

The global tragedy of the COVID-19 pandemic has damaged every country, culture, and citizen negatively in mortality, morbidity, economically and psychologically and will mark history for eternity. The Miami Valley is not immune to this but is in a historically unique position to help turn this tragedy into an opportunity for peace and prosperity by sharing its rich culture, diversity, historic ingenuity, work ethic and location.

The SARS-CoV-2 virus, the cause of the COVID-19 pandemic, originated in China, coincidentally at the same time the United States and China are negotiating a historic trade agreement. The United States National Security and Defense Strategies specifically call for countering China's influence and military power as a top priority. Rumblings, both quiet and public, have circulated as to whether the COVID-19 pandemic was a counter to the US economic strength in the trade negotiation. Regardless whether the start of the COVID-19 pandemic was intentional or accidental, its release and subsequent mishandling were irresponsible, and China must be held accountable. Knowing that China is a top priority in current US security strategies, how should that accountability be handled? Observing the evident test of leadership in THIS moment, the real test will lie in planning for the POST COVID-19 world and therefore, it is our belief that a diplomatic solution should be sought that meets the goals of the United States, ceases any further suffering and could create a new era of global, ethical, bioscience research standards which could be applied to prevent future pandemics. The international system will continue to be deeply interconnected (biologic and economic) and will benefit from leadership and cooperation by the great powers (United States-People's Republic of China-Russian Federation) to drive recovery, and the prevention of another COVID-type-wave.

The problem-solving and leadership embodied in the Dayton Peace Accords (DPA- the successful negotiation of peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in 1995) provides a model of how to proceed. Dayton was picked as the location for negotiations because of its proximity to Washington, D.C. and possession of a secure location for the protection of the negotiation teams at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, while remaining somewhat remote. Dayton should once again offer itself as the preferred location for this new era of global security discussions.

The political leadership must rise to the level of scientific and technical cooperation we see in responding to COVID-19 and that leadership must embrace and support the scientific and technical communities such as Dayton. With its globally recognized academic institutions, performance and presentation arts, readied infrastructure and the birthplace of aviation, which changed the world in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Dayton has much to offer the world as the chosen location for building peace and security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Chris Royse and Dr. Donna Schlagheck, Wright State University, Department of Political Science Alumnus ('96) and Professor Emerita.

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