



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

70<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE WHO REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA

**KENYA'S NATIONAL STATEMENT DURING SPECIAL EVENT ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE  
IN THE AFRICAN REGION**

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- **Thank you, Chairperson,**
- **Honourable Ministers and Heads of Delegations,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Kenyan delegation would like to thank the Secretariat for organizing this special event on the COVID-19 response in the African Region.

**Chairperson,**

The world continues to face unprecedented difficult times due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic which was first detected in Wuhan China, in December 2019. The pandemic has since spread across the globe devastating lives and economies as well disrupting the way we live and introducing numerous 'NEW NORMALS'.

Apart from the unfortunate loss of lives and increased morbidity amongst our populations, the other key sectors that have been adversely affected by this scourge is education, hospitality, manufacturing, transport, labor and others. This is clearly a major setback to the progress of development worldwide including attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The adverse impact will continue to be felt until this pandemic is successfully brought to an end.

**Chairperson,**

Just like other WHO Afro Member States, Kenya has not been spared by the pandemic. We recorded the 1<sup>st</sup> case of COVID-19 on 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 in Nairobi County. Since then, the country has recorded cases in all the 47 counties with some of the counties disproportionately affected. As at 24<sup>th</sup> August, 2020 a total of **32,557** cases with **554** deaths (**CFR 1.7%**) have been reported.

In response to this public health emergency, the country has undertaken the following intervention measures:

- Coordinated response efforts through whole government/society approach with full support by the Executive led by His Excellency the President
- Activated Public Health Emergency Operation Centre (PHEOC) to full activation level to coordinate technical aspects of the response efforts
- Enhanced surveillance for COVID-19 countrywide including at all Points of Entry (POEs)

- Scaled up the diagnostic capacity to ensure timely confirmation of suspected COVID-19 cases. Currently, we have 34 laboratories spread across the country with capacity to undertake PCR tests.
- Imposed travel restrictions to and from counties with intense community transmission.
- Suspension of large social, religious and political gatherings to ensure social and physical distancing are achieved. Learning institutions were also closed.

**Chairperson,**

Kenya is fully committed to providing her share of support towards COVID-19 response measures within and beyond our region. To this end, and in recognition to the call by WHO to African countries to be part of the global effort to find 'One Vaccine for all' to support in the fight against COVID-19, Kenya has joined up with others to be part of this global race to find an effective vaccine. Our scientists at KEMRI will in the next few weeks be conducting local trials for one of the vaccine candidates, (ChAdOx1 nCoV-19) which has already reached phase 3 trials in the United Kingdom, Brazil and South Africa. In addition, Kenya has contributed **fifty (50)** health care workers from various disciplines to support surge capacity in Seychelles.

In conclusion, Chairperson, Kenya wishes to applaud WHO for the critical role played it has played in providing technical leadership and mobilizing resources from partners to facilitate timely containment of this pandemic. We are calling for collective efforts from all Member States in tackling this menace.

I thank you.