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Peace in the Face of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Making Sense of the Paralysis at the UN Security Council

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Abstract

The coronavirus that made its first apparition in 2019 in Wuhan, China, has proven to be more lethal than a bullet; it continues to claim thousands of deaths out of a growing number of infected people worldwide, and we are no way near its ending. The pandemic threatens to wipe out the billion poor that lack the means to purchase needed equipment for disease control and production of vaccines. This article attempts to address the question as to why all-time military preparation aimed at securing the survival of states does not tally with the readiness to fight pandemics and ensure the well-being of citizens. In the tradition of the Frankfurt school of critical theory, it seeks to explain and evaluate the paralysis of the United Nations Security Council to walk the talk at a time when collective response to fight a common enemy (COVID-19) is urgently needed. While each nation takes a sole-ranger approach toward the global pandemic, safety measures adopted by the World Health Organization constitute a covert recognition of the human agency that is needed for the promotion of peace that is associated with citizens' well-being.

INTRODUCTION

Since Roman times, peace and war have been treated as dependable bedfellows. The fear of the enemy across international borders continues to haunt political leaders because as goes the saying, "let him who desires peace prepare for war." Against the backdrop of preparedness

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for war, individual nations spend huge amounts of money annually on the production/purchase of sophisticated machines of war. Higher military spending involves manufacturing and stockpiling weapons of war, training personnel in war academies, and intelligence gathering, as well as incessant deployment of combat troops abroad under the pretext of protecting national interests. In recent times, a drone carrying hellfire laser-guided missiles and controlled from a US base in the Middle East was able to hit its target with precision. There was jubilation in the White House when the "enemy of peace" was murdered while the Islamic Republic of Iran called for retaliation. As one expert on future warfare at the New American Foundation observes, targeted strikes like the one that killed Soleimani "requires a truly immense intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance effort, one which basically no other country in the world can match, and which is vastly expensive, time-consuming, and requires a lot of expertise."[1.]

Even though major players have not engaged in interstate wars since the end of the Second World War, international peace can be likened to a truce that gives member states of the United Nations the opportunity to acquire the latest technology of war. It has allowed the NATO member states to increase their military capabilities and broaden the field of influence beyond the Western world. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2% GDP of member states bring the NATO budget to $1.8 trillion.[2.] Moreover, NATO member states still enjoy the liberty to individually deploy national armies where national interests are said to be at stake, as in the case of French troops stationed in Francophone Africa. However, when the coronavirus disease hit the world by surprise in 2019, the same narrative went around. From Italy to Spain, Germany, France, UK, Canada, and the United States (to mention but a few), medical facilities reached a breaking point. With little or no protection, health workers were unable to attend to an increasing number of infected people. The virus threatened to wipe out the million poor in most African countries, where the lion's share of common wealth goes to the security sector in sustained efforts to win wars against banditry, militancy, and terrorist groups—without paying much attention to the education and health of the citizenry.

This study attempts to address the question of why military preparation aimed at securing the survival of states in the international system does not tally with states' readiness to rid the world of COVID-19 and ensure the well-being of citizens. The paper adopts a critical theory framework according to *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (SEP 2005)[3.] as it seeks to unveil the flaws of the dominant model of peace spearheaded by the United Nations. Going by the unprecedented loss of lives in the developed world as a result of COVID-19, many masks are falling down, thus exposing the mainstream notion of peace construed as enforced settlement by hegemonic powers. Against the backdrop of the Security Council's paralysis, new concepts of vaccine *nationalism* and *apartheid* are gaining currency. Rich nations enter into agreements with pharmaceutical corporations to secure the supply of the vaccines for their populations before they are even manufactured. Meanwhile, the global south backed by the World Health Organization (WHO) calls for equal treatment instead of attending to the poor nations with leftovers. Once again, the coronavirus pandemic exposes the inability of the international system spearheaded by the United Nations Security Council to cooperate.[4.] However, safety measures adopted by the WHO, such as hand washing, use of face masks, and social distancing, can be interpreted as a turning point in our understanding of peace as health by calling on every human being to become not only a solution to the pandemic but also an agent of international peace.

OVERWHELMING MILITARY RESPONSE AT ALL TIME

Political realism—*realpolitik*—perceives the international system as anarchy in which states adopt self-help behaviors toward one another, which only fuels the propensity to mistrust, conflict, and war.[5] For military strategists, war is construed as peace even though the intention behind military deployment is to defeat the enemy. To paraphrase the Prussian army officer, Karl von Claussewitz (1781–1831), war is the continuation of politics by violent means that compel the enemy to submit to the will of the powerful.[6] However, the horror of the First World War did not induce world leaders to trade once and for all their war machines for ploughs that are still needed to sustain human life (agriculture). Instead, the post-war era was actually a time to prepare for a new war when major players trampled down the Versailles Treaty and its attendant League of Nations.[7] In the span of nearly two decades, the survivors of World War I were once again plunged into the nightmare of another catastrophe of global repercussions.

Toward the end of the World War II, the leaders of Grand Alliance (United States, Russia, Britain, France, and China) came together and conceived of an intergovernmental organization that was capable of promoting international peace and security. The following excerpt from the preamble of the Charter of the United Nations (1945) is worth noting:

> We the Peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our life-time has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom, AND FOR THESE ENDS to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples...[8]

From the above statement of intent, the UN's post-war sentiment carried a message of hope for the entire human race, which could have led to a new world of peace, freedom, and equality. But something went wrong. It did not take long before the new organization was dwarfed by its makers. Within the UN, the goal of peace assigned to it refers to the absence of war between member states, without discounting the possibility of clashes caused by the pursuit of national security. According to Bull, "the coupling of the two terms together in the Charter reflects the judgment that the requirements of security may conflict with those of peace, and that in this event the latter will not necessarily take priority."[9] In other words, peace must serve the cause of security construed as state's perpetuation in the international system without discounting warfare. For the war-mongers ready to invade any part of the world for reasons known to them only, war is peace.[10] In fact, Kenneth Minogue sums up European history as a period of "preparing for war, waging war, or recovering from war."[11]

At the onset, the UN created an enemy image by privileging the interests of the winners of the war (Grand Alliance) while downplaying the voices of major wartime adversaries (Germany,

Japan, and Italy) along with their allies and co-belligerents (Axis Powers). This was made possible with the establishment of the Security Council, in which five permanent members were entitled to a veto power each on matters concerned with the maintenance of peace and security in the world. This exclusive veto power has enabled the P-5 to remain loyal to the institution which was actually designed to safeguard their respective interests overseas. As Jussi Hanhimaki puts it, "this strategy, it was thought, would provide the key countries with an incentive to remain part of the UN. It also provided them with the means of neutralizing the world organization."[12.]

Another enemy image emerged when the Grand Alliance was split into two blocs (East and West) along ideological overtones. The establishment of the Iron Curtain in Central Europe in 1948 cemented the divided world, thus plunging humanity into the Cold War that spanned over four decades. Little wonder that the provision of Article 43 of the UN Charter (which suggested the establishment of a joint standby army to rapidly and impartially intervene wherever threats to peace and security occurred) never saw the light of the day. Instead, antagonism was sealed with the creation in 1949 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as a military wing of the Western bloc that was intended to safeguard the interests of the US and her European allies while keeping the Communist enemy in check.[13.] Following the integration of West Germany into NATO, the Western defense mechanism prompted Russia and her satellite states to sign the Warsaw Pact on May 14, 1955. Until its dissolution on July 1, 1991, the Pact set its signatories apart as a competing military bloc located in the East.

Except for a few developed nations whose military spending is minimal (mainly in Scandinavia), the military budget of rich nations is always on the increase as long a perceived threat cannot be ruled out. It is worth mentioning that a powerful country like United States spends more than $700 billion annually on the military establishment and considers the healthcare system as a luxury.[14.] This huge budgetary allocation has remained relatively constant over the years, keeping the United States on top of the list of military powers.[15.] A powerful NATO, therefore, implies that Western nations who are also the big producers of weapons of war also constantly look for both markets to sell their machines of death and grounds for testing their new technologies of war. Russia and her long-term ally at the Security Council, China, must remain vigilant for any possible attack from the West while engaging in the nonstop arms race. Along with the use of veto power, any effort toward the promotion of true global peace is thus consistently paralyzed.

It is noteworthy that at the start of Cold War, the African continent (except for Ethiopia, Liberia, and South Africa) existed only as pockets of economic interests (colonies) under the jurisdiction of the European powers. When colonial masters acceded to political independence from the 1960s onwards, a first generation of African leaders appended their signatures to the Charter of the United Nations and joined in the post-war *modus vivendi* of power politics. The security of state quickly became synonymous with the security of the head of state in most poor nations. Since then, military spending of poor nations has continued to attract the lion's share of national budgets, to the detriment of vital sectors of development such as education, health, industrialization, social justice, and other vital elements of sustainable peace. Little wonder that in the absence of an enemy of state across international borders, specialists of official violence (regular armies and police) have often turned inward with brutal force, causing the rise of civil wars, insurgencies, ethnic cleansing, genocide, Ebola, and other pandemics.[16.]

These intrastate tensions are on the increase in many parts of the African continent. In the Sahel region, five governments known as G5 Sahel (Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger) are uniting forces to fight Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Despite the presence of French troops on the ground to support G5 Sahel since 2012, the crisis has reached an impasse with no military victory in view. In the Lake Chad Basin, the Boko Haram terrorist group has claimed many

lives, destroyed property, and displaced entire populations in Northern Nigeria, Chad, Niger, and Cameroon despite the presence of a multinational Joint Task Force in the region. As a result, conflict-torn countries of Africa are left to choose between silencing the guns through military victory against terrorist groups and fighting the global pandemic with meager budgets. However, increasing military spending seems to be the only guarantee for peace and security globally without paying attention to vital sectors of development including education, transport, housing, and health.

IN THE FACE OF GLOBAL PANDEMIC

The cause of the COVID-19 pandemic is still not entirely clear, but its ugly manifestation was first identified in early December 2019 in Wuhan, one of the largest cities in China. This deadly virus belongs to the epidemiological family of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). Because China does not entertain freedom of expression, one can expect a higher level of concealment of the new virus from the general public. Richard McGregor of the Centre for Strategic International Studies argues: "When a group of doctors began sharing information they had about a strange new virus on *WeChat*, they were doing what you would expect medical professionals to do - but of course, that was a dangerous thing to do in China."[17.] Eventually, the information reached the WHO on December 30, 2019, when it became difficult to hide the growing number of dead bodies. In early January 2020, the city of Wuhan was in lockdown in an attempt to curb the spread of the new virus. While the rest of the world was watching from a distance, Chinese engineers were mobilized to build isolated centers, including the biggest hospital in the world in a matter of weeks, to treat the growing number of infected citizens. Various companies worked around the clock to produce basic medical equipment such as face masks, gloves, beds, ventilators, ambulances, drugs, and many more lifesaving essentials, all made in China. Coming from all corners of the country, doctors and nurses in great numbers attended to patients with total dedication over a period of close to two months. By the end of February 2020, around 4000 had lost their lives out of an approximate population of 500,000, infected in a country of 1.4 billion people.[18.]

However, the rapid response of the Chinese government raises many questions, giving credence to conspiracy theories. Were the people of China fully prepared to confront the virus head-on? Why did they not call on the international community to come to their help? Why did the virus not affect the economic hub of Shanghai as well as the seat of power in Beijing? If the Chinese government was able to contain the spread of the virus within Wuhan, how come the pandemic became global within a matter of weeks? Does COVID-19 belong to the generation of biological/chemical weapons? Discussions around these and similar questions go beyond the scope of this modest study. However, suffice it to say that the successful response of the Chinese government is, whatever else, a demonstration of self-reliance in practice.

This was made possible partially by the fact that, over the years, most American and European companies had moved to China, attracted by the nation's cheap labor market. Outsourcing manufacturing companies has been the best strategy to rid Western cities of sweatshops and its attendant pollution. At the same time, it positioned the most populated nation on the planet as the world's economic base. It goes without saying that the management of such multinationals had also brought many European and American chief executive officers along with their technocrats into China. Today, almost everything the world consumes is made in China, and it does not come as a surprise that among the country's many exports is COVID-19. However, unlike many other goods exported by China, the virus was not shipped in containers; it moved with people, wearing human faces.

It is therefore plausible to argue that at the beginning of the Chinese saga, many foreign nationals left China as carriers of the new virus. By the time the country began to roll back its intervention kits, the deadly virus had already spread across international borders. In a matter of weeks, it held the world hostage, shaking the foundations of rich societies where technological advancement in medicine is unquestionable. Even though the pandemic is not airborne, it has followed the same pattern of emigration from overseas: a one-to-one contact causes the number of infected to grow exponentially.[19.] Before being quarantined, unlucky carriers may have exposed their immediate collaborators, friends, and family members to the virus. What is more, medical tourism for well-to-do individuals is no longer fashionable when every nation struggles to meet the health needs of its citizens first. It strikes diplomats, cabinet ministers, politicians, businessmen, residents, and visitors who have recently stayed overseas.

The advent of COVID-19 poses huge challenges given other global health care crises, including, as Stellah Kwasi notes, "weak health systems, high rates of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis infections, poverty, and a large informal economy and settlements without adequate water and sanitation infrastructure."[20.] From North Africa down south, outdated or nonexistent health facilities coupled with long held customs and belief systems fanned the fires of annihilation. How do we make sense of threats to international peace and security in the midst of coronavirus when people are falling dead in great numbers without being hit by bullets, irrespective of nationality, religion and social status? What is the position of world leaders at the UN Security Council (UNSC) on the prevailing pandemic?

PARALYSIS AT THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Before addressing this crucial question, it is important to glance at what transpired in the recent past. In his report to the General Assembly in 2005, *In Larger Freedom*, then-Secretary General Kofi Annan argued:

> Threats to peace and security in the twenty-first century include not just international war and conflict but civil violence, organized crime, terrorism and weapons, of mass destruction. They also include poverty, deadly infectious disease and environmental degradation since these can have equally catastrophic consequences. All of these threats can cause death or lessen life chance on a large scale. All of them can undermine States as the basic unit of the international system.[21.]

Annan's message was informed by the SARS outbreak that threatened the global financial center in Hong Kong in 2002. Learning from the tragic experience of Ebola in West Africa in 2014 and recently in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the African Union's Peace and Security Council, at its 910th meeting of February 13, 2020, expressed grave concern about COVID-19, fearing that "it could constitute a threat to peace and security on the continent."[22.]

Meanwhile, UN Secretary General Antonio Gutierrez multiplies calls for global ceasefire: "The fury of the virus illustrates the folly of war. That is why today, I am calling for an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world. It is time to put armed conflict on lockdown and focus together on the true fight of our lives."[23.] Will terrorist groups operating in the Sahel region, the horn of Africa, the Lake Chad basin, or Central Africa heed the UN call for ceasefire?

In what looked like a division of labor at the UN, the WHO put on a brave front and described the outbreak, in a declaration dated January 30, 2020, as a Public Health Emergency of

International Concern (PHEIC). In his briefing from Geneva, on March 27, the WHO Director-General, Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, glossed over appeals for funds toward research and development of a vaccine, as he intensified sensitization campaigns based on alarming data of infected people and death toll. He also highlighted three punctual objectives of the organization: fight, unite, and ignite. In short, individuals must fight the virus by stopping its spread (hand washing, use of face masks, and social distancing); nations must unite by sharing the best responses (cure and vaccine); and the world must ignite a commitment that no more shall we go through such a pandemic.[24] Whether the message, like seeds of hope, will fall on barren soil once again is yet to be seen.

Interestingly, in a press conference dated February 3, 2020, the UN Security Council president, Ambassador Marc Pecsteen de Buytswere (Belgium), observed that no request has been made to discuss the issue of COVID-19 by member states since the pandemic has not posed any threat to international peace and security.[25] Even after China occupied the UNSC presidency in the month of March, it was business as usual that revolved around the conflicts in Libya, Afghanistan, and Syria. By the time the rotational presidency ended on March 31, no debate about the COVID-19 response had taken place either in the Chamber or through video conferencing. It is worth mentioning that when one of the council's ten non-permanent members, Estonia, raised the issue of greater international cooperation in confronting what was believed to constitute a major threat to international peace and security, China blocked the move, claiming that other institutions should address the issue. More importantly, the outgoing president and Ambassador Zhang Jun actually paraphrased the WHO boss by claiming that "public health matters did not fall within the Security Council's geopolitical ambit."[26] Does world peace discount public health?

The same UNSC was not silent when Ebola struck West Africa in 2014. Through Resolution 2177, it considered for the first time a public health issue as a threat to international peace and security in line with Article 39 of the UN Charter. Ebola infected some 28,000 people over the course of two years in West Africa and attracted multilateral responses, while the spread of COVID-19, by contrast, spread to more than 180 countries across six continents counts more than two million infected people in less than five months. This comparison raises questions about why the UN Security Council resolution was not forthcoming despite the magnitude of COVID-19. Unlike Ebola, which could easily be classified as a poor man's disease that called for humanitarian aid from New York and Geneva, COVID-19 is an invisible enemy that attacks all indiscriminately. In the absence of a collective approach to the pandemic, each country must fend for her population separately.

However, 111 days after the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 to be a global pandemic, the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 2532 (July 1, 2020) which recognized the potential threat of the novel coronavirus pandemic to international peace and security. Without getting out of the box, the Security Council actually endorsed the appeal of the UN Secretary General for a global ceasefire, while indicating that the latter was not applicable "to military operations against Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh), Al-Qaida and Al-Nusra Front, and all other individuals, groups, undertakings, and entities associated with Al-Qaida or ISIL, and other Council-designated terrorist groups."[27] The UNSC was also able to issue another resolution dubbed "COVID-19 Vaccine Ceasefire" on February 26, 2021, "calling on all member states to support a *sustained humanitarian pause* to local conflicts, in order to allow for COVID-19 vaccinations."[28] It begs the question as to where the ceasefire would in fact be applied, and by which actors, given the fact that terrorist attacks by non-state actors are commonplace in most armed conflicts around the world.

It is little wonder that many world leaders have resorted to the language of war which they know best, as they canvass for mass mobilization against an invisible enemy. Reservists are called upon to set up isolation camps and medical facilities in open spaces to attend to the growing number of infected people. In the streets of Italy, Spain, or France, army trucks in funeral convoys move many dead bodies daily—not from the battlefield but from medical centers to burial sites and crematoria. It seems that no country can boast of an adequate infrastructure to care for their infected populations when vast resources are continually spent on the weapons of war. Against the backdrop of a massive death toll that could have been prevented, it becomes difficult to maintain the classic distinction between positive and negative peace.[29] As it is gathered from the writings of one of the fathers of peace studies, Johan Galtung, a negative peace is the aim of narrow versions which will be a good description of the failed peace treaty after World War I while a positive peace may well explain the European Peace after World War II.[30] Given that health workers are selecting patients on the availability of beds and ventilators, negative peace is ubiquitous even in most advanced nations of the world. Arguably, the current pandemic has overturned the tables, leaving no one in a position of leadership globally, including the UN Security Council. Even if the call for a global ceasefire in Resolution 2532 is considered legally binding, it means nothing to non-State armed groups that are not Members of the United Nations.

When two elephants are fighting, the grass underneath suffers the most. Behind the lukewarm attitude of the UNSC to walk the talk, the US government was pressing for a resolution which would implicate China from where the pandemic originated. In line with Donald Trump's description of COVID-19 as "the Chinese virus," many voices were canvassing for a court case against Beijing for hiding vital information about the deadly pandemic. But as Stephen L. Carter put it, China as a sovereign state enjoys immunity from such lawsuits.[31]

On her part, Beijing accused Washington of politicizing the pandemic in an attempt to whitewash its inefficient response. In an email released by a Chinese diplomat: "The groundless accusations and malicious fabrication from the U.S. aim at shirking its own responsibilities, which severely poisoned the atmosphere of global cooperation in containing the outbreak."[32] The Sino-American war of words may not necessarily translate into a conventional World War III but the aftermath of the COVID-19 will surely redefine the rules of the game.

In the short terms, manufacturing companies that were dormant in Europe and America have stepped up local production of drugs, ventilators, vaccines, and other medical equipment in an attempt to break the chain of dependency from China. The lockdown of cities and towns around the world not only makes international boundaries meaningless at this critical period, but also calls the attention of individuals, families, and communities to look after themselves without relying much on the service of security guards at the gate. Indeed, COVID-19 has exposed the problems with the kind of peace which the UNSC has promoted since 1945, namely the survival of big and small states in a fixed international system. This statist peace does not pay attention to the well-being of populations that make up such individual states. As Jessica Williams contends, "it is not hard to conceive of a world where development and wellbeing are made a bigger priority than developing new weapons whose sole purpose is to intimidate, maim and kill."[33]

ANOTHER MEANING OF PEACE UNVEILED

In this time of COVID-19, nothing could be worse than a return to normality. Pandemics have always forced human beings to break with the past and fashion new ways of life. However, instead of just adapting to the "New Normal," it is better to interrogate the system we have created

and consider whether we should spend more time fixing it or building a better model. The irony of the statist model of peace is such that rich nations spend billions on nuclear arsenals while their medical doctors and nurses have to make critical choices about which COVID-19 patients get placed on ventilators. A continuous search for alternatives to the mainstream peace of the military at the service of state is "probably the next threshold for peace theory and practices to cross."[34.]

In many traditions, peace greetings convey the wishes of well-being. For instance, peace in the Judeo-Christian tradition means *shalom* and it is the same for *salaam* in Islam. A close look at various African cultures points to many seeds of peace that need to be nurtured. Among the Yoruba in Southwest Nigeria, *alaafia* is a common form of greeting and it is regarded as the cornerstone of a fulfilled life. Similarly, the people of Kasai in Democratic Republic of Congo use the concept of peace greeting as *muoyo,* which is a formula for extending the wishes of well-being to one another. In southern Africa, the concept of peace as *ubuntu* carries the meaning of belonging, harmony, and care for one another by virtue of our shared humanity. In other words, there is no life outside of the community because as human beings we are related, connected, and bound together. As the French fable says, "help yourself, and heaven will help you."[35.]

Identification of personal hygiene (washing of hands, use of masks and social distancing) is found to be a practical way of protecting oneself and curbing the spread of the COVID-19 and other viruses to others. However, behind the WHO sanitary instructions can be deduced a revival of human agency that reconnects peace with the well-being of the citizens. By way of comparison, the mainstream concept of peace is state-bound, vertical, and costly. It translates a kind of military might in the hands of a few states, and it is reminiscent of *Pax Romana, Britannica, and Americana* which stand for an imposed settlement by hegemonic power.

On the contrary, the notion of "peace as health" is people-centered and relational. It is associated with the well-being of every human being irrespective of culture, social class and caste, race, and religion. It is not only empowering but also lifesaving and cost-effective.

CONCLUSION

This study has focused on the inability of the United Nations Security Council to unanimously recognize COVID-19 as a major threat to peace and security in the world and open the floodgate of collective action to save lives without delay. In coming days and months, armed with a veto power, China is likely to paralyze any resolution which challenges its national interests even though the UNSC presidency changes hands. It is not enough to call for a global ceasefire when non-State actors are involved in armed conflicts around the world. As such, this analysis has exposed the limits of the mainstream model of peace which is associated with high military spending to the detriment of vital sectors of human development. The ongoing blame game between the two economic superpowers is likely to plunge the world into deeper economic and security risks unless both parties agree to bury the hatchet. As privileged trading nations, both the United States and China must work together toward finding a lasting solution to the global pandemic before it is too late.

So far, access to the COVID-19 vaccines is conditioned by each nation's ability to pay the bills from big pharmaceuticals, leaving poor nations behind. The personal safety measures adopted by the WHO are not only cost-effective and people-centered, but they also carry a message of emancipation. The survival of a state, one can conclude, is not measured by the stock of sophisticated weapons but by the health of its population. Little wonder that the world is celebrating

the lifesaving role of health workers and volunteers as heroes. As Frank J. Kinslow put it, "No proclamation of world peace, no matter how lofty the organization that crafts it, can secure world peace. World peace will be realized only when the individuals of that world are at peace within themselves."[36.] The coronavirus has indeed taught the world that sustainable peace and citizens' well-being are interconnected, people-driven, and locally bound.

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