

## Let's Join Hands in Combating COVID-19

*By H.E. Mr. Cao Xiaolin, Chinese Ambassador to Tonga*

The world today is a global village. People from all countries are closely connected. As a result, our life is becoming much better. At the same time, globalization has also brought some challenges which need concerted efforts of the international community to cope with. For example, in the field of health, the spread of diseases respects no borders. It requires a collective response from the international community, and no country can be immunized.

At present, the prevention and control work on the novel coronavirus(COVID-19) in China is continuously trending in a positive direction, and the resumption of production and living order is accelerated. Meanwhile, people in more and more countries are infected with COVID-19. This proves that it is vital to enhance international cooperation and fight the epidemic together.

From its name, the novel coronavirus is a very new disease. In fact, it is also very complicated and sneaky. Until now, no efficient vaccine has been developed to cure this virus. Therefore, it is very important for the health authorities and the ordinary people to learn the successful experiences on the treatment and prevention for coping with COVID-19.

The most effective way of China's prevention and control against this epidemic is that, under the strong leadership of President Xi Jinping and his personal guidance, the whole country and people were united as one, and adopted the most comprehensive, rigorous and thorough prevention and control measures, following the principle of early detection, early report, early diagnosis, early quarantine and early treatment for prevention and control, as well as the principle of pooling together patients, experts and resources for treatment efforts, in order to improve

the admission and cure rates and reduce the infection and mortality rates.

For example, the epidemic outbreak happened at a time when the Spring Festival was drawing near, which is the most important festival for the Chinese nation. It should be an occasion for family reunion, sharing happiness and cheerful chatting, and also a time of massive population flow. However, the 1.4 billion Chinese people consciously conducted self-quarantine at home. More than 40,000 medical workers traveled to Hubei Province, the center of the outbreak, to support the prevention and control work there. This Spring Festival will be a memorable and very heart-touching one in the Chinese history.

Through hard efforts, we are delighted to see that all regions, except Hubei, in the Chinese mainland haven't had a single non-imported new confirmed case over the past few days, and the number of cured patients have risen very fast. We have full confidence, capacity and certainty to win the battle against the epidemic.

As a responsible major country, China is committed to the international cooperation in prevention and control against the epidemic. President Xi emphasized that, to prevail over a disease that threatens all, unity and cooperation is the most powerful weapon. We will follow our vision of a community of shared future for mankind, fulfill our responsibility for the global public health as well as for our own people.

Following this instruction, the Chinese government has adopted an attitude of openness, transparency and responsibility, shared data on the epidemic with the World Health Organization(WHO) and relevant countries, provide medical assistance to highly infected countries, and actively conducted international cooperation on combating the epidemic. WHO and other countries have spoken highly of China's efforts.

The Chinese government and Chinese people have received warm care and valuable support from the Tongan royal family, the Tongan

government and friends from all walks of life. Her Royal Highness Princess Pilolevu wrote a letter and recorded a video clip to extend support to China. Hon. Prime Minister Tu'i'onetoa and Lord Speaker Fakafanua wrote letters to the Chinese leaders, commending China for fighting the epidemic and protecting the health and safety of Tongan citizens in China. Lord Speaker Fakafanua, Hon. Samiu Vaipulu, minister for trade and economic development, H.E. Tau'aika 'Uta'atu, Tongan ambassador to China and the Nishi Trade Company made generous donations to China for combating this virus. These supports have fully reflected the deep and strong friendship from the Tongan people to the Chinese people, which we will always cherish.

In the meantime, China has maintained close cooperation in epidemic prevention and control with Tonga. President Xi made solemn promises to the international community that China will take good care of foreign nationals in China in the same way as it looks after its own citizens, and will do its best to provide support for all foreign students studying in China as it protects its own children. Following President Xi's instruction, we have gone all out to provide health protection for the Tongan citizens in China. We assisted the 51 Tongan athletes who had finished their training in China coming back home safe and sound. The Chinese embassy has kept in close contact with the Tongan ministry of health, sharing information and experiences, and provided TOP40,000 for the capacity building against the epidemic. COVID-19 is ruthless, but the cooperation in coping with the virus has deepened the friendship between China and Tonga.

Last week, a suspected case was found in Tonga. It is important for all the people in this beautiful country, the Friendly Islands, to keep vigilant, and make all efforts to prevent and control any potential outbreak. Every country has its own unique medical system. The measures adopted to respond to the epidemic have to be in line with a country's condition. The National Health Commission of China has issued *Guidance for Coronavirus Disease 2019, Prevention, Control, Diagnosis and*

*Management.* The Chinese Embassy has provided this *Guidance* to the Tongan ministry of health. Beijing Center for Disease Prevention and Control has issued *Prevent COVID-19, Live a Healthy Life*. These experiences may be helpful to the Tongan Government and Tongan people. Some information can be obtained on the Embassy's Facebook page at:

[https://www.facebook.com/Embassy-of-the-Peoples-Republic-of-China-in-the-Kingdom-of-Tonga-119136479495395/?modal=admin\\_todo\\_tour](https://www.facebook.com/Embassy-of-the-Peoples-Republic-of-China-in-the-Kingdom-of-Tonga-119136479495395/?modal=admin_todo_tour)

The Chinese people are now fighting the final battle against the epidemic. At the same time, China is ready to enhance collaboration with Tonga and provide medical assistance such as personal protection equipment within our ability. I am confident that, with the joint efforts of China, Tonga and the whole international community, we will defeat COVID-19, and that our global village will become a much healthier and safer place.