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WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the “continued increase in cases and the evidence of human-to-human transmission outside of China are, of course, most deeply disturbing.” The illness produces a range of symptoms with about 20% of the patients becoming severely ill, including pneumonia and respiratory failure, he said.

**VIDEO** 05:21**WHO spokesperson: Coronavirus a health crisis in China, not globally**

“Although the numbers outside China are still relatively small, they hold the potential for a much larger outbreak,” Tedros said.

Tedros, who joined the news conference late, said he met with Chinese leader [Xi Jinping](#), China’s National Health Commission minister, Ma Xiaowei, and China’s minister of foreign affairs, Wang Yi, on Tuesday. During the visit, Tedros and Chinese leaders discussed containment measures and sharing data on the virus, he said.

“I was very encouraged and impressed by the president’s knowledge of the outbreak and his personal involvement in the response,” Tedros said.



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