



IGAD HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT DECLARATION ON THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PANDEMIC

Monday, 30th March, 2020

We, the Heads of State and Government of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), convening via video-conference at the Extraordinary Summit on coronavirus diseases (COVID-19) pandemic on 31st March 2020:

Deeply concerned by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic which constitutes an unprecedented global health crisis affecting a large part of the world;

Taking note of the increasing levels of coronavirus infections in IGAD member states and the looming threat of a health crisis in the region;

Gravely concerned by the unsustainable and potentially counterproductive uncoordinated global responses and unconnected country-specific measures to combat the COVID 19 pandemic;

Emphasizing the need for coordinated global and regional leadership and approaches to respond to health and economic implications of the COVID-19 pandemic;

Recognizing the urgent need for a comprehensive multi-sectoral, multi-agency strategy that addresses the impact of COVID-19 on all sectors especially health and the economy;

Acknowledging the central role and the proactive support of the African Union and its Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) through capacitation of healthcare providers and emergency response teams, as well as provision of medical supplies including testing kits;

Further Acknowledging the extraordinary sacrifices made by health care delivery workers across the world and in the IGAD region to combat the COVID-19 pandemic;

Appreciating the swift action taken by all the IGAD Heads of State and Government to contain and combat the spread of the Coronavirus;

Recognizing the efforts and initiative of the H.E. Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, chair of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of Government to mobilize support from the international community to combat COVID-19 in the IGAD region;

Supporting the efforts of the Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia H.E. Abiy Ahmed Ali to galvanize the international community towards formulating a global strategy to tackle the human and economic cost of the coronavirus scourge;

Cognizant that the COVID-19 crisis comes at a time when the IGAD region has barely recovered from the first round of the worst desert locust invasion in 25 years with a second invasion is on its way threatening to severely affect livelihoods in Kenya, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Somalia;

Welcoming the intervention of the Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia H.E. Abiy Ahmed Ali to mobilize international support for the IGAD region and the generous donation of medical supplies, laboratory testing kits and personal protective equipment (PPE) from the founder and director of the of the Alibaba Group to African Countries including IGAD Member States;

Commending the extraordinary efforts of the World Health Organization to coordinate global and regional responses to the COVID-19 pandemic including support to the national health systems of IGAD countries;

Appreciating the support from the international community towards preventing the spread of the Coronavirus in Africa and strengthening health systems on the continent and in the IGAD region;

Further Appreciating the tremendous efforts of stakeholders that have ensured the continuity of supply chains and provision of critical and essential services for the population of the IGAD region;

We now hereby solemnly resolve to:

1. Collectively formulate a comprehensive regional response strategy and task the IGAD secretariat to develop an accompanying implementation plan to address the COVID-19 pandemic in the IGAD region that also incorporates the protection of populations and special groups that face difficulties accessing the national health systems such as IDPs, refugees and migrants;
2. Establish an IGAD emergency fund for the control and prevention of pandemic diseases;
3. Expedite the adoption of a coordinated, whole-of-government-approach to responding to the COVID-19 pandemic in IGAD member states;
4. Strengthen the IGAD regional mechanism for responding to the outbreak of pandemic diseases through increased capacitation of the regional disease surveillance, early warning and response system;
5. Hold an emergency meeting of the Ministers of Health in IGAD to table the current needs of the region to collaboratively combat the Coronavirus and provide projections of the infrastructural, technical and material capacity for the duration of the outbreak;
6. Hold an emergency meeting of the Ministers of Finance in the IGAD region to cost, budget and mobilize the monetary resources required to underwrite the current needs of the region to collaboratively combat the Coronavirus for the duration of the outbreak;
7. Mobilize medical professionals and support from the IGAD community in the diaspora to join the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in the IGAD region;
8. Facilitate an enabling environment for strengthening national public health systems in IGAD Member States to deliver and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic;

On Support from the International Community to IGAD we;

1. Call upon the international community to adopt a globally coordinated and coherent approach to tackle this public health crisis;
2. Urge the international community to sufficiently empower and resource the World Health Organization to co-ordinate global responses to all pandemics including COVID-19 and directly assist governments in the IGAD Member States;
3. Request the International Financial Institutions, bilateral, regional and international partners especially WB, IMF, AfDB, to rapidly implement debt relief and cancellation and provide access to financial assistance, concessionary loans and essential support to IGAD Member States and the Secretariat to effectively combat the Coronavirus;
4. Entreat the international community to support the IGAD regional emergency fund for the control of pandemic diseases and the strengthening of health systems in the region;
5. Appeal to the international financial institutions to urgently extend monetary and fiscal support, in addition to exercising flexibility for IGAD Member States to access finances in needed to respond to the social and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic;
6. Request international financial institutions to support the distressed private sector in the IGAD region. Particularly by supporting to build local manufacturing capacity for essential medical equipment and supplies to fight the outbreak of pandemic diseases such as COVID-19;
7. Urge medical professionals from the IGAD community in the diaspora to join the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in the IGAD region;
8. Encourage the private sector to support the IGAD regional response to COVID-9;

And;

Commit to remain actively seized of the matter.