



Dear World Leaders,

Following Canada's urgent health advisory and precautionary ban of potentially toxic face masks, we the undersigned individuals urge you to immediately remove masks with nanoparticles from the market and ban the sale of PPE containing nanoform materials.

We know that masks are a critical line of defense against COVID-19 and other airborne illnesses, but they shouldn't expose the public to additional health risk. Thousands of students in Quebec were issued masks treated with an antibacterial coating, intended to be an added layer of protection against the spread of COVID-19. This coating was a layer of nanographene — a tiny form of carbon with virucidal properties. After months of wearing the masks, people who wore them reported **difficulty breathing, skin irritation, and the feeling of “[breathing in cat hair](#).”**

There is not enough data about [how these particles react in our bodies](#). Some scientific studies have demonstrated lung toxicity in animals, and research is underway to find more answers about the effects on human health. In spite of these potential risks, millions of masks containing nanographene continue to be produced every day and are available for sale around the world.

Masks don't need nanomaterials to be effective. [A group of international NGOs](#) have already sent a [letter](#) to European officials asking them to take action. Now, we are urging you to **follow Canada's early example and ban personal protective equipment (PPE) made with potentially toxic materials.**

The public deserves masks that keep us safe and don't put us at risk. As world leaders, you have a responsibility to take urgent action to protect human health from this complicated risk.

Sincerely,