

# *Washington's poisonous coronavirus politics must end*

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By stoking pernicious anti-Chinese sentiments, instead of focusing on fighting the epidemic in their own country, some U.S. rumormongers only encourage fear, division and hate.

The global battle against the novel coronavirus has arrived at a critical stage, as the number of confirmed cases worldwide has surpassed 100,000, with more than 100 countries and regions hit.

Yet instead of focusing on fighting the epidemic in their own country, some in the United States are trying to shift the blame and politicize humanity's common challenge by stoking pernicious anti-Chinese sentiments. Their dangerously irresponsible statements are highly counterproductive at this drastic hour that demands solidarity and cooperation, and could be much more menacing than the virus itself.

In a CNBC interview on Friday, when asked whether the United States could achieve similar success to China in battling the virus, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo blamed Beijing for what he called imperfect data from China, which put the United States "behind the curve" in containing the outbreak.

Also last week, U.S. broadcaster Fox News host Jesse Watters asked China to apologize for the epidemic in a talk show, misinforming the public that the disease "originated in China."

Their smear against China is unfounded. Since the outbreak, China has been keeping the international community updated in a timely and transparent manner. As for the United States, China has notified the country of the epidemic and China's control measures dozens of times since early January, said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying last month.

What's more, the origin of the virus remains unclear, as scientists and researchers around the world are still trying to figure it out.

So, why is China being targeted by people like Pompeo and Watters -- notably, since the outbreak?

One immediate reason is Washington's chaotic and sloppy epidemic response. Many in the United States, including commentators, politicians and ordinary citizens, are complaining about such things as the slow disclosure of infection numbers and sluggish testing for the virus. Obviously, some in Washington are in a hurry to find a scapegoat.

Also, in this politically-charged election year, some U.S. politicians have again picked up their China-bashing habit to get media exposure and grab cheap political gains.

Of course, a more deep-seated problem is those China bashers' misguided understanding of the Asian country, as well as their lack of motivation to learn about China. In their eyes, everything about the United States is right and is the best in the world. Everybody else should simply follow. A fast developing China with a unique political and social system, therefore, poses a threat to the United States.

However, as the epidemic is spreading to more countries and regions, and infecting more people around the globe, it is time for countries to build a united front to win the war on the disease. Those U.S. rumormongers' attempts only serve to encourage fear, division and hate.

For the sake of their own people, and of those around the world, they should finally hit the brakes on their egoistic demagoguery.

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