

A Few Words from our Executive Director Christiaan Morssink

Below is an email from one of our members that we received in blind copy. He took issue with a few emails he received from a former colleague, who showed his far-right, ultra-nationalist colors on social media. I believe that this email sums up a good reflection of our stance re COVID-19 and the WHO. Indeed, regardless of the science, and regardless of the definition, **declaring and managing a pandemic is an utterly political act**, which, as politics go, will become slaughtered in the arena of geo-political machinations. Each and any UN institution is fodder for these machinations, and science on a global scale is the most important lifeline for multinational collaborations such as the WHO. Nationally, we hope that our own US scientists have the guts, strength, and wherewithal to keep standing up to the filthy and demeaning manipulations that we witness daily in some of our national political institutions, and trumpeted on and in the new social media.

“-----Dear X,

greetings from Philly.

I must admit that I was shocked by several of your statements/claims sent to me last week. Many of them wreek of ignorance and disinformation. That is a terrible shame.

Before projecting your opinions and insulting your friends, you might wish to take a little time to read and study some facts and legitimate analyses of the complex international situation surrounding the World Health Organization (WHO) in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Attached are three articles/reports about the work of the World Health Organization (WHO) from three fairly reputable sources. hope that you will read them before expounding again, like a seasoned expert -- which you are not. (There are many more in-depth evaluations of WHO to consider as well).

Taken together, these reports do not exonerate the WHO from blame for the current global Covid-19 pandemic. But they clearly do not justify the extremely reactionary, destructive, and dangerous policy goal of the Trump Administration to cut all funding for the WHO. This would be tragic for many, many developing countries -- and **also** for the United States, and other industrial nations, indeed, most WHO member states.

Over the past 40 years, I have worked closely with dozens of health experts and officials from the WHO through my public information assignments at the UN Development Programme, the World Bank and elsewhere. No, these folks are not self-less angels; and the WHO is not a flawless international agency. But they are largely a dedicated group of trained professionals committed to making the world a better and healthier place to live. And, despite divisive global politics, the WHO is still faithfully pursuing its founding mission.

Comments such as yours -- that are founded in and repeated millions of times over in the far right-wing media -- are highly destructive to a honest, public dialogue; they are based on ignorance, propaganda, and biased, selective reporting -- and many outright lies. It is a disservice to humanity to repeat them, and not to challenge them directly.....”

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2020/04/why-world-health-organization-failed/610063/>

<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-does-world-health-organization-do>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/04/14/trump-who-coronavirus-response/>