

American Jewish Committee (AJC) Call to Action on Coronavirus



March 17, 2020 — New York

If America – and the world – needed a reminder of our interconnectedness, our interdependence, and our shared vulnerabilities, COVID-19 is it.

The virus respects no borders. It bows not to military might, religious edict, or government fiat. It is indifferent to ethnicity, nationality, faith, gender, and political orientation, if, alas, not to age.

As the coronavirus makes its way through our communities, straining health care systems and transforming the daily lives of millions, we grieve for those who have succumbed to the disease and express our sympathy and solidarity with affected families, as we call on governments at every level to affirm core principles:

- **Informed leadership** With authority comes the responsibility in a time of public health emergency to base policy on scientific expertise and pragmatism – not on superstition, prejudice, political expediency, or partisanship;
- **Global cooperation** Just as the disease disregards national and state boundaries, so must the efforts to combat it – with data on testing, transmission, morbidity and mortality, as well as current and contemplated containment strategies, treatment regimens and capacity, and progress on anti-viral medication disseminated widely;
- **Openness** Public trust in government – and individuals' willingness to sacrifice comfort and convenience, and access to family, education, social amenities, and work, for the public good – depends on governmental transparency, the assurance of the public's right to know;
- **Civility** Crises test the human spirit, and too often summon the basest responses: bigotry, scapegoating, xenophobia, selfishness, finger-pointing. Leaders must inspire the better nature in all of us, modeling compassion, mutual respect, unity, urgency, and self-sacrifice. Citizens must follow suit.

In our increasingly globalized world, the COVID-19 pandemic may be a harbinger of this century's escalating and universal threats to public health and safety. As such, it should dispel false notions that global problems – from novel pathogens to terrorism to climate change – can be resolved by national action alone. Above all, they require urgent, thoughtful, fact-based leadership, and the maximum possible international cooperation.

As our leaders at the national, state, and local level, in concert with their counterparts around the world, confront this disease and the terrible losses it incurs, they will have – and they will need – the support of civil society, of the business community, of individuals of every faith. For, truly, we are all in this together.

SHARE THIS



SHARE THIS



BACK TO TOP ▲

MORE GENERAL NEWS



Advocacy Anywhere Surpasses One Million Viewers Worldwide

[READ THE PRESS RELEASE ▶](#)

The Slow Death of Syria

[READ AJC'S ANALYSIS ▶](#)

SIGN UP
TO STAY INFORMED

Enter your email

SUBMIT

STAY CONNECTED



GLOBAL VOICE

WHO WE ARE

ISSUES

TAKE ACTION

GLOBAL FORUM

SUPPORT OUR WORK

LEGAL INFORMATION

PRIVACY POLICY

PODCAST

CONTACT US

AJC's mission is to enhance the well-being of the Jewish people and Israel, and to advance human rights and democratic values in the United States and around the world.

© Copyright 2020 AJC