

Common Market for  
Eastern and Southern Africa



# COVID-19 MEASURES in MEMBER STATES



17 July 2020

15 Edition

**T**his publication comprises a listing of measures that COMESA Member States have put in place to contain the spread of the Corona virus. They cover trade facilitation and support to businesses, protection of the vulnerable from the impact of the spread of the virus and other relevant measures. It also includes the support received from the international community Aid agencies. A trendline on the number of cases reported has also been included as well as the contacts of the focal points in the Ministries that coordinate COMESA activities in Member States.

This document is updated on a regular basis to take into account the new measures that governments are putting in place in response to the changing circumstances.

The data and information are drawn from monitoring press briefings of the national COVID-19 response taskforces and other open sources.

**Compiled by:**

*Trade and Customs Division &  
Governance, Peace and Security Unit*

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## Burundi



### BACKGROUND

The first case of COVID-19 was reported on 31st March 2020

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#### Preventive Measures in Place

- Suspension of passenger flights in and out of Burundi from 22nd March 2020.
- All borders were closed except for cargo. Travelers are advised that if they plan to cross the border from Rwanda into Burundi, they may be denied entry
- Mandatory quarantine for 14 days for those exposed or suspected of having the virus.
- As from 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020, mass testing campaign launched in Bujumbura City. Other measures put in place include:
  - reduction on the price of soap and water to enhance and ensure accessibility,
  - provision of masks to the citizens,
  - health personnel equipped with protective masks,
  - hygiene to be maintained in public transport vehicles and passengers to wear masks.
- Limited access to hotel premises for two months at least since then.
- Sensitization and awareness campaign have been created through TV and Radio.
- Installation of hand sanitizers and water for handwashing in public places.
- The authorities have asked hospitals to make beds available for potential cases (20 for each national hospital and 5 for each local hospital).

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#### Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- From the new COVID 19 government directives/guidelines, all borders are now open for cargo movement. Cargo flights are still operating.

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#### Coordinating Ministry (National Contact Points)

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## Comoros



### BACKGROUND

**First case of Corona virus was confirmed on 30 April 2020**

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#### Preventive Measures in Place

- Adherence to barriers as announced by the President including regular washing of hands, social distancing (1-2 meters), etc
- Closure of all schools and educational institutions of higher learning effective 20th March 2020
- Prohibitions of gatherings of more than 20 people
- Ban of collective prayers including Friday prayers (blessed day for Muslims)
- Flights between Comoros and the islands of Mayotte and the Réunion suspended
- Quarantine measures implemented for travelers from, or those who have transited through COVID-19- infected countries
- Night curfews to restrict movements

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#### Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Closing of sea and air borders (except for cargo ships and/or special evacuations)
- Support for economic operators and households (reduction of customs duties, deferral of tax obligations, etc.)
- Import taxes on food, medicines, and items related to hygiene reduced by 30 percent.
- A fund to support employees associated with airport operations created.
- The Central Bank reduced reserve requirements to 10 percent.
- The authorities announced a restructuring of commercial loans and freezing of interest rates in some commercial loans.

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## Democratic Republic of Congo



### BACKGROUND

The first case was reported on 10 March 2020.

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- Formation of a COVID-19 Task Force and a coordination team in the government on 18 March and issuance of Presidential Decree declaring a State of Emergency.
- Extension on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020 of Coronavirus Health Emergency Decree for an additional 15 days.
- Closure of all education centers, prohibition of all gatherings of people in public spaces, including suspension of all religious and sporting events, and closure of bars and restaurants
- Mandatory wearing of masks
- Suspension of all major international passenger flights into and out of the country from 20 March until further notice. However, cargo flights allowed to operate
- Closure of land borders with Angola, the Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda starting 21 March.
- Declaration of a 48-hour-long total confinement from 23 March 2020 over all Haut-Katanga province.
- Release by Government of 1200 inmates from Makala Prison and other prison facilities on 7<sup>th</sup> April to decongest the prisons
- Ban of inter-provincial travel from 24<sup>th</sup> March
- Prohibition of all gatherings of people in public spaces
- Shut down of all land, sea and air borders to passenger, private or commercial travel from 24<sup>th</sup> March
- The development of a response national plan with an estimated budget of \$135 million (0.3 percent of GDP) to:
  - i. Strengthen early detection and surveillance and foster coordination within the government and expert that helped discover Ebola charged to coordinate the mechanism
  - ii. Improve the quality of medical care to infected patients; and
  - iii. Develop preventive communication strategies and enhance medical logistic platforms.
- Dashboard that shows current information and information on COVID-19 put in place on: <https://www.stopcoronavirusrdc.info/>

#### Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Continuation with mineral export trade from Lubumbashi despite 24-hour lockdown on 28 April 2020
- The borders are open and Customs officers on duty
- Measures to facilitate the cross-border movement of relief consignments and essential supplies include: Emergency collection of in-bond pharmaceutical inputs and products; Limitation of Customs controls to what is strictly necessary; Authorization to make incomplete and provisional declarations; Exemption from duties and taxes on pharmaceutical supplies and equipment and essential supplies, in accordance with government instructions.
- Measures put in place to support the economy and ensure supply chain continuity include: Access to goods removal credit; Adoption of measures allowing payment by instalments of Customs duties and taxes and of penalties; Suspension of checks at outposts; Action to facilitate compliance with the formalities for Customs clearance of goods; Measures adopted in accordance with government guidelines, in particular as regards exemption from duties and taxes on pharmaceutical inputs and

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medical equipment and the suspension of Value-Added Tax (VAT) on imports of basic necessities.

- Measures to ensure protection for Customs Administration personnel and other border authorities at the border. Measures put in place to facilitate the cross-border movement of relief consignments and essential supplies include: Emergency collection of in-bond pharmaceutical inputs and products; Limitation of Customs controls to what is strictly necessary; Authorization to make incomplete and provisional declarations; Exemption from duties and taxes on pharmaceutical supplies and equipment and essential supplies, in accordance with government instructions.
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- Measures to ensure protection for Customs Administration personnel and other border authorities at the border.
- Kasumbalesa border open but limited flows / inbound flows / traffic out of Zambia Freight services and emergency transportation exempted from the Presidential Decree ban subject to strict screening of crews before admittance to allow entry of cargo.
- Promotion of use of e-payments to reduce contamination risks in bank notes.
- Fast tracking of ASYCUDA World Implementation approved.
- Through the Central Bank (BCC) on 24 March to ease liquidity conditions such as:
  - I. Reduction of policy rate to 7.5 percent
  - II. Elimination of mandatory reserve requirements on demand deposits in local currency
  - III. Extension of the maturity of emergency liquidity loans to up to 24 months.
  - IV. Postponement of the adoption of new minimum capital requirements.

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## Djibouti



### BACKGROUND

First case reported on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- The Djibouti Government has set up an Inter-Ministerial Committee chaired by the Prime Minister and subcommittees have been established to observe the situation and impact.
- A nation-wide lockdown is in place, except for essential services.
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- Djibouti-Ambouli International Airport to reopen for commercial flights beginning 17th July 2020. All passengers entering Djibouti will be tested for COVID-19 upon arrival by Ministry of Health personnel. sea ports and border posts will be open to receive outsiders.
- Gatherings of more than ten people not allowed.
- Use of facial masks in all public or private spaces in which social distancing cannot be observed is mandatory.
- Public and private construction activities allowed to operate.
- Traffic has been restricted to the minimum and is only allowed with administrative authorization.
- Hotels can resume normal operations on 30th June 2020.
- Restaurants and cafes reopen on 16th June 2020 with social distancing and hygiene measures in place;
- Conference rooms, event halls, and cinemas are closed until 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020;
- Grocery stores and retail outlets have reopened.
- Leisure and amusement sites as well as hotels have reopened.
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- Closure of educational institutions, sports events and bars. Schools to remain closed until 2nd September 2020 – the start of the next school year;
- Places of worship reopened but must follow very strict measures of ensuring protection including wearing of facial masks and social distancing.
- Quarantine sites to be established for infected persons and contact tracing procedures put in place.
- The World Bank has provided Djibouti with US\$5 million credit towards efforts to prevent, detect, and respond to the rapid spread of COVID-19.
- The World Health Organization has delivered protective equipment to the Ministry of Health including goggles, surgical gowns, gloves, face masks and hand sprayers. WHO has also ordered 500 test machines and 80 respirators for COVID-19 preparedness in the country.

#### Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Cargo movement of goods and services permitted.
- Only commercial traffic to/from Ethiopia allowed through Galafi border. At Galafi, a health checkpoint has been set up to screen people for Covid-19.
- Port communities have raised awareness among Ethiopian drivers on compliance with barrier measures and brochures in Amharic language were produced and disseminated to the latter.
- The Djibouti Port and Corridor is still operational, and no case has been detected. An alerting protocol is implemented by the port communities.
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- Slight truck shortage experienced due to spike in demand and drivers' fear of COVID-19.
- Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority (DPFZA) introduced online payment gateway facility for the port community in order to limit physical visits to ports and free-zones premises and decrease online documentation completion time,

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enable savings on transportation while respecting government measures to contain the spread of the pandemic

- Djibouti made 82.5% reduction in port tariffs and granted Free Terminal Handling Charges for 60 days, from Thursday, April 16th, 2020 for Ethiopia export cargo to the world gated in Djibouti Ports.

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## Egypt



### BACKGROUND

#### The first case reported on 14th February 2020

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- Re-opening of mosques from 1st July 2020 for daily prayers but Friday and Saturday prayers not allowed. Toilets and ceremonial halls at worship places to remain closed as well.
- Public parks and beaches to remain closed.
- Public transport will resume and operate between 4 a.m. and midnight.
- Restaurants and cafes to resume operations with 25 per cent capacity and to close by 10:00 p.m. Other shops to close by 9:00 p.m.
- Restriction of public gatherings in schools, universities, bars, clubs, malls, public transport, public gathering places and tourists' locations.
- Cinemas, theatres, and entertainment venues to remain closed.
- Hotels allowed to re-open, provided they abide by strict hygiene measures stipulated by the government, at 25% occupancy rate in May and 50% occupancy rate in June.
- Preparation of medical sites nationwide in anticipation of the escalation of Covid-19 patients.
- Released over 4000 prisoners to prevent overcrowding in prisons and contain the spread of the Coronavirus.
- The government has expanded the cash transfer programs known as Takaful and Karama (Solidarity and Dignity). In addition, the government has instituted new programs to provide cash transfers to irregular workers who are substantially affected by the crisis and distribute medical and sanitation kits to poor villages.
- Fiscal policy is being eased to support the economy and address crisis needs, including increases in health spending (26 percent) and social protection (10 percent).
- EgyptAir to resume flights to 24 destinations from July 2020.
- Flights and tourism activities to resume in the following three governorates: Red Sea, Marsa Matrouh, and South Sinai.
- Abolishment of COVID-19 testing at airports.
- Mandatory quarantine for visitors who test positive for Coronavirus in a government isolation hospital.
- Adoption of an integrated plan which covers early detection, quarantine and treatment measures, as well as raising public awareness.
- Schools, universities and colleges and all sporting activities closed.
- All services provided by ministries and governorates to citizens, such as civil registry services, work permits, passports and renewal of traffic licenses, are all suspended.
- Securing food stuff and goods in preparation for the months ahead.
- Allocation 100 billion Egyptian pounds (6.35 billion U.S. dollars) to finance the anti-COVID-19 comprehensive plan and its precautionary measures.
- Increased number of metro coaches in operation
- Daily sterilization off all terminals, means of transport and roads.
- Public transport operators not to carry more than 50% of capacity of conveyance
- Total lockdown in a number of villages including Nile Delta, Gharbia, Menoefia and in some residential building in the Suez-canal city of Port Said.
- Decontamination of 7500 buildings including government administrative building and tourist facilities.
- Extension of the state of emergency for another three months from 28<sup>th</sup> April.
- Expatriation of more than 1,100 of its citizen from Kuwait

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- The government is introducing measures to partially offset the revenue shortfall such as promoting green recovery through a fee on the consumption of fuel products.
  - The government has hastened structural reforms that began under the Extended Fund Facility. The reforms being undertaken include streamlining the financial operations of state-owned enterprises and economic authorities, strengthening competition by levelling the market to encourage SMEs and amendment of the customs law to improve Egypt's investment climate.
  - Limiting cash withdrawals and deposits to avoid overcrowding during payroll and pension disbursement. A daily limit of 10,000 Egyptian pounds (around 630 USD) for individuals and 50,000 (around 3180 USD) for businesses is applied.
  - Launched an online awareness campaign against COVID using animation. This is also aimed at curbing misinformation.
  - Starting May 30, people should wear face masks in public places, with violators fined 4,000 pounds (\$250) by police
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- Slight lifting of overnight curfew to start at 9pm instead of 8 pm. Shopping malls that were originally ordered to close to remain open until 5pm
  - The international Monetary Fund approved an additional loan of USD 5.2 billion on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2020 to help Egypt ameliorate the economic impacts of COVID-19.
  - On 14<sup>th</sup> March, the government announced a USD 6.4 billion stimulus package allocating 20 billion Egyptian pounds (\$1.2bn) to support the country's stock exchange.
  - Reduction of Tariffs: USD4.50 per million British Thermal Unit (mmBtu) (previously USD 6.00 per mmBtu for cement companies and USD5.50per mmBtu for metallurgy and ceramic manufacturers).
  - Reduction in the price of electricity for "heavy industries" from EGP 1.10 to EGP 0.10 (c. USD 0.0064) per kilowatt hour. Electricity prices frozen for other industries for 3-5 years.
  - The Export Subsidy Fund will pay out the entire EGP 1 billion in arrears during March and April, plus 10% in cash payments to exporters during June 2020.
  - The Central Bank of Egypt decreased interest rates from 13.75% to 10.75%.
  - The Central Bank of Egypt extended the tenor of all bank loans to businesses for six months and provides debt relief for individuals.
  - The National Bank of Egypt announced a one-year savings deposit program with a 15% interest rate.
  - The Financial Regulatory Authority has announced an extension to 15 June for EGX listed companies to submit their financial statements for Q4 2019 (original deadline 30 April).
  - The exemption from the taxation of capital gains on securities listed on the Egyptian stock exchange (EGX) for Egyptian residents will be extended to 1 January 2022 (originally due to expire 17 May 2020).
  - The exemption from the taxation of capital gains on securities listed on the Egyptian stock exchange (EGX) for non-residents will be made permanent.
  - Withholding tax on dividends paid by companies listed on the EGX reduced from 10% to 5%.
  - From 25 March 2020, the Egyptian Ministry of Trade and Industry (the Foreign Trade Sector) put the following measures in place (i) documents, such as commercial invoices, would be accepted without being accredited by the Chambers of Commerce (this usually being a requirement) and (ii) certificates of origin would be accepted without authorization from the Egyptian Embassy abroad.
  - Stamp duty on transactions on the Egyptian stock exchange (EGX) will be reduced from 0.15% to 0.125% for non-residents.
  - Three-month extension for the payment of property taxes for companies in the industrial and tourism sector.
  - The grant of an "immediate" financing for the import of key commodities.
  - Trade between Egypt and Saudi Arabia to be done through trailers only without trucker by using RORO ships.
  - General Authority for Investment and Free Zones (GAFI) currently permits local companies to hold their meetings virtually via conference and/or video calls.
  - The EGX developed electronic trading support systems allowing remote access to several platforms, including customer coding, electronic membership system, financial solvency, and OMNI accounts.
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- Allocation of USD 6.35 billion to raise wages and pension
  - Opened up hotels to allow for domestic tourism on condition that they operate at no more than 25 percent capacity and adhere to arrange of other health measures
  - Provide 3-month tax relief for Real Estate taxes for tourism and industrial sectors;
  - A USD 2.7 billion loan was requested and granted by the IMF, as an emergency support;
  - Write-off EGP 17 billion from 226 distressed firms
  - Starting 1st July 2020 scheduled international flights and foreign tourists allowed to travel to resorts that have been least affected by the coronavirus.
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## Eritrea



### BACKGROUND

The first case reported on March 21st, 2020

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- A lockdown declared on 2nd April 2020.
- National Task Force on COVID-19 was established at high and lower levels and has issued regulations and implementing Guidelines.
- All entry visas to Eritrea suspended.
- All citizens, except those engaged in indispensable developmental and security tasks directed to stay at home.
- Only a maximum of two members of a household are allowed to go out from their homes to buy essential food items during the day. This conditional permission also holds for emergency medical treatment.
- All trading activities and transactions banned. Similarly, weekly markets that occur in various parts of the country also to remain closed.
- All government institutions ceased from performing routine services and functions to focus on indispensable developmental and security tasks and most public sector employees to stay at home.
- People that have been confined to their homes are not allowed to use their private cars during the period of lockdown, except the citizens employed in institutions that have been allowed to continue their functions. All public and private education institutions that will continue their operations will have to strictly observe social distancing and all personnel of the public and private bodies that will continue their operations will be issued with permits by their respective institutions.
- From 17<sup>th</sup> May 2020 random and extensive COVID-19 testing to be carried out. Residents of Asmara, frontline health workers, and residents of border areas to be targeted. Food production, supply and processing enterprises as well as grocery stores, pharmacies and banks will continue to provide services. These institutions will close at 8:00 p.m. every evening.

#### Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Major productive and service sectors (manufacturing, food processing, construction, and transport) allowed to continue operations.
- Citizens in the rural areas engaged in farming and animal husbandry allowed to continue their occupational activities.

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## Eswatini



### BACKGROUND

The first coronavirus case reported on 13 March 2020.

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- The Government established the Cabinet sub-committee, Emergency Task Force, Regional and Sector Committees to implement the COVID-19 Emergency Plan and declared a national state of emergency
- Partial lockdown to continue.
- Government announced a one-month extension of the National Emergency in Eswatini with effect from 19 May 2020.
- Operation permits for non-essential businesses revoked beginning 24 April, that include car dealerships, craft vendors, photographic studios, agents and consultants, dry cleaners, driving schools, furniture shops, general dealers not selling food items, car wash business, casinos and gambling shops, clothing shops (excluding baby shops)
- Only essential sectors as identified allowed to operate and to also follow WHO Guidelines;
- Suspension of private and public gatherings of 50 people or more
- Closure of schools
- Suspension of non-essential travel for all citizens
- Recruitment and training of health workers, including scheduled onsite trainings of army personnel on screening at informal points of entry
- Intensive screening and mandatory self-isolation for residents/citizens coming from high risk countries,
- Enhanced coordination and collaboration among stakeholders through one channel of communication and conducting joint inspections,
- Collaboration with neighboring countries through sharing of information on national developments that impact the movement of goods across the border,
- Provision of PPE to staff and sensitization on the pandemic,
- Restricted entry to foreign nationals coming from high-risk countries.
- The Government issued a supplementary budget for public healthcare amounting to E100 million (app. US\$ 5.38 million) or 0.14 percent of GDP.
- Redirected low priority recurrent spending to the fight against the pandemic and health infrastructure
- Ban on alcohol production and distribution for two months starting 1 July 2020.

#### Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Contact Point for information on measures affecting trade set up and appointed including the contact details provided.
- Manufacturing and Processing:
- Government recommended the introduction of more shifts to limit the number of employees in factory floors and restrict the number of employees in any defined working area.
- Businesses obliged to ensure compliance with the World Health Organization's social distancing guidelines (1.5-meter distance between 2 individuals).
- In terms of hygiene the following for businesses to comply with:
  - Reinforcement of cleaning and sanitization protocols,
  - At Point of Sale (POS), there shall be a dedicated resource whose sole job will be to enforce social distancing measures as patrons make payment for their shopping.
  - Management obliged to ensure that at no point in time does the number of people exceed 20 inside any establishment. For smaller retail shops, this figure shall even be lower. In any event, social distancing of 1.5 metres apart shall be observed without fail. Sanitise counters, doors and areas subject to frequent contact by people.

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- Management obliged to enforce these measures at all times and the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade with the help of duly authorised agencies such as Business Eswatini and FESBC shall ensure compliance.
  - Employers to ensure that public transport in which their employees are transported are sanitized both at boarding and disembarking.
  - On 7 May 2020, the government announced the easing of restrictions as follows:
    - Manufacturing and Production companies that have international orders to fulfil - under strict WHO and Ministry of Health Guidelines.
    - Agents and Consultants to operate three times a week
    - Furniture Shops to open three times a week; Tuesday, Thursday and Friday between 9am and 3pm.
    - Dry Cleaners to also operate under similar conditions as furniture shops.
    - Retail Clothing Shops, tailors and dressmakers (that produce face masks and PPE) to operate three times a week – Monday, Wednesday and Saturday between 9am and 3pm.
    - Vehicle testing stations to operate three times a week.
    - Deco Shops to operate three times a week
  - Redirected low priority recurrent spending to the fight against the pandemic and for health infrastructure.
  - Through the Central Bank of Eswatini, a reduction of the discount rate by 100 basis points to 5.5 percent; Reduced the reserve requirement to 5 percent (from 6 percent); Reduced the liquidity requirement to 20 percent (from 25) for commercial banks and to 18 percent (from 22) for the development bank
  - Encouragement of greater use of electronic payments;
  - Encouragement to banks by the Central Bank to consider loan restructuring and repayment holidays.
  - Cross Border Trade to operate normally;
  - Provision for later completion of clearance procedures
  - Fast tracking clearance of goods for the fight against COVID-19, i.e. medicaments. Clearance can be done after, controls still exercised
  - Enhanced Customs collaboration with other stakeholders i.e. Health (communication to clients through one channel, joint inspections, etc.)
  - Provision of PPE to the Customs staff, sensitization on the pandemic.
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## Ethiopia



### BACKGROUND

The first case reported on 13th March 2020.

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- On April 8, the Prime Minister declared a State of Emergency for 5 months under Article 93 of the constitution, which allows it to impose more stringent measures.
- Closing of all schools including institutions of higher learning and banning of public gatherings including sporting events from 16th March 2020
- Release of over 4000 prisoners to prevent overcrowding in prisons and contain the spread of the coronavirus
- Postponement of elections from 29th August 2020 to a new date to be determined
- The mandatory 14-day quarantine of arrivals from abroad has been shortened to as few days as three. In addition, passengers from abroad who hold COVID-19 negative certificates are mandated to isolate themselves for only three days after giving samples and stay for 14 days at home before joining their communities.
- All movements across land borders, except for the flow of cargo and essential goods, are suspended effective 23rd March
- Closure of all-night clubs and places of entertainment effective 20th March until further notice
- Wearing of face masks is mandatory when visiting 'service providing' places such as shops and everyone must stand at least two strides apart
- Government employees ordered to work from home
- Sporting activities at all levels are prohibited
- Greetings by handshake are banned
- As of 1st April, suspension of mass gatherings in places of worship including mosques and churches
- House to house screening and diagnostic testing conducted.
- Rigorous contact tracing, isolation, compulsory quarantine and treatment.
- COVID-19 Response Fund established for resource mobilization. Comprises both private and public institutions. Contributions are both financial and non-financial and include buildings, hotels, vehicles, sanitary items, masks, etc.

#### Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Extra funding for healthcare facilities
- Removal of the restriction on floor price for flower exports that was previously set by the National Bank of Ethiopia
- National Bank of Ethiopia has availed 15-billion-birr (About USD 450 million) liquidity for private banks to enable them to provide debt relief and additional loans to their customers in need and especially the businesses adversely affected by COVID-19
- Clamping down price gouging by retailers to protect low income households
- Emergency support of \$82.8M from the World Bank to mitigate the economic impact of COVID-19
- Ethiopia has relaxed rules for mobile banking and money transfers, opening the market to all local businesses to encourage people to go cashless to control the spread of coronavirus
- Commercial banks ordered to give priority to importers that import goods to combat COVID-19 like ventilators, sanitary goods and medical equipment, including testing kits, when providing forex.
- Ministerial level macro-economic management sub-committee has been set up



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- Waived all duties and taxes on all medical supplies and equipment imported to fight COVID- 19
  - Ethiopian Airlines continues to operate concentrating mainly on cargo deliveries and scaled down passenger flights by about 90%
  - Border closure in effect but no restrictions on cargo movements from Djibouti to Ethiopia. Custom offices operating on both sides. However, shortage of trucks to Djibouti due to spike in demand
  - Djibouti Port operational for Ethiopian service. However, extended lockdown in Djibouti affecting operational hours for Shipping Lines and the storage space shortage in Djibouti port adds costs and time to the clearance of containers at the port.
  - Ethiopia-Sudan border is closed to all traffic.
  - Customs and Revenue authorities are facilitating continuity of business by implementing e-documents and e-payments and pre-arrival clearance procedures and exempting some required documents such as certificate of origin.
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Coordinating Ministry  
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## Kenya



### BACKGROUND

**The first case was reported on 13 March 2020.**

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- Coronavirus Task Force established as a national emergency response
- Gradual reopening of schools set to commence on September 1, 2020.
- Suspension of , weddings, for 30 days. However, the government has allowed for the reopening of restaurants albeit under strict measures to maintain social distancing.
- As from July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 places of worship opened with strict adherence to health measures.
- Fines and jail time introduced for those found in breach of the measures.
- Minimized attendance of social gatherings like weddings, funerals, malls for a period of 30 days.
- Minimized congestion in public transport and limiting visitors to hospitalized patients in both public and private hospitals.
- Public transport including all matatus, hospitals and shopping malls are encouraged to provide soap, water and hand sanitizers and ensure that all their vehicles and premises are regularly cleaned and disinfected.
- Government registries and the courts are closed except for the handling of emergency matters.
- Government offices, businesses and companies have been encouraged to allow employees to work from home except of employees working in critical or essential services.
- Cessation of movement into and out of Eastleigh and Old Town, Kwale and Kilifi counties lifted.
- Curfew hours relaxed from 9 pm to 4 am as of June 7, 2020. The curfew to continue for another 30 days from 7 June 2020.
- Development of a local testing kit for COVID-19 by the Kenya Medical Research Institute.
- Travel suspended for all persons coming into Kenya from any country with reported cases of Coronavirus.
- Kenya citizens and any foreigner with valid residence permit entering Kenya is required to self- quarantine or go to a government designated quarantine facility.
- The cessation of movement in and out of Nairobi Metropolitan area, Mombasa, Kilifi, Kwale, Mandera Counties lifted as from 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020.
- Resumption of domestic air travel from 15<sup>th</sup> July and international flights to resume on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020.
- Mass production of sanitizers, masks and ventilators by private sector in Kenya
- Temperature readings for truck crews to be taken at entry points and at designated weighbridges which are: Namanga; Busia, Gilgil, Mariakani; Malaba and Taveta.
- Truck occupants must keep temperature/readings/health forms until they exit Kenya unless they are Kenyan residents; stringent screening of the trucks; limited numbers of crew and passengers, and any truck crew member who exhibits symptoms occupants subject to a 14 days quarantine.
- Cashless transactions encouraged and facilitated to limit contact.
- Stringent medical screening at all border points. Only drivers, loader plus the clearing agent are allowed across the border.
- A 100-percent tax relief for low-income-earning persons up to KES24,000
- Reduced the top Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) rate from 30 percent to 25 percent.
- Appropriation of KES 10 billion through cash transfers to the vulnerable members of society.
- Temporary suspension of listing with Credit Reference Bureau for persons who default on their loan obligations with effect from 1 April 2020.

- Disbursement of KES 1 billion for the recruitment of additional medical personnel.
- The government committed to pay the bills for all those in isolation centres thus encouraging testing.

**Trade  
Facilitation /  
Business  
Support**

- Cashless transactions such as mobile money and credit cards are encouraged. Mobile operators and banks have been implored to take into consideration the situation and reduce the cost of transactions during this period.
- The reduction of the standard VAT rate from 16 percent to 14 percent (effective 1 April 2020).
- A reduction of the resident corporate income tax from 30 percent to 25 percent.
- 24-hour Call Centre and information portal set up and manned by Kenya Private Sector Association (KEPSA)
- Lowering of Central Bank Rate (CBR) to 7.2%
- Lowering of Cash Reserve Ration (CRR) to 4.2%
- Central Bank of Kenya to offer flexibility to banks on loans that were active as of March 2020 to maintain liquidity levels
- Assessment and restructuring loans taken by corporate borrowers (and SMEs) based on their respective circumstances arising from the pandemic.
- Cargo movement allowed to continue however spike in transport requirements has led to a strained supply of trucks.
- Mandatory requirement for all returning cargo crew to self-isolate for a period of 14 days straining cargo operations.
- Office hours for Customs Offices changed to 9.00 – 3.00pm at a 50% reduced staffing. There is also reduced access to Customs officers and other officials.
- Kenya Ports Authority has reduced workforce to two shifts.
- KPA enabled online document submission systems to reduce human contact at Mombasa Port
- Mandatory pre-arrival report of ships
- Allocated of USD 100 Million to fast-track payment of outstanding VAT refunds and other pending payments to SMEs. USD 30 million as seed capital for SME Credit Guarantee Scheme.
- Allocated of USD 20 Million soft loans to hotels and related establishments.
- Allocated of USD 15 Million to assist flower and horticultural producers to access international market.
- Enforce a policy on “Buy Kenya, Build Kenya”.
- Allocated of USD 6 Million to purchase locally manufactured vehicles.
- Trade related essential services providers, Customs, Immigration, and Port Health officials are exempted from the provisions of curfew and required to work 24 hours

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- For Customs related taxes, log on to ICMS (Integrated Customs Management Systems) and the Simba System
- For Supply Chain Management (SCM) or e-

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## Libya



### BACKGROUND

The first case was reported on 3rd April 2020

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- Closure of all air, ground and maritime Libyan borders for a period of three weeks (with possible extension).
- Prayers in mosques have been cancelled, schools and universities have been closed for two weeks and public gatherings limited.
- Reopening of restaurants and cafés from 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020 on under strict conditions.
- A primary healthcare centre in the Gergaresh neighbourhood of Tripoli – serving a catchment area of at least 30,000 people, including high concentrations of refugees and migrants from sub-Saharan Africa - has re-opened as from 15th July 2020 to deal with the rising numbers of COVID-19 cases.
- Large public gatherings have been banned.
- 470 inmates from local and regional prisons have been freed to reduce the risk of infections.
- After the expiry of the 24 hours curfew on 24<sup>th</sup> April, partial curfew from 6 p.m. – 6 a.m. in the west for 10 days. In the East, in areas controlled by the Libyan National Army (LNA), the curfew remains 6 p.m. to 6 a.m.
- A special committee has been formed including with the ministries of interior, finance and health to develop a policy and procedures for repatriating Libyans from abroad.
- The Supreme Committee for Combating COVID-19 closed all vegetable and meat markets but bakeries and some shops remain open to meet people's needs.
- Points of entry (PoEs) to screen travelers arriving from affected areas have been established at three airports (Mitiga, Misrata and Benina), four seaports and land border entry points at Ras Ijdier, Wazen and Msaed.
- Testing is being undertaken for truck drivers who are travelling over the Tunisian/Libyan border with drivers required stay for 14 days in Zwara for quarantine.
- Authorities in both the West and East have started to repatriate Libyan citizens stranded overseas (those wishing to return are in Egypt, Tunisia and Turkey).
- Returning citizen are tested and allowed to quarantine at home for 14 days.

#### Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Cargo transportation exempted from ban
- No penalties will apply to the late filing of corporate income tax, personal income tax and stamp duty returns.
- Customs and Revenue authorities are facilitating continuity of business by implementing e-documents and e-payments and pre-arrival clearance procedures and exempting some required documents such as certificate of origin.
- Joint mechanism on export of goods between Libya and Tunisia through the border of Ras Ajbir established.

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## Madagascar



### BACKGROUND

The first case reported on 20 March 2020.

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- Suspension of all international flights effective 20th March for 30 days. Only Air France and Turkish Airlines serve Madagascar via their weekly cargo flight.
- Cruise ships not allowed in any port.
- On 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020 the Government launched new dedicated COVID-19 treatment centers amid rising cases of the pandemic. The new centres are in Alarobia Professional Technical High School and the Mahamasina Sports Complex in the capital Antananarivo.
- Extension of the state of health emergency until at least June 2 to curb the spread of coronavirus
- Entry and exit restrictions are heightened in the regions of Analamanga, Atsinanana, Haute Matsiatra, and Alaotra Mangoro, which are COVID-19 clusters.
- Starting Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July authorities re-imposed a total lockdown in the Analamanga region to last until July 20 due to the rise in Coronavirus cases. Analamanga is a region in central Madagascar, where the capital Antananarivo is located, and its surrounding metropolitan area. During the lockdown, only food production units, materials, and equipment necessary for the fight against COVID-19 will be authorized to open. Secondly, only one person per household will be allowed to go out to buy supplies between 0600hrs to 1200hrs.
- Gatherings of more than 50 people are prohibited
- A night curfew of 2100-0400 is in place in Amalanga region
- All land, sea, and air borders remain closed. Cargo and humanitarian flights are permitted to operate.
- Mandatory wearing of face masks in public
- Public markets to open for only three days a week subject to strict SOPs
- 14-day quarantine mandatory for individuals who have had possible exposure to COVID-19; travel limited to essential services and work
- All entertainment venues closed, and all sporting events suspended.

#### Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Gradual relaxation of lockdown allowing movement and public transportation from 0600-1300 hours
- Price controls introduced by Government to regulate the prices of essential services and to prevent businessmen from taking advantage of the situation to hike prices
- Ports are operational while respecting governmental procedures. Major problems experienced on Mauritius trans shipments and connections.
- Customs offices Tamatave and Antananarivo will ensure maximum service with minimum contact. However, humanitarian aid, pharmaceuticals and basic necessities will be given priority.
- Temporary suspension of all exports of drugs and other health products

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## Malawi



### BACKGROUND

The first case reported on 2nd April 2020

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- Malawi declared a State of National Disaster from 23rd March
- Closure of all schools, colleges and universities from 23rd March 2020 until further communication.
- As from 12<sup>th</sup> July 2020 authorities increased screenings at the two international airports – Kamuzu International Airport (KIA) in Lilongwe and Chileka International Airport (CIA) in Blantyre - for all arriving passengers.
- As from 1 July 2020 wearing of masks in all offices and within public institutions made mandatory. Public gatherings restricted as well.
- All flights into and out of Malawi suspended effective 1 April, until further notice.
- Flights carrying medical professionals, essential health equipment and emergency relief items are exempted. Additionally, authorities have suspended the issuance of visas. Flights carrying returning Malawi citizens and or cargo are handled on a case by case basis.
- Recruitment of 2000 health workers to support the fight against COVID-19
- Mandatory 14 days quarantine for all travelers from COVID-19 affected countries
- Opening of institutional isolation and treatment centers in the cities of Blantyre, Lilongwe and Mzuzu
- Establishment of a relief fund through which well-wishers, companies can contribute to support the fight against COVID-19
- The President and all the ministers to take a 30% pay cut for three months in order to support the fight against COVID-19
- Formation of a Presidential Taskforce on COVID-19

#### Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Reduction of fuel prices to lower the transport costs
- Application of tax waivers on the importation of essential goods for Corona Virus management
- Reserve Bank of Malawi to allow banks to offer a three-month moratorium on interest payments on loans to small- and medium-sized businesses
- The country's Competition and Fair-Trading Commission to put in place strict monitoring of price controls and punish anyone found increasing prices
- The government to increase loans under the Malawi Enterprise Development Fund that will help micro, small and medium scale businesses that have been seriously affected by COVID-19
- Tobacco markets to remain open and allowed to operate without disruption to protect small farmers and bolster foreign currency receipts.
- Trucks carrying cargo allowed into and out of Malawi.

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## Mauritius



### BACKGROUND

#### The first case reported on 18th March 2020

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- Closure of borders and banning of commercial flights effective 19th March. Only specially authorized flights allowed to operate;
- As from 19th March, all passengers entering Mauritius are quarantined in hotels for 14 days;
- Stranded Mauritian nationals abroad have been repatriated from South Africa, France and India;
- Covid-19 High level Task Force, chaired by the Hon. Prime Ministers, comprising Senior Ministers and the Minister of Health meet daily to closely monitor the situation;
- Lockdown for all non-essential services/travel extended from 15th May;
- Treatment of COVID-19 patients in hospitals and community infection control measures under implementation including contact tracing in line with WHO recommendations;
- Sensitization of the population on the precautionary and hygiene measures including, the wearing of masks, use of hand sanitisers, home confinement and social distancing through media campaigns in appropriate languages;
- Precautionary measures in all public places;
- Public transport to resume full operations as from 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and must observe hygiene and social distancing regulations.
- Religious and social gatherings including weddings permitted as from 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and must observe hygiene and social distancing regulations.
- Most schools will open on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020 instead of 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020 as previously announced.
- Shopping authorized in supermarkets and shops selling essential commodities based on alphabetical order under strict conditions subject to sanitary control;
- Postponement of court cases;
- Food safety nets for vulnerable persons in place.

#### Trade Facilitation / Business Support and related measures

- On 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020 the Government extended the access period to its 5 billion rupee (\$130 million) special relief programme as part of its ongoing response to the Covid-19 pandemic, this will be available to banks to enable them to continue lending to businesses affected by COVID-19.
- Provision of a Special Relief Fund to economic operators to meet cash flow and working capital;
- Setting up of a standing committee to explore ways to limit the impact of the Covid-19 on trade and businesses.
- Exemption of municipal fees for some 13,000 market stallholders;
- Lines of credit and soft loans made available to support vulnerable companies/SMEs from the import-export sector and tourism industry.
- Financial Support/Assistance to individuals by Commercial Banks and other financial entities:
- Commercial Banks remained open in strategic locations during lockdown;
- Introduction of contactless transactions by some commercial banks;
- A loan scheme provided to Mauritians stranded abroad to cater for their needs;
- COVID-19 Support to Households Programme introduced to defer the capital repayment of home loan;

#### Employment-related measures

- Workers' rights will not be impacted if they are forced not to work;

- Both public and private sector employees have been working from home;
- Work Access Permits issued to those in need of accessing their places of work;
- Wage Assistance subsidy provided to companies for payment of staff salaries;
- Financial support provided to workers in the informal sector/ planters/ fishermen;
- Hotline put in place to facilitate inter-alia, complaints and employments laws;

#### Educational Support:

- Closure of all nursery, schools and tertiary institutions until 31st July;
- Students of higher secondary and tertiary levels are benefiting from online classes. Some lessons targeted to students of primary and lower secondary levels are broadcast on the national TV channels;
- A Facebook page has been created to assist parents with disabled children;
- Courses are being provided on the radio for students with no internet access;

#### Other measures:

- A COVID-19 Solidarity Fund created to support the population;
- Capital Market activity has been suspended until further notice;
- The Government has applied for a grant of MUR 26bn from the World Bank;
- Payment of vehicle insurance and renewal of road taxes deferred by a month;
- Electricity consumption rates reduced for low income groups/ small businesses;
- Control of prices of several basic commodities such as rice, cheese, flour etc;
- The COVID-19 (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill and the Quarantine Bill were passed in the National Assembly on 15 May 2020. The objectives of the Quarantine Bill are to prevent the resurgence of COVID-19 infection, and step up the preparedness and response of the country to any future pandemic

#### Deconfinement measures

- Lockdown extended up to 01 June 2020;
- From 15 May 2020, economic activities will restart with the resumption of duty of the public and private sector employees with Work Access Permit;
- Beaches, restaurants (sit-in), public gatherings remain closed;
- Limit on number of attendees to Weddings/ Funerals;
- Country Borders and commercial Malls remain closed;
- All schools and tertiary institutions close up to 01 August 2020;
- All luxury shops remain closed;
- Supermarkets to be open but alphabetical order maintained;
- Pensions for elderly and handicapped persons will be hand-delivered at home
- Number of passengers in public transport and taxi limited;
- Work from home to be encouraged and change in law to facilitate this; and
- Elderly authorized to go out based on alphabetical order but can use the public transport only during off peak hours.

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## Rwanda



### BACKGROUND

First case reported on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2020

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- A nation-wide lockdown announced on March 21, 2020. Gradual lifting of lockdown from March 22 but curfew to be observed between 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. Movements in and out of Kigali City prohibited.
- Government has established an online platform for people in need of essential services including visiting hospitals, attending to emergencies, shopping etc. to apply for clearance of movement.
- Mass testing of taxi moto operators to be carried out. It is also mandatory that all taxi moto operators remove the helmet screens for passengers and use a hand sanitizer to clean the helmets. The passengers should wear a cloth to cover their heads before using the helmet.
- From June 25<sup>th</sup> six villages of Kigali City put under a 15-day total Covid-19 lockdown in a bid to prevent the spread of the virus to other areas. The six villages are Nyarugenge and Kicukiro districts and are Kamabuye, Zuba, Nyenyeri, Rugano, Kadobogo and Gisenga.
- Citizens or foreigners returning to the country are subject to a 7 -day mandatory quarantine at designated locations at their own cost;
- Commercial flights to and from the country allowed to operate as from 1st August 2020. Rwandair to resume international flights on 1st August 2020 starting with Africa routes. Health measures put in place to safeguard the health of passengers, crew, and airport staff as provided by Ministry of Health and ICAO.
- Places of worship to resume services as from 16th July 2020 upon approval by local authorities.
- As from 15th July 2020 six administrative cells in Nyamagabe District (in Southern Province) and Nyamasheke District (in Western Province) to be placed in a 15-day COVID-19 lockdown after increases cases being recorded. The cells are Kigeme and Ruhunga (Nyamagabe District) and Mubuga, Gitwa, part of Kivu-Butare road, and Jarama
- All visitors travelling to Rwanda by charter flights must test negative for COVID-19 within 72 hours prior to arrival; a second test will be taken prior to visiting any tourist attraction.
- Domestic and international visitors travelling for tourism by charter flights to be allowed in the country as from 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020.
- Domestic tourists visiting Volcanoes National Park and Nyungwe National Park must test negative for COVID-19 within 48 hours prior to visiting the parks.
- All passengers arriving in Rwanda by commercial flights including those in transit will be required to show proof of a COVID-19 Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) negative test from a certified laboratory taken within 72 hours of arriving in Rwanda. A second PCR test will be conducted upon arrival – with results delivered after 24 hours.
- Apart from the national Kigali National Reference Laboratory, other satellite testing labs set up in COVID-19 hotspots areas of the country which include the districts of Kirehe, Rubavu, Rwamagana, Nyagatare, and Rusizi, This is to hasten the process of generating results for patients to ensure timely interventions.
- Hotels to operate and offer tourism and conference services but must adhere to the provided health guidelines.
- Religious wedding ceremonies to take place but should not exceed 30 people.
- Educational institutions (schools and colleges), and bars to remain closed.

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- Restaurants and cafes allowed to operate until 7:00 p.m.
  - Social distancing to be observed.
  - Wearing of face masks is mandatory in public places and multi-family settings.
  - All borders closed except for goods and cargo services.
  - Internal travel between districts and cities not authorized except for medical reasons or essential services.
  - Markets to operate at 50% capacity with prevention and rotation measures in place.
  - Deployment of five high-tech robots from 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020 to limit the risk of healthcare workers from contracting COVID-19. The robots' tasks include mass temperature screening, delivery of food and medication to patients, capturing data and detecting people not wearing masks.
  - Screening at all market centres in place and compulsory
  - Wholesale and Retail shops to operate with essential staff only with social
  - Funeral gatherings restrictions lifted a little with mourners not exceeding 30 allowed, up from the maximum of 20 people previously allowed.
  - Shops closed except for those selling food, medicine and other essential services.
  - Contact-tracing for suspected infected persons to be conducted for further follow-up, testing, and treatment.
  - Hospitality establishments including hotels, restaurants, and coffee shops to register all customers patronizing their premises. This is in aid of contract tracing.
  - Citizens urged to use mobile money and online banking whenever possible to limit the transfer of paper money and minimize person to person contacts
  - The World Bank on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 approved a USD 14.3 million (RWF 13.65 billion) International Development Association (IDA) credit as emergency response towards efforts to contain COVID-19.
  - New Guidelines for the Mining sector issued on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and included: mining operators and quarry owners to provide relevant personal protective equipment (PPEs) to all workers, and miners to put in place contact tracing programmes.
  - As from 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020 both Kamembe Town in Rusizi District put under total lockdown for two weeks. Travel in and out of the district restricted.
  - As from June 30<sup>th</sup>, travels restrictions in and out of Rubavu District put in place since 4<sup>th</sup> June lifted.
  - Public transport within the district of Rusizi is restricted and only cargo transporting vehicles either transiting or destined for the district would be allowed to continue operating.
  - On 1<sup>st</sup> July the Ministry of Health to launch a random street testing survey in Kigali City to assess COVID-19 situation in the city.

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**Trade  
Facilitation /  
Business  
Support**

- Maximum utilization of non-intrusive cargo scanners for homogeneous goods.
  - The whole clearance process for imports, exports and transit is conducted in the Rwanda Electronic Single Window (RESW) which minimizes to a great extent any human intervention.
  - Authorized trucks carry not more than two people including the driver.
  - All cargo and conveyors shall be offloaded and transshipped at the Customs point of entry (i.e. Rusumo and Kagitumba Customs Border Posts).
  - Warehousing facilities shall be available for loading, offloading and warehousing of cargo at the entry points;
  - Inland Cargo depots shall be availed for effective loading and transshipment exercises at the Customs entry point;
  - Clearing of goods should be done using the pre-clearance mechanisms currently in place i.e. SCT Clearance framework and payment of duties and taxes before the arrival of the goods quick release at the entry border posts;
  - All declaration documents accompanying cargo must be submitted electronically to customs administration to avoid paper manipulation;
  - Clearing agents must declare the full detailed description of goods to expedite the clearance and release of goods;
  - Clients with perishable goods and consignments that require special
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warehousing facilities such as petroleum products shall be allowed to proceed to destination after change of crew members (truck drivers) in respect with the current health guidelines in places;

- Transit cargo should be escorted upon entry to the final destination and truck drivers will only stop at designated points.
- The Central Bank of Rwanda has provided a Rwf50 billion (\$54 million) facility and reduced the reserve requirement ratio for commercial banks from 5 per cent to 4 per cent to support the country's banking sector.
- The IMF emergency support under the Rapid Credit Facility in March 2020 provided Rwanda with a \$109.4 million (Rwanda Francs 104 billion) for Covid-19-related pressures on trade, tourism and foreign exchange reserves. The support will also provide much-needed resources for health expenditure and for households and firms affected by the COVID-19 crisis.
- From 14th April 2020 Rwanda to benefit from USD \$11 million (RWF 10.5 billion) debt service relief from the International Monetary Fund for an initial period of 6 months.

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## Seychelles



### BACKGROUND

The first case reported on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- Government issues new Seychelles Safety Travel Guidelines
- Gymnasiums and fitness facilities opened
- Indoor seated public shows or gatherings, conferences and meetings held per health guidelines and sports competitions that will take place without spectators allowed to resume.
- Ban on all cruise ships in Port Victoria until end of 2021
- All leisure boats not allowed entry into Seychelles' waters until further notice

As of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020

- Airport opens gradually for transactions on conditions set by Department of Health.
- To reopen its border on 1st August 2020 to commercial passenger flights from low and medium risk level COVID-19 countries. The process will be guided by the national framework for the integrated management of reopening of Seychelles borders which has a criteria for classifying countries into low, medium and high risk.
- Application for international flights carrying passengers to be made to Public Health Commissioner (PHC). A standard form (application for entry into Seychelles by air and sea) is available on DoH website is to be completed and submitted. Applications will be processed on a case by case basis as per Public Health Order
- All foreign workers holding a Gainful Occupation Permit (GOP) and outside of Seychelles as of 20th March 2020, not allowed to return until further notice. No new GOPs to be issued.
- As from 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020, tightening of fishing regulations for West African fishing crews who will not be allowed to join their ships through Seychelles, but rather to do so in Reunion.
- Closure of all public schools and day care centres on Mahé, Praslin and La Digue until further notice, including all post-secondary institutions, the University of Seychelles and the Guy Morel Institute. However, all child-minding and day-care services, all post-secondary institutions including A-Levels, Guy Morel Institute and the University of Seychelles, will reopen on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020 while Primary and Secondary Schools will reopen on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020.
- Improvement of handling capacity of quarantine and treatment facilities, including the finalization of a programme to receive additional human resource support if necessary.
- Reinforcement of measures and controls since 6th April 2020 at the Port, including new maritime surveillance measures that mandate the use of tracking systems such as VMS, on all vessels at all times; failure of which will be a punishable offence under the law.
- Temporary closure of all construction companies to stop the transportation of large groups of construction workers.
- Since midnight of 9th April 2020, movement of people restricted during the day except for essential services of which a list has been published and special pass has been made available.
- Additional \$3.6 million provided to health sector through national budget amendments.



- Seychelles secured an African Development Bank (AfDB) loan of US\$10 million to support the Government's COVID-19 response programme.

Additional measures:

- Non-essential workers advised to stay at home and work from home.
- Members of the public restricted from leaving homes and moving on the roads until 4th May 2020 except for purposes of accessing essential services such as, to buy food, for medical assistance, to go to the bank, amongst others.
- As of 17th April 2020, movement of people restricted from 7pm in the evening till 6am in the morning until 4th May 2020. Only the police with the support of the army and certain key workers in critical services to be allowed on the road.
- A list of these critical services has been published by the Public Health Commissioner. Additional measures include:
- Closure of all shops from 6pm in the evening until 6.30am the next morning until 4th May 2020.
- Closure of all shops and businesses that do not sell groceries and food.
- Public gatherings which attract crowds or comprise social distancing, strictly forbidden and no permission to be granted by the police for any public gatherings. The ban to be lifted from 4th May 2020.
- All restrictions on the movement of people will be removed.
- Religious services, including funeral services, will be able to resume following guidance from the Department of Health.
- All shops will be able to stay open until 8 pm in the evening.
- The majority of services and businesses will be able to reopen. Construction companies can resume their work as per guidance issued by the Department of Health
- Conduct of funeral procedures at the cemetery under strict guidelines as set out by the Department of Health.

**Trade  
Facilitation /  
Business  
Support**

- Courts in Seychelles to resume on 1 June 2020 and will give priority to hearing urgent cases.
- Three islands that include Cousine Island, Fregate Island and North Island have been authorized to resume tourist activities.
- Bilateral negotiations with Israel that would allow Seychelles to admit Israeli tourists without quarantine as part of reopening of its tourism industry ongoing and expected to be finalized by the end of May
- Amended budget presented by Minister of Finance to National Assembly on 7th April 2020 as a move to reconsider and reprioritize Government spending for the year in light of the negative economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Budget also caters for economic and social support that the Government intends to provide to private sector and the most vulnerable people over a defined period of time.
- On 8 April 2020, Central Bank of Seychelles Governor announced the disbursement of US\$10 million out of the country's international reserves of US\$591 million to assist the domestic market.
- The government announced measures to subsidize wages for companies facing distress caused by COVID-19
- On 20 March 2020, Government announced reduction of loan repayments for six months.
- Tax payments due in March postponed until September.
- The Central Bank of Seychelles (CBS) reduced the policy rate by 100 bps to 4 percent on March 23.
- Central Bank provided a credit facility of approximately US\$36 million to assist commercial banks with emergency relief measures to assist businesses and individuals struggling with the financial impact of the pandemic.
- A limited credit provided to government by the Central Bank up to SCR 500 million (US\$30 million). In addition, credit line facility worth SCR500 million (\$28 million) set up for small businesses and accessible through commercial banks as well as Seychelles Credit Union and the Development Bank of Seychelles (DBS)
- Maturity of credit to commercial banks extended to 3 years.



- Measures aiming to Facilitate the Cross-border Movement of Relief and Essential Supplies include: Fast tracking the processing and release of urgent medical cargo and relief supplies through simplified procedures; Accepting scanned copy of preferential certificate of origin during the COVID 19 pandemic subject to the original copy being submitted once the crisis is over; Taking deposit for the release of consignment benefitting from preferential treatment but unsupported by preferential certificate of origin because of lock down from exporting countries.
- The Port is operational with Customs staff working to ensure that import and export procedures are completed in a timely manner with priority given to consignment directly related to the COVID 19 pandemic.
- Encouraging declarant to use pre-payment account and pre-lodgment (pre-arrival declaration)
- Part of the US\$10 million loan secured an African Development Bank (AfDB) will be used for macro-economic stabilization
- 37,409 private sector workers provided with wage grants as support to private sector.
- Central Bank of Seychelles cut Monetary Policy Rate (MPR) to 3% from 4% to promote economic stability.
- On 25<sup>th</sup> June the Government secured US\$15 million loan from World Bank to support macro-economic stability.

### Latest Developments

From Monday 4th May, the following measures lifted

- Restrictions on the movement of people.
- Religious services, including funeral services, will be able to resume following guidance from the Department of Health.
- All shops will be able to stay open until 8pm in the evening.
- The majority of services and businesses will be able to reopen. Construction companies can resume their work as per guidance issued by the Department of Health.

From 11th May,

- All child-minding and day-care services, all post-secondary institutions including A-Levels, Guy Morel Institute and University of Seychelles, will reopen.

From 18th May,

- All primary and secondary schools will reopen.

From 1st June

Conditions of entry from 01 June 2020

Types of flights to be allowed:

- Private jets with passengers destined to authorized resort, yacht or residential facilities.
- Chartered passengers' flights with passengers from low risk countries published by the Department of Health.
- Chartered cargo flights that may carry passengers under permission (eg patients, returning Seychellois, students who completed their studies)

Criteria for allowing entry into Seychelles

- For the month of June, private flights carrying passengers who have been given approval will be permitted.
- Chartered flights carrying passengers from approved countries may be permitted.
- All passengers must have proof of a negative COVID-19 PCR test that is 48 hours or less prior to boarding the flight to Seychelles.
- Aircraft/Airline are not to board any passengers or crew who are symptomatic of COVID-19.
- Any passengers who arrives in Seychelles without this proof will be turned back on the same aircraft.
- Exit screening must have been completed by all incoming passengers and crew.

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- Entry screening will be done upon arrival starting with completion of the health check form, symptomatic check, temperature scanning. The passenger may be required to undergo a rapid antigen test.
  - All passengers must provide proof of accommodation in an approved establishment for the entire period of stay and must show booking vouchers at Immigration on entry.
  - During the month of June, they are not to change accommodation during their stay and must not interact with the community apart from those at their place of residence.
  - In order to minimize interaction between groups of clients arriving on different dates client groups should be segregated within the Establishment. The Establishments will be visited prior to re-opening to verify that this can be done.
  - For 14 days after arrival the client will be monitored daily by the designated Health and Safety officers or focal person.
  - All clients must ensure strict hygiene measures and physical distancing are enforced.
  - All staff must be monitored daily by the designated Health and Safety Officer or focal person and record kept.
  - Any illness must be reported immediately to the nearest Health Facility who will provide appropriate guidance.
  - All cost of screening and test will be borne by the passenger.
  - Businesses to prepare their own standards of operation to ensure the guidelines are implemented.
  - Tourism businesses will require to be issued with a Safe Tourism Certificate by the Government before they can reopen
  - Seychellois will be able to travel abroad as per guidance and regulations issued by the Department of Health.
  - Leisure boats and yachts will be able to enter Seychelles territory, respecting any guidance from the Department of Health.
  - Sporting activities can resume, following guidance from the Department of Health.
- 

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## Somalia



### BACKGROUND

First case detected on 16th March 2020

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- All educational institutions both private and public closed and large gatherings prohibited. However, beginning 15<sup>th</sup> June, the Galmudug State Ministry of Education opened primary schools for Grade 8 students and exams to start on 11<sup>th</sup> July.
- Public meetings banned.
- A night curfew declared on 15th April 2020 for Mogadishu and to be observed between 7:00 and 5:00 a.m. The curfew prohibits opening of business premises and traffic. However, shops selling dry foods, hospitals, and pharmacies are exempted.
- Minibuses which usually carry 15 passengers will only be allowed to carry 10 in order to reduce congestion in public transport vehicles.
- International commercial flights suspended with exceptions for humanitarian flights.
- Domestic flights which were suspended in April 2020 to resume services on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2020 with adherence to strict health guidelines
- A quarantine unit established at Aden Adde International Airport (AAIA) in Mogadishu to isolate passengers who demonstrate symptoms of Coronavirus.
- Cancellation of all flights except medical equipment and foodstuff flights
- Restriction on imported KHAT to Somalia from our neighbouring countries (Kenya and Ethiopia)
- National health institutions -assisted by WHO - to conduct case findings and contact tracing, testing and treatment, and quarantine activities.
- A toll-free number 449 has been set up for the public to seek advice and report suspected cases of COVID-19 across the country.
- Banned re-export of medical equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE) due to domestic shortages.

#### Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Exemption of tariffs on all imported foodstuffs including rice, dates, wheat flour, and cooking oil ahead of the month of Ramadan.
- Sea ports and road transport are operational but medical screening of crew in effect.
- Dropping charges for cash withdrawals from ATMs. Ministerial level macro-economic management sub-committee has been set up
- Waived all duties and taxes on all medical supplies and equipment imported to fight COVID- 19

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## Sudan



### BACKGROUND

The first case was confirmed on 13 March 2020

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- Prime Minister issued Emergency Order No. 1 of 2020 which criminalizes attacks on health personnel, smuggling, and illegal hoarding of good and medicines
  - Suspension of visa issuance and flight services to countries listed by WHO as the most affected (Korea, China, Italy, Iran, France, Spain, Japan, and Egypt) from 12 March to 23 April.
  - Closure of three border crossing points with Egypt, dispatch of medical teams and security forces to the border areas with Egypt and halting bus trips to Egypt; and following a state of emergency declared on 16th March, a shutdown of all ports of entry.
  - Ban on political and social events or gatherings beginning 14 March, including the postponement of the National Economic Conference, scheduled for 29-31 March.
  - Sudan on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020 suspended the special entry arrangement for special business representatives and foreign diplomats and their families that was introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020. This followed a case where a 9-year-old daughter of the Sudanese attaché in Bangkok tested positive for COVID-19 upon return.
  - The Qastal-Ashkeet land border crossing with Egypt reopened on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020, having been closed in March 2020 over coronavirus concerns.
  - Sudan Joined the United Nations' Better Than Cash Alliance - a digital payments platform to Drive Financial Inclusion and Transparency.
  - Closure of schools, universities, religious institutes, universities, colleges and higher institutes for one month beginning 14 March.
  - Markets and banks closed and prayers at mosques suspended in South Darfur after five cases confirmed
  - Introduction of a curfew in the whole country from 24 March 2020 (08:00 pm until 06:00 am) until further notice. From 31 March, the hours of the mandatory nationwide curfew were extended to 12 hours to between 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.
  - As of 8 July 2020, night curfew to be maintained in Khartoum State, but from 6pm to 5.00am.
  - Partial lockdown for the whole country extended until 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020.
  - New coronavirus protocol for banks issued by the Central Bank of Sudan to guide banking operations in handling of paper money as well as basic hygiene.
  - Postponement of basic certification exams in all states until further notice.
  - Measures introduced to shorten the time worshipers spent in mosques to avoid crowding.
  - Establishment of a National Covid-19 Response Plan with a budget of \$82 million to manage arrivals at points of entry, isolation, patient care, infection prevention and control, supplies, risk communication, surveillance and capacity building.
  - Halt to inter-city and long-haul bus travels beginning 26 March (from 6 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.).
  - Establishment of a national fund to collect donations to combat the pandemic.
  - Daily reporting has been activated at 10 points of entry: Northern, Red Sea, Khartoum, Kassala, Gedarif and West Darfur states; seaports, airports and ground crossings.
  - Only scheduled flights of goods and humanitarian supplies and medical supplies are permitted
  - Government secured on 26<sup>th</sup> June US\$35 million on in emergency funds to strengthen response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 
- Airports closed for both internal and international commercial flights, except for cargo and workers of oil organizations.
  - Closure of Khartoum International Airport extended until 12<sup>th</sup> July 2020. This excludes scheduled and additional cargo flights, humanitarian and technical

#### Trade Facilitation / Business

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**Support**

assistance, the flights related to the companies operating in oil fields and evacuation of foreigners.

- Khartoum International Airport (KIA) allowing flights from Egypt, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates. All passengers arriving at KIA will be tested for COVID-19 as of July 14 if they do not possess a certificate for being COVID-19 free.
  - Sudan authorities have opened up gold export trade to private firms including the handling of all exports through Khartoum International Airport.
  - Ban on maize exports from 15 March until further notice.
  - Local transport within Sudan allowed including fuel and other essential commodities.
  - Port Sudan operational but Cargo vessels must meet 14 days quarantine from last departure.
  - Sudan exports on Egyptian trucks are allowed to leave through Ashkit border crossing.
  - Lockdown measures on shops and restaurants lifted as they have been allowed to reopen as from July 6<sup>th</sup> 2020.
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## Tunisia



### BACKGROUND

The first case was reported on 2nd March 2020

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- Cancellation of the curfew that was imposed in March 2020
- Government Offices, factories, shops business, mosques and cafes to open.
- Borders will be opened for international flights on 27th June 2020
- From June 4, work will resume at 100 percent capacity in public administrations and in the other sectors of activity.
- Borders to open on 27th June 2020 after the country recording zero local cases for a month. The reopening of sea, land, and air borders for foreigners on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2020 is under strict conditions. A color-coded system has been introduced to show which countries may enter without restrictions and which countries can enter with enhanced restrictions.
- Through Decree No. 2020-208 the government allowed partial and gradual opening of the courts.
- As part of the easing up of measures mosques, all worship places, hotels, party halls and restaurants have been opened from 4th June 2020.
- Sporting activities to resume from 8th June 2020.
- Repatriation of Tunisians abroad from 4th June – 14th June 2020. Priority will be given to students and residents who have lost their jobs.
- Supermarkets and retail shops re-opened as part of easing lockdown measures.
- As from 4th June 2020 inter-city and travel between provinces has been allowed
- Closure of schools, Universities and other educational institutions.
- Expansion of the budget allocation for health expenses as well as the creation of a 100 TND Million (app. US\$34 mill) fund for the acquisition of equipment for public hospitals.
- Enhanced digitization of government services to minimize human contact.
- Robotic technology has been deployed for policing and screening of patients at all hospitals.
- Allocated 100 MD (approximately \$50million) for acquisition of hospital and public health equipment.

#### Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- A 2.5 billion TND emergency plan (\$0.71 billion or 1.8 percent of GDP) was announced on March 21.
- Creation of investment funds of 600 million TND (app.US\$ 204 million).
- Established a state guarantee for new credits of 500 million TND (app. US\$ 170)
- The government will delay tax debts, postpone taxes on small- and medium-sized businesses, delay repayment of low-income employee loans and provide financial assistance to poor families.
- Provided banks with the necessary liquidity to enable them to continue their normal operation.
- Carry over of credits (principle and interest) due during the period from 1st March until the end of September 2020. These measures granted to customers classified 0 and 1
- Establishment of a fund of 2.5 billion Tunisian dinars (\$860 million) to support businesses
- Lowering of the interest rate to 6.75%.
- Delaying the payment of instalments on loans and dropping charges for cash withdrawals from ATMs.
- Banks have removed withdrawal charges and offering e-banking subscriptions
- Activation of a mechanism for the state to cover the difference between the policy rate and the effective interest rate on investment loans within a cap of 3 percent.
- Postponement of CIT return filing deadline (due by March 25) until the end of May 2020, for all companies except those subject to CIT at the rate of 35%;
- Exemption from VAT for sales of pharmaceuticals by retailers and wholesalers;

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- All companies are authorized to revalue their buildings and lands recorded in their balance sheets on the basis of their market value; the capital gain resulting from this revaluation will be exempt from income tax provided that the revalued assets are not sold;
  - Amnesty of customs duties for industrial companies, which were subject to customs minutes or judgments before 20 March 2020, provided they pay a fine of 10% of the amount of the said duties;
  - For companies severely impacted by COVID19, certificates of suspension of VAT as well as all tax certificates, for persons who are normally eligible, will be granted immediately on request without requiring the presentation of the necessary documents based on a commitment to provide these later;
  - For companies severely impacted by COVID19, the procedures for the refund of VAT credits derived from operations will be simplified through removing the consideration of the requirement for 6 months of consecutive credit, and the credit will be refunded within one month;
  - Joint mechanism on export of goods between Tunisia and Libya through the boarder of Ras Ajbir established.
  - On 8 May 2020 the government launched an electronic platform to receive requests from companies affected by the pandemic and that wish to benefit from the government's support measures.
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## Uganda



### BACKGROUND

First case reported on 18th March 2020

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- Private cars to carry a maximum of 4 passengers including the driver to ensure social distancing
- Public service vehicles to carry half their capacity to ensure social distancing and to adhere to strict Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs)
- Curfew still being enforced from 1900hrs to 0600hrs
- Compulsory wearing of face masks in all public places
- Testing of all truck drivers entering the country from all entry points in place including testing the crew of cargo planes
- Closure of all schools and educational institutions of higher effective 20th March 2020
- Release of over 800 prisoners to lessen congestion in the prisons sector and ensure social distancing.
- Suspension of religious gatherings including Friday prayers in mosques, Sunday church services effective 18th March 2020
- Ban of all international flights and closure of all borders.
- All incoming travelers are quarantined at designated facilities for 14 days
- Suspension of political and cultural public meetings, rallies, conferences, by-elections
- Public gatherings limited to a maximum of 7 persons for weddings and 10 persons for funerals
- Presidential Directive to allow free movement of cargo within the country and across borders in 12 hours. Empty trucks, however, allowed to move during the night across the border to reduce the queues. Cross border pedestrian traffic prohibited.
- Temporary opening of the border with DRC on 1<sup>st</sup> July for 3 days to allow in refugees fleeing from violence in DRC.
- Truck may carry a maximum of three persons with duties in connection with the movement and clearance of conveyance and or cargo.
- All drivers on Uganda side are to go through a mandatory “blood test” upon arrival at the border
- Shops and shopping malls have been allowed to open but to abide by strict SoPs
- Civil servants to stay and work from home

#### Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Reduction of fees on mobile money transactions and other digital payment charges in order to limit the use of cash and increase daily transactions limits for Mobile Money
- Intervening in the foreign exchange market by the Central Bank to save the shilling from depreciation and to smoothen out excess volatility arising from the impact of COVID-19 on the global financial markets
- Central Bank to provide exceptional liquidity assistance to financial institutions for a period of one year for those who need it. This measure will enable financial institutions to have sufficient liquidity to assist businesses which are being directly impacted by COVID-19
- Cargo transport by train, plane, lorry, pick-up, tuku-tukus, bodaboda and bicycle, within Uganda and between Uganda and the outside, must continue but only with minimum numbers, technically needed as follows: Cargo – Aircraft – only the crew; Lorry – not more than 3 persons i.e. driver, turn-boy plus one, etc., as will be directed by the Ministry of Transport, working with the National Task Force on the Coronavirus; Boda bodas should stop at 2:00pm
- Container depots in Kampala are operational



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- Shifting movement of goods to rail transport
  - Measures aiming to Facilitate the Cross-border Movement of Relief and Essential Supplies Include: Priority clearance of medical and essential supplies; Tax exemption extended on specific medical equipment and sundries by Government of Uganda to support the fight against the Pandemic; and Truck drivers are allowed to proceed on their journey as the samples are taken at the points of entry are submitted to the national lab or the mobile labs for processing
  - Measures aiming at Supporting the Economy and Sustaining Supply Chain Continuity include:
    1. All designated border points of entry and exit of goods are operating as usual allowing movement of cargo across borders with a crew of not exceeding 2 people
    2. Use of electronic cargo tracking technology to track drivers whose results test positive for COVID-19.
    3. Ensured that operational guidelines issued during the period are relayed to clients and the public through all available channels of communication including social media.
    4. Encouraged importers and manufacturers to take on tax exemptions as provided for under the laws and allowed general extension of payment of duties upon request.
    5. Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) is facilitating Bond owners and clearing agents to access the bonded warehouses.
    6. Use of Online systems for cargo clearance and to respond to queries and inquiries, e.g. ASYCUDA, Help tool to respond to queries.
    7. Categorization of Customs officials as providers of essential services and thus enabling them to continue to work during lock down
  - Restrictions have been lifted and the following are now operational: -
    - Wholesale shops
    - Hardware shops
    - Garages for repair and servicing of automobiles
    - Metal fabrication and wood workshops
    - Insurance providers to start operations
    - Restaurants operate but only on takeaway basis
    - Warehouses
- 

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## Zambia



### BACKGROUND

First case reported on 18th March 2020

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- Citizens who have tested positive but are not showing any symptoms be allowed to go in self-isolation and strictly observe health guidelines. Health officials must conduct surveillance on such persons to monitor their situation.
- Patients who have tested positive and have underlying illnesses such as tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS must be placed under quarantine in government designated health facilities.
- All travelers arriving in Zambia from any country with confirmed COVID-19 cases are required to self-quarantine for a minimum of 14 days, and to inform Zambian health officials if they develop symptoms.
- The Government of Zambia has suspended all tourist visas until further notice.
- Health screening at all entry points.
- Nakonde border reopened to cargo after conclusion of implementation of targeted measures.
- The three International airports in Ndola, Livingstone and Mfuwe to reopen as from 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020 but must adhere to stipulated health guidelines. The Kenneth Kaunda International Airport in Lusaka remains open until further notice.
- Football leagues to resume in July 2020 but with strict adherence to stipulated health guidelines.
- Conferences, meetings and workshops involving large groups of people banned; But some lifting of restriction to holding church services and other public gatherings since 24<sup>th</sup> April - Lusaka City Council has put in place procedures for obtaining certification/permit for holding a church service or public gathering.
- Universities (both public and private ) to open on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020 for students to sit final year exams.
- Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training (TEVET) institutions to open on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020.
- Examination classes in both Primary and secondary Schools to reopen on 1st June 2020 on condition that they enforce all public health guidelines, regulations and certification.
- Bars, and nightclubs, to remain closed.
- Restaurants, cinemas, gymnasiums, and casinos to open but must adhere to the stipulated public health guidelines.
- Hotels and lodges should consider resuming normal operations.
- Police to restrict numbers of people visiting inmates and suspects in police detention.
- Prison authorities to ensure detention facilities are not overcrowded.
- Social distancing of at least one to two meters to be observed.
- Social gatherings banned.
- Ministry of Health has set up the Epidemic Preparedness Fund amounting to Kwacha 57 million (app. US\$3.17 million).
- Cabinet approved a COVID-19 Contingency and Response Plan with a Budget of 659 Mill. Kwacha (app. US\$36.6 M) under the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit.
- Meetings of the Council of Ministers, Committee of Permanent Secretaries, and the National Epidemic Preparedness, Prevention Control and Management Committee (NEPPC&MC) have been convened since the declaration of the outbreak.
- Mandatory wearing of face masks in public places announced on 16th April 2020

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**Trade  
Facilitation /  
Business  
Support**

- To support easing of liquidity, Government to release Kwacha 2.5 billion (app. US\$140 Mill) to reduce arrears owed to domestic suppliers of goods and services, pay outstanding arrears of pensioners and retirees.
  - Kwacha 140 million (app. US\$7.8 Million) to be paid to local contractors in the road sector.
  - Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) to suspend excise duty on imported ethanol-based sanitizers and other medicine-related activities subject to guidelines to be issued by ZRA
  - Nakonde border temporarily closed to allow for screening, testing and sanitization.
  - International commercial flight options currently exist in Zambia with Ethiopian Airlines.
  - VAT payments on imported spare-parts, lubricants, and stationery to be removed to ease pressure on companies.
  - Suspension of import duties on the importation of concentrates in the mining sector to ease pressure on the sector.
  - Suspension of export duty on precious metals and crocodile skins.
  - The Government has put in place measures to encourage the use of digital financial services to minimize use of cash money and minimize person to person contacts in conducting financial transactions by:
    - I. waiving charges for person to person electronic money transfers of up to Kwacha 150: these transactions are thus to be free of charge.
    - II. Removing the transaction and balance limits on agents and corporate wallets.
    - III. Reducing the processing fees for Real Time Gross Settlement System.
  - Pre-clearance and e-Payment strongly encouraged to reduce human contact
  - Use of Risk Management and selectivity
  - Truck drivers are allowed entry at border points however, they are subjected to testing and kept under mandatory quarantine for 14 days on entry if showing symptoms or if they are originating from high risk countries
- 

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## Zimbabwe



### BACKGROUND

The first case was reported on 20 March 2020

#### Preventive Measures in Place

- On 17 March 2020 the President declared the pandemic a State of National Disaster and on 19th March a COVID-19 National Preparedness and Response Plan was launched
- Suspension of gatherings of more than 50 people including suspension of prayers at churches and mosques
- Universities and school exams classes to open in July 2020. Midyear examinations to be written July 2020.
- Restaurants to open in July 2020 and can serve at 50% of sitting.
- Cancellation of political meetings and major events like the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair (ZITF)
- Designation of journalists as an essential service (SI 93 of 2020)
- Reduction of employee attendance at government and private workplaces (except for critical staff).
- Gazette Public Health (Covid-19 Prevention, Containment and Treatment) Regulations 2020 on 23 March to allow for compulsory testing
- To ease the situation in quarantine and isolation facilities, the Government adopted new World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines that will allow asymptomatic and symptomatic COVID-19 patients to be discharged after 10 days and 13 days, respectively.
- Authorities availed over ZWL\$100 million (app. US\$2 million) to fight COVID-19. Government lifted freeze on hiring for the health sector and to recruit additional medical personnel
- Mass testing intensified.
- Use of schools by churches banned as from 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020 to reduce the risk of infections when schools reopen

#### Trade Facilitation / Business Support

- Reduction of main lending rate from 25% to 15% by Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe effective 1 May 2020
- Arrangement made in July 2020 for cross border traders to buy goods from Beitbridge as opposed to going inland
- ZW\$17 million (US\$270,000) relief fund availed to assist youth whose businesses or survival activities were affected by COVID-19
- Authorization to companies to extend the payment of corporate taxes (waiving interest and penalties)
- Relaxation of restrictive measures in the formal sector allowing commercial businesses and industry to operate subject to adherence to set health guidelines that include, temperature checks, sanitization and wearing of facial masks and social distancing.
- Only public transport allowed back on the roads- minibuses and small informal transporters not yet operational
- Two Bulawayo gyms (Body Works Gym and Pro-Active Gym) granted permission by the Sports and Recreation Commission (SCR) to reopen in July 2020.
- Beginning 16 May 2020 businesses such as manufacturers, supermarkets and banks allowed to operate normally as before the lockdown (8 ½ hours from 8am to 4:30pm) as opposed to the previous 6 hours.
- Buses to be sanitized at specified times
- ZWL\$15 billion (\$720 million) economic rescuer and stimulus package announced by the government to support businesses
- Suspension of duties and taxes on various goods and services related to COVID-19, including on testing, protection, sterilization, and other medical consumables.

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- Relaxation of some procurement regulations with a view of facilitating speedy procurement of essential goods and services.
  - Return of the multicurrency system allowing both Zimbabwean dollar and US dollar as legal tender.
  - Reduction in bank policy rate from 35 percent to 25 percent.
  - Reduction of the statutory reserve ratio on bank deposits from 5 percent to 4.5 percent.
  - Increase of the private sector lending facility by the central bank from ZW\$1 billion to ZW\$2.5 billion.
  - Movement from managed floating exchange rate system to a fixed exchange rate management system.
  - Encouragement of use of electronic payments including RTGS, mobile money and other electronic payments
  - Mining and manufacturing sectors allowed to reopen in line with WHO and public health authorities' guidelines
  - Borders open for commercial cargo
  - Electronic cargo tracking in place for high risk cargo
  - Designated transit routes as per Electronic cargo tracking in place with waived/loosened fines
  - Regulated transit days and CVG conditions in place
  - Regional Customs Guarantee Scheme (RCTG) and Yellow Certificate (YC) acceptable
  - Mandatory pre-clearance
  - Physical examination suspended except in exceptional circumstances (Non-Intrusive inspection (NII))
  - Electronic resolution of queries via ASYCUDA World
  - Partial relaxation of restrictions on the tourism sector on 29<sup>th</sup> June including opening of national parks and safaris to the public and allowing restaurants to serve sitting customers within their premises but using only half their licensed capacity.
  - On ZWL\$500 million bank guarantee facility availed by Government to resuscitate the tourism and hospitality sector.
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