

Back in early 2020, when COVID-19 emerged, I called for the CDC to get access to China to learn about the virus so we could fight it more effectively. The failure to get our inspectors on the ground in those early months will always hamper any investigation into the origin of COVID-19.

Nevertheless, shortly after I became President, in March, I had my National Security Advisor task the Intelligence Community to prepare a report on their most up-to-date analysis of the origins of COVID-19, including whether it emerged from human contact with an infected animal or from a laboratory accident. I received that report earlier this month, and asked for additional follow-up. As of today, the U.S. Intelligence Community has “coalesced around two likely scenarios” but has not reached a definitive conclusion on this question. Here is their current position: “while two elements in the IC leans toward the former scenario and one leans more toward the latter – each with low or moderate confidence – the majority of elements do not believe there is sufficient information to assess one to be more likely than the other.”

I have now asked the Intelligence Community to redouble their efforts to collect and analyze information that could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion, and to report back to me in 90 days. As part of that report, I have asked for areas of further inquiry that may be required, including specific questions for China. I have also asked that this effort include work by our National Labs and other agencies of our government to augment the Intelligence Community’s efforts. And I have asked the Intelligence Community to keep Congress fully apprised of its work.

The United States will also keep working with like-minded partners around the world to press China to participate in a full, transparent, evidence-based international investigation and to provide access to all relevant data and evidence.

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