing, near the Palace Museum, also known as the Forbidden City, *hutong* neighborhoods are near everything. All my daily needs are just a few steps from my front door: supermarkets, convenience stores, and restaurants, just to name a few. I also particularly enjoy the small-town atmosphere of single-story *hutong* buildings.

In recent years, *hutongs* have evolved dramatically. After many were demolished to make room for modern buildings, a protection plan was established in 2016. Destroying *hutongs* was banned, and some refurbishment plans were introduced to preserve them. Some *hutongs* have become major tourist draws rivaling the Forbidden City and the Summer Palace. Some famous *hutongs* such as Nanluoguxiang and Wudaoying are now filled with cafés, shops, and small *siheyuan*-style hotels. Some *hutongs* around the Drum Tower are bustling at night thanks to numerous restaurants and bars. The Bada Hutong area that was once the red-light district and home to Peking Opera practitioners before the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 was a great discovery for me. It is now a charming neighborhood where young people enjoy going out on weekends. As a result of the makeover and central location, the price per square meter in old alleys is skyrocketing, reaching often twice or more that of apartment buildings.

Gradually, Beijing's *hutongs* are transforming from old-fashioned to trendy places. More and more young Chinese artists and designers are setting up studios or starting businesses in *hutong* neighborhoods. This is injecting fresh vitality into the *hutongs* and helping preserve them after they almost vanished in recent decades—preserving the identity of Beijing. 

Answering the Call: Exhibition of Shanghai's Battle Against COVID-19

China Art Museum, Shanghai
April 8 – May 8, 2020

More than 800 works featured in this exhibition were selected from more than 13,000 visual art pieces spontaneously created by Shanghai's frontline anti-epidemic heroes, literary and art workers and people from all walks of life.

The exhibition is divided into a main exhibition, a sub-exhibition of photographic works and a sub-exhibition of comic works. More than 250 paintings, 480 photographic works, and 70 pieces of folk art, sculpture and installations are on display, all being original.



Waiting for Your Return by Zhou Yuan.

Suzhou Embroidery: Exhibition of Yao Jianping

Suzhou Museum, Suzhou
December 25, 2019 – May 5, 2020

A traditional Chinese handicraft, Suzhou embroidery has always been closely tied to traditional Chinese culture and is now a national intangible cultural heritage.

“Illustrating the times with needle and thread” is a creative tenet of Yao Jianping, a Suzhou embroidery artist. Since she established Suzhou Zhenhu Embroidery Research Institute in the 1990s, she has designed and created a series of works to express the spirit of the times and promote national culture. Her works have been gifted to many foreign

dignitaries and celebrities. This exhibition showcases more than 20 representative Suzhou embroidery works by Yao alongside a series of cultural life works that she led a team to develop in recent years. All works on display showcase Yao's innovation in developing Suzhou embroidery art.



Poster for “Embroidery Exhibition of Yao Jianping.”



Delivery in the Epidemic by Zhang Weiren.

Landscape and Books: Pearl Art Museum's 2nd Anniversary Exhibition

Pearl Art Museum, Shanghai
January 18 – May 15, 2020

The exhibition features over 200 pieces of contemporary print, oil paintings, installations, art books, antique books, ancient calligraphy and painting, and manuscripts, including works of Chinese artist Chen Danqing, Japanese artist Asami Kiyokawa, and five other famous contemporary artists. The exhibition presents a diverse and vivid picture of contemporary exploration and creation under the overarching theme “Landscape and Books,” in the hope of creating a unique journey through books and art.



Poster for “Landscape and Books: Pearl Art Museum's 2nd Anniversary Exhibition.”

Amazing Chinoiserie: Chinese Export Porcelain Exhibition, 17th to 18th Century

Guangdong Museum, Guangzhou
March 13 – October 11, 2020

From the 17th to 18th century, the rise and development of maritime trade resulted in China's ceramic ware becoming a key commodity exported to the West. This exhibition displays a collection of 175 fine porcelain products manufactured for export from the 17th to 18th century. It demonstrates the high development of ancient China's porcelain industry while shining light on trade between East and West as well as dialogue and collision of different races, civilizations and cultures.



Poster for “Amazing Chinoiserie: Chinese Export Porcelain Exhibition, 17th to 18th Century.”

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