

**February 16, 2020**

## **An update message from the Program Organizing Committee and Local Organizing Committee for the 16<sup>th</sup> International Thyroid Congress regarding the 2019 novel coronavirus disease**

The outbreak of the 2019 novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) infection has unfortunately led to uncertainties for the upcoming 16th International Thyroid Congress in China. In early February, a joint statement, Bulletin Regarding the 16th ITC, was released by AOTA, LATS, ETA, and ATA. The Organizing Committees are making every effort to enable the conference to be unaffected. Below are updates regarding COVID-19 and its influence on the conference.

### **Current Situation in China**

In China, the National Health Commission of China releases daily briefing on novel coronavirus cases on the website, so as to people are aware of the changing affected numbers of COVID-19. As of Feb 15, 2020, 82% of the cases were from Hubei Province, the hardest-hit province in this outbreak. Numbers of newly confirmed cases in mainland of China (exclude Hubei Province) have been declining since February 4, 2020.

China has stepped up enormous efforts to curb the spread of COVID-2019. All 31 provinces in mainland China have now adopted the first-level response to major public health emergencies. The central government and some provincial governments have provided food and medical supplies and dispatched expert groups and medical teams to manage and control the outbreak in Hubei Province.

Growing evidence of the pathogens responsible for COVID-19 infection, as well as the epidemiological characteristics, and clinical features has been revealed and published. Chinese experts, along with scientists worldwide, are seeking ways to accelerate the development of interventions including vaccines and therapeutics.

### **Current Suggestions by the WHO**

On January 27, 2020, WHO released Updated WHO advice for international traffic in relation to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus 2019-nCoV ([https://www.who.int/ith/2019-nCoV\\_advice\\_for\\_international\\_traffic/en/](https://www.who.int/ith/2019-nCoV_advice_for_international_traffic/en/)), which advised against the application of any restrictions of international traffic based on the information currently available on this event.

On January 30, 2020, the WHO Director General has declared the outbreak of novel coronavirus 2019-nCoV as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), based on the advice of the Emergency Committee under the International Health Regulations (2005). Following that determination, WHO did not recommend any travel or trade restrictions, based on the current information available.

### **Current Suggestions by Different Countries**

Please refer to your government website(s) for local advice.

### **Actions from the 16th International Thyroid Congress**

The program organizing committee (POC) and local organizing committee (LOC) have extended deadlines for abstract submissions and early bird registrations.

So far, the POC and LOC would like to proceed the 16th International Congress as planned. But at the current time, we advise delaying making travel plans.

The POC and LOC are actively staying abreast of the situation and will endeavor to keep members of sister societies apprised of updated information.

**We apologize for any inconvenience. Please follow the updates on the conference website ([www.itc2020.org](http://www.itc2020.org)), as well as websites of AOTA, LATS, ETA, and ATA.**

Thank you.

Best regards,

Prof. Weiping Teng, Chair of the POC  
Prof. Zhongyan Shan, Vice-Chair of the LOC