

Allow no Cold War thinking in COVID-19 vaccine development



The United States has some of the world's most innovative scientists. Yet their ability to imagine can be easily outshined when some Washington politicians scramble to smear China during the coronavirus pandemic.

Talking to Fox Business on Monday, White House trade advisor Peter Navarro alleged that China may have withheld data on the virus during its early stages to win a business race to find a vaccine ahead of others, adding "but we're going to beat them."

However, the fact is that China has since the outbreak shared information with the international community including the United States in an open, transparent and responsible manner.

China publicly shared the genome sequence of the virus on Jan. 12, five days after the pathogen was first identified, in what was described by World Health Organization (WHO) chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus as a record-short time.

Anyone with just a little scientific common sense would know that the virus-related information Beijing has presented to the world can lay a solid foundation for global research on vaccines, medicine, and treatment of the disease.

With this data, scientists worldwide, including those from China and the United States, are on a level playing field to develop a vaccine.

Navarro's remarks only lay bare his cold-blooded calculation that for him, commercial and political interests override people's lives and health. To similar minds in Washington, human life is a card they can use to garner more votes and interests.

China, however, puts life above all else. The life-first principle has been demonstrated by the all-out efforts it has made to save every life from the deadly disease and contain its spread by locking down a whole city and halting most business activities nationwide.

Meanwhile, China has been calling on the world to work closer in epidemic prevention and control and step up international communication and cooperation to accelerate the research and development of effective vaccines and drugs for the benefit of all.

As the fatal pandemic has infected over 2.4 million people worldwide and claimed more than 170,000 lives so far, scientists from different countries are joining together in a bid to shorten the time frame of vaccine development.

Vaccines are about saving human lives, and their research should not be read as a kind of commercial or political race. No matter which country successfully finds a vaccine for the coronavirus, it will surely be good news for all of humankind.

In the past weeks, some U.S. politicians, for their selfish political interests, have been busy with smearing and stigmatizing China. Their groundless and irresponsible accusations to deflect blame for Washington's botched handling of the public health crisis at home will achieve nothing other than damaging global solidarity during this difficult time.

To soon win the battle, all countries need to pool their wisdom and efforts and avoid leveraging the disease as a political tool. In the face of the common enemy of the human race, it is time for those China hawks in Washington to abandon their old-fashioned Cold War mentality and zero-sum game mindset and build both trust and cooperation with others.

source: xinhua

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