



June 25, 2020

Mr. Eric Yuan  
Chief Executive Officer  
Zoom Video Communications  
55 Almaden Boulevard, 6th Floor  
San Jose, CA 95113

Dear Mr. Yuan,

We write this letter to add our voice to a growing chorus of concerned lawmakers, human rights activists and advocates for internet freedom. Reports of Zoom's recent deactivation of the accounts of two U.S.-based, pro-democracy Chinese activists, as well as a Hong Kong activist, for holding Zoom events to commemorate the anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre offer ample cause for our apprehension. This feeling is only intensified by Zoom's own admission that these actions were taken at the behest of the Chinese government, in order to prevent Zoom users in mainland China from taking part in the events.

While Zoom's statement responding to the well-deserved outcry over its actions recognized that the company fell short in suspending and terminating the activists' accounts, it also stated that Zoom will work to develop technology that will enable the company to remove or block participants based on geography in the future – thus allowing Zoom to better comply with requests from local authorities, such as those made by the People's Republic of China.

We acknowledge the complexity of Zoom's situation as a U.S.-based company with a significant portion of its research and development team located in China. We understand the allure of doing business in that vast and populous nation. But recognizing this does not in any way excuse Zoom from the responsibility of taking a firm and unwavering stand on the side of internet freedom, particularly at a moment when its influence in the world is on the rise.

Zoom has played a pivotal role amid the COVID-19 outbreak, bringing together workplaces and communities in a safe, simple and reliable way. The company's technology may very well continue to play an outsized part in the way we communicate for months, or even years, to come. It is, therefore, imperative that Zoom makes a choice now – whether it will commit to upholding the values of freedom and democracy in all of its business dealings, or whether it will sacrifice these values in the name of cost-savings, growth or profit.

We would recall for you a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing in 2007, years before Zoom even came into existence. During this hearing, our namesake Congressman Tom Lantos drilled executives from Yahoo about their decision to work with Chinese censors, a move that resulted in the years-long imprisonment of journalists and human rights activists. Congressman Lantos berated them in no uncertain terms, saying, "While technologically and financially you are giants, morally you are pygmies." He demanded the CEO apologize to the mother of an imprisoned journalist, who sat just behind him. While it may be easy to make corporate decisions from the safety of a US office, the real-world implications of one's actions come into sharp focus when face to face with the lives ruined by your compliance.

It is our hope and belief that Zoom does not wish to earn for itself the shameful designation of "moral pygmies", but rather wants to align itself with those fighting to tear down the Great Firewall of China and extend internet freedom to its more than 1 billion citizens. We call on the company to commit to protecting and promoting its users' right to free speech, regardless of where they may live. If you must make changes in your operations to maintain your independence, we urge you to do so. If you must sacrifice a portion of your business to uphold democratic values, it will be a price well worth paying in order to preserve your moral dignity and further the noble cause of internet freedom throughout the world. If you want to become a leader in opening the internet to those living in repressed societies, we would be thrilled to partner with you to help find ways to not only be a better corporate citizen, but a true human rights leader.

Sincerely,

Dr. Katrina Lantos Swett  
President