



**NATIONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMITTEE**  
**PRESS STATEMENT ON THE UPDATE OF CORONAVIRUS**  
**IN THE COUNTRY AND RESPONSE MEASURES AS AT 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**MARCH 2020**

The coronavirus has continued to affect the World in an unprecedented way. Global statistics indicate that as of March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020, there were 266,073 confirmed cases and 11,084 deaths.

The epicenter of the virus has since shifted from China to Europe. In Africa confirmed cases as of March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020 were 572 with 12 reported deaths.

On Friday we announced that there were no new coronavirus cases, and that the seven patients who had tested positive for the virus were still undergoing treatment and were stable. We continue to monitor their progress, as well as the individuals that came into contact with them.

In the last 72 hours, we have received confirmation of **Eight (8)** new cases who have tested positive for Coronavirus in the country. This now brings the number of those who have tested positive to fifteen (15).

Out of the latest eight (8) cases, five (5) are Kenyans and three (3) are foreign nationals-two French and one Mexican. All the eight are imported cases from Europe and America. The ages are between 20 years for the youngest and 67years for the oldest.

All the eight came through the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport between March 4<sup>th</sup> and March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020. They have all been isolated at various facilities and are being monitored by our teams.

We are tracing 363 persons who had come into contact with patients. So far we only have three people awaiting processing at Mbagathi hospital. The rest have been processed and discharged.

All the patients, except one who is at the Coast are in stable condition. The government is organizing to have the patient airlifted to Nairobi for further treatment.

Like I mentioned on Friday last week, our actions continue to be guided by the trends that we have observed in other countries. Evidence from other countries indicate that the number of infected persons increases dramatically in the second week following confirmation of a first case.

I did further indicate that this coming **two weeks are extremely critical for this country**, as we seek to contain the outbreak.

Fellow Kenyans, the government has in the past few weeks announced various measures that are aimed at containing this virus. However, we have noticed that majority of our people have continued to ignore these measures and are behaving as if it's business as usual.

Like I cautioned last week, this is not a joke, Kenyans **MUST** treat this matter with the seriousness it deserves, by adjusting and changing their lifestyles. If we continue to behave normally, this disease will treat us abnormally.

In addition to the measures we have already announced, the NERC has today resolved as follows:

1. All international flights are suspended effective Wednesday March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at midnight with the exception of cargo flights whose crew must observe strict guidelines. Those coming into the country between now and Wednesday will undergo mandatory quarantine at a government designated facility at their own expense.

Countries wishing to evacuate their nationals must make their arrangements to do so within this period. Kenyans who are currently in foreign countries, and will not have come back within the period are advised to observe the guidelines issued in the respective countries wherever they are.

2. Whereas we had allowed Kenyans and foreigners with valid residence permits to come in to the country, we have observed that there are those who are not observing the self-quarantine protocol. Consequently NERC has decided that all persons who violate the self-quarantine requirement will be forcefully quarantined for a full period of 14 days at their cost, and thereafter arrested and charged under the Public Health Act.

3. Effective midnight tonight, all BARS will remain closed until further notice. Restaurants are to remain open but only for purposes of facilitating take away services. This is meant to

secure the social distance requirement, noting the increased risk of transmission these facilities cause.

4. Further in order to give effect to the social distance requirement in the public transport sector all public service vehicles must adhere to the directive issued on Friday March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 failure to which the respective Sacco licenses will be revoked. The Inspector General of Police has been already directed to enforce this directive.

5. Lastly, having noted the non-compliance of religious institutions to the social distance requirement as issued on Friday March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the NERC has directed the suspension of all church, mosques, and other religious gatherings. This also include weddings, funerals and other social gatherings which are restricted to immediate family members only. These directives take effect immediately until further notice.

Once again we are aware that these measures may be inconvenient at the moment, but I assure that they are necessary for meeting our indicated objective of keeping all Kenyans safe.

**Hon Mutahi Kagwe, EGH**

**CABINET SECRETARY**