March 4, 2019

To the members of the Chinese American community in Houston:

We, members of AJC’s Community of Conscience, as members of faith and ethnic communities, express our solidarity with you during these tense and troubling times. We appreciate China’s efforts to contain, to treat and to provide research on the virus.

We convey our message to the Chinese people in Greater Houston, in China, and globally. We are concerned about rising xenophobia aimed at the Chinese in this country and abroad. Each of us knows that in such times, concern can quickly turn into hysteria. That hysteria can lead to scapegoating.

We commit to ensure that Chinese people feel safe and supported, and to respond to attacks and stereotyping on social media. Whether we are Jewish, Latino, African American, Muslim, and/or other diverse groups, we know from history that fearmongering can be devastating.

We are aware that many Chinese owned businesses have been affected by misinformed concerns about COVID-19 virus. We encourage our own communities not to give in to such fears. There is no need to avoid Chinese people or businesses.

Our communities share much in common, including a commitment to the highest ideals and welcoming spirit of America. All of us are more committed than ever to upholding these ideals and ensuring they are extended to you, our friends and neighbors in the City.

We know many of you are concerned about the health of relatives and friends in China. We offer our thoughts to each of you.

AJC created the Community of Conscience last November at its America’s Table Thanksgiving breakfast. Seeking to eradicate the hateful and divisive rhetoric that has poisoned the nation’s political discourse and spawned acts of violence in houses of worship, AJC has called on Americans to join its Community of Conscience.

The initiative includes a declaration of nine principles, https://global.jic.org/take-action/community aimed at rejecting bigotry and amplifying values that unite all Americans.

We can’t go it alone. We mustn’t. None of us can. We must all stand together. The Community of Conscience stands with you.

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