

The Outbreak: WHO to blame?

by Ümit Altar Binici

For nearly half a year, Coronavirus has been within our lives, altered today's world completely. Many countries have been working towards the future, trying their best to cure the disease. However, amid crisis, the eyes have been turned towards the World Health Organisation.

In January, one of the initial announcements made on behalf of WHO implied that Coronavirus do not transmit from human to human. However, at that time the Chinese government said the possibility of human to human transmission should not be excluded. Although after months we have learned that neither of these statements was true, the former made by WHO no doubt misled many governments into not taking the situation seriously. Of course, this unpreparedness caught the United States off guard and led hundreds of thousands of people to become infected.

In return, United States, also the largest single source of funding of the WHO, temporarily suspended the WHO funding for 60 days in April, accusing WHO of mismanaging and covering up the spread of the coronavirus. What is more, a few weeks ago, US President Donald J. Trump published a letter sent to the Director-General Dr. Tedros of World Health Organisation, threatening to cut WHO funding completely if WHO does not prove that the organization is independent of China. Knowing the initial misinforming reports from WHO, this very act of US could sound fair. However, since the US is the largest supporter of the WHO money-wise, the body could face its dissection if the funding gets cut off when it is needed the most. Whereas we might think that WHO is faulty, the information was provided to WHO by Chinese authorities. The accusation could very well be put on China, an example would be that China's initial censorship on Dr. Li Wenliang for "spreading rumors", later praising him as a martyr, when he was trying to warn other doctors about the new disease. The United States did try blaming China first, tried to associate the virus with the Chinese nation. However, it seems like trying to promote another cold war during a global crisis must have been a bad idea. Nonetheless, even though the US suffered the most, others are blaming WHO for inaccurate reports. Only a week after the letter is published, including the US and China, 194 members of the United Nations have come to a common ground that an independent investigation to be conducted on WHO.

Whether be in favor or against, over the course of everything happened so far implies that blaming WHO for acting irresponsibly, rather than accusing China of concealing reports, sounds like a safe choice at times of global crisis. Otherwise, a possible global economic depression would affect many countries very deeply. As once a wise man said: "Politics have no relation with morals." That said, I would like to ask you, the readers, once again: Is it really WHO to blame? If not, who is to blame?
