



COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

22nd July, 2020

PRESS STATEMENT ON PREPAREDNESS OF COUNTY GOVERNMENTS ON COVID-19 – WEEK 20

Today, I am privileged to host my colleagues from Western region for a meeting to discuss development issues. Governors from this region are committed to working together to spur economic growth of the region.

We will also discuss ways of pulling resources together to help fight the spread of Covid-19 pandemic.

The following is an update on Counties Preparedness in the fight against Covid-19.

In the last few days, we have seen an upward trajectory of COVID-19 cases with a new record high number of 688 positive cases reported on Saturday. So far 45 Counties have been affected by the pandemic. The number of fatalities has also increased as patients mostly with underlying illnesses have succumbed to the disease. We condole with the affected families and our prayers go out to them.

We thank H.E the President for his directive on a welfare package to reward frontline healthcare workers. I am happy to report that the National Treasury has disbursed allowances from April to June to all

County Governments. We are now confident that this incentive will motivate healthcare workers in their efforts towards containment of the virus.

Further, we appreciate the efforts by the National Government in securing services of 20 specialized Cuban doctors who will arrive tomorrow to help in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in the Country. Nonetheless, we must note that for us to fight this common enemy, we need to cooperate and undertake collective responsibility of combating the spread of COVID-19.

In the past week, the 47 County Governments have addressed themselves to the following:-

1. Home-Based Care Services

38 Counties have a cumulative total of **1,070 patients** under home-based care. Of these, **803 patients** have recovered from the virus.

County Governments have extended the following services to patients under home-based care:- psychological support; provision of County hotline numbers for emergency response; and ambulance services for patients in urgent need of medical treatment. Counties have also extended the following services to families with COVID-19 patients under home-based care:- testing of close contacts; screening of COVID-19 symptoms; and psychological support.

2. Active Quarantine facilities

This week, 38 counties reported on the status of active quarantine facilities. There are **1,105** people in active quarantine facilities and **813** people who were confined in public quarantine facilities have been released.

Cumulatively in 38 counties, **9,727** tests have been carried out. Out of the people who turned positive this week, **60** are frontline healthcare workers.

3. Training and sensitization of Healthcare workers

Cumulatively this week, 38 Counties have trained and sensitized an additional **5,381** healthcare workers bringing the total to **28,661** and an additional **9,301** Community health volunteers totaling **77, 614**.

4. Re-opening of places of worship

In line with the guidelines issued by the Inter-faith Council, most places of worship have re-opened and overall there is adherence of the guidelines put in place.

We urge all County Public Health Officers to ensure that they keep up the strict enforcement so as to safeguard congregants from contracting COVID-19.

5. Community of Practice Forum

In my previous statement, I reported that the Council hosted the inaugural COVID-19 Response Community of Practice on WASH aimed at safeguarding operations of Water Service Providers (WSPs) and their financial sustainability during COVID 19 pandemic.

The Council has now organized the 2nd COP dialogue forum on **“Maintaining Safe and Sustainable Transport Operations during the Coronavirus Pandemic”** to be held from 20th to 31st July.

In this regard, through the leadership of H.E Governor Lee Kinyanjui a webinar on the same has been scheduled on 28th July 2020.

On behalf of the Council, I invite all stakeholders to participate in this forum so that we can address the emerging issues and work out modalities for intergovernmental collaboration in implementing protocols in the transport sector across Counties. This engagement is crucial in view of the fact that COVID-19 transmission is aggressively facilitated through human mobility.

Challenges:

1. Disbursement of County Equitable Share of revenue

Despite the end of the Financial Year 2019/2020, County Governments are yet to receive the June disbursements. Further delay will not only affect payment of staff salaries but also negatively hinder timely response of COVID-19.

We urge the Controller of Budget and the National Treasury to urgently disburse the funds to County Governments so as to avoid

interference with execution of their activities. We further appeal that subsequent disbursements be released not later than the 15th day of every month as required by law.

2. Summoning of Excellency Governors

In the recent past, we have witnessed that the Senate has continued to summon Governors to appear physically before them. We note that this is dangerous especially for Governors in the risky age bracket. The Council acknowledges the fact that Governors are not opposed to appear. However, in the wake of COVID-19, we request that henceforth, any appearance is done virtually.

We call upon the Speaker of the Senate to emulate the example of the National Assembly which has since dispensed with Physical appearance. I urge all Governors to appear virtually as their health comes first.

3. Non-adherence of the guidelines

Despite the stringent guidelines on COVID-19, the political class remains the weak link in this fight by flouting the rules. The challenge to my fellow brothers and sisters is – let us protect Kenyans who elected us by:-

- (a) Abstaining from attending physical meetings;
- (b) Being deliberate on social distancing; and
- (c) Caring for County Citizens by ensuring strict adherence of the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health.

4. Traffic in the border Points

Last week, I reported that Counties are experiencing a challenge on human and truck traffic at the border points. This still remains a major challenge. Currently, clearance of truck drivers with full documentation at the border points is increasingly delaying from the initial 24 hours to 2 days. This has resulted to major traffic snarl-ups at the border Counties. Further, community infections have increased due to unrestricted interactions between the truck drivers and the local communities.

We call upon the National Government to support the border Counties as follows:-

- (a) Provision of by-passes to ease traffic at the border towns;
- (b) Provision of sanitation facilities at the border points; and
- (c) Sensitization of communities within the border on mitigation measures to prevent the spread of the virus.

5. Rapid spread of the Coronavirus

Last week we had 43 Counties with positive cases. We now have 44 Counties that have been affected by the virus. There is a rapid spread of the virus and is now affecting Government offices. This calls for re-engineering of service delivery during this period of COVID-19.

Conclusion

With the surge in the number of COVID-19 cases, I emphasize once again that we must all take individual responsibility to help prevent the spread of the Coronavirus. Wear your masks properly, observe physical distance and wash hands thoroughly as it is the first line of defense against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Asanteni sana.

Signed

H.E. Hon. FCPA Wycliffe Ambetsa Oparanya, EGH, CGJ
Chairman, Council of Governors