

## **CORONAVIRUS: A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT AND CEO**

As the global community continues to grapple with COVID-19 (coronavirus) and its far-reaching implications, I am writing to update you about measures the Atlantic Council is taking to protect the health of our staff and the broader Atlantic Council community that attends our events, interacts with us in our offices and participates in our travels. Here is our new approach to events and travel, effective tomorrow, Thursday, March 12, through the end of March.

### **UPDATED TRAVEL POLICY**

For employees, we are prohibiting all business travel through March 31, except with my approval in urgently required situations through a request sent to our Chief Administrative Officer, Julie Varghese. Requests for travel beyond April 1 must also be approved by Julie. Our travel agency has been instructed not to book travel any travel through March 31. Furthermore, we will continue to ask employees to report their personal travel as well as travel of family members, or others, with whom they live, to any of the designated high-risk areas. Those areas include China, Iran, South Korea, Italy and Japan. We are extending those to include the following locations in the United States: Washington state, parts of California and New York.

Employees who have traveled to a location designated high-risk by the CDC and State Department are asked to maintain a 14-day self-quarantine period starting with the day they return home. Additionally, management is maintaining flexible policies that permit employees to work remotely, in consultation with your supervisor, or to stay home to care for sick family members. When traveling under any circumstances, we are asking all team members (employees, fellows, consultants, interns) who work out of any of our offices not to attend large convenings for personal or business reasons through the end of March.

### **EVENTS/OFFICE VISITORS/MEETING PARTICIPANTS**

Effective Thursday, March 12, the Council is suspending all in-person events and meetings through Friday, April 3. Given the recent World Health Organization declaration of a pandemic and in a further step to protect the health and safety of our staff and community, we have decided to move entirely to mandatory telework beginning Monday, March 16, through Friday, April 3. This period may be extended and we will re-evaluate as the situation develops.

During this period, our teams are working to innovate and develop engaging event formats that will not only be livestreamed but made interactive with online audiences.

### **OUR APPROACH ACROSS OUR WORK**

At the same time, the Atlantic Council team is also working to stay ahead of the geopolitical implications of this rapidly spreading disease. Given the economic, political and regional impacts of the virus, there probably isn't a program at the Atlantic Council whose work isn't in some way influenced.

It is during such challenging times, in fact, that our work becomes even more crucial in delivering understanding of the situation and providing policy approaches and lessons learned.

From an [event with NSA Robert O'Brien](#) on the impacts of coronavirus on the US-China relationship, among other issues, to a [timely series of panels and press/members calls](#) on the geopolitical and economic implications of the coronavirus, as well as the effects of disinformation on this global crisis, the Council is working across the board to go beyond the headlines and produce analyses in policy areas impacted by this growing global emergency. Click [here](#) to read more about our response.

I've also focused my weekly [Inflection Points newsletter](#) on the unfolding situation.

As always, don't hesitate to contact me with any comments, questions or advice.

**Frederick Kempe, President and CEO**