



COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

29th April, 2020

PRESS STATEMENT ON PREPAREDNESS OF COUNTIES ON COVID-19

Fellow Kenyans, as you are aware, we have a total number of 374 reported positive cases as of now. Through concerted effort of the National and County Governments we have put in place mechanisms to curb the spread of the virus.

The Council of Governors takes great exception to the recent media report carried by the Standard Media Group attempting to rate County Governments on preparedness to deal with the corona virus pandemic.

We want to assure the entire Country that all CGs are prepared and ready to deal with the pandemic. It is therefore in bad light for a Media House to purport to rank County Governments.

What we seek at this moment is support from the public, media, development partners, private sector, National Government and well-wishers to enable the entire architecture of County Governments to deal with this pandemic.

We further wish to inform you that the Council of Governors today held a consultative meeting with the National Treasury to discuss the proposed reduction of the County equitable share. It was agreed that there will be no reduction on the of Kshs. 30 Billion County Equitable share for FY 2019/20. County Governments will

now be able to continue delivering services to the citizens without disruption.

We thank the President for his intervention by ensuring County Governments receive Five (5) Billion to supplement their effort towards the response to the pandemic. These funds have been included in the Supplementary budget. Subsequently, the Commission of Revenue Allocation (CRA) will come up with a formulae for allocation of these funds amongst all the forty seven (47) County Governments.

Last week, I updated you on our preparedness. I hope you are walking with us in this journey. Let me share with you what we have done in the last one week:-

1. Training and Capacity building of health workers

A total of Fourteen Thousand Seven Hundred and Twenty Three (14,723) health workers have been trained across all the forty seven (47) Counties. In addition, Counties have trained Four Thousand Three Hundred and Forty One hospital support staff have been trained to increase their capacity to handle COVID-19.

2. Testing Centres for COVID 19

Last week I reported a total of 10 testing centres countrywide. We now have an additional 6 testing centres. There is therefore going to be enhanced testing of the virus which will enable Counties respond appropriately.

Further, the County Government of Mombasa in collaboration with the Technical University of Mombasa (TUM) and the private sector have set up a COVID -19 isolation and treatment center with capacity of 100 beds. Machakos County Government has also set up a mass screening and isolation centre with capacity of 60 beds.

3. Food Security

The National Government through the Nyumba Kumi initiative has identified a total of one (1) million vulnerable households across the 47 Counties for provision of food. Further, the National Government has piloted the cash transfer Programme in Nairobi with 5000 households receiving Two thousand (2,000) shillings.

Five (5) Counties have also mapped vulnerably households and mobilized resources to support 317,000 households. We urge the remaining 42 Counties to also map households to ensure adequate measures are put in place to cushion the vulnerable.

Last week I report that County Governments are in the process of creating war rooms. So far, 35 Counties have set up security war rooms to enhance county capacity to monitor and report on food market performance and advice the County and National Governments on interventions required to ensure optimal operations of food markets.

4. ECDE and Vocational Training during COVID-19

There is a total of 2.73 million learners enrolled in public and private ECDE Centres across the forty seven (47) County Governments. These learners are now currently on holiday and County Governments will give an update from next week on how the learners will be engaged.

Further, trainees in 77 County Vocational Training Centres are currently engaged in industrial training and apprenticeship programmes in local *Jua Kali* cottage industries whereby they are producing locally manufactured facemasks.

5. County COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund Regulations

The Council of Governors has developed a model regulation on the County Emergency Fund, 2020 to enable all County Governments customize the same for approval by the respective County Assemblies. The fund will consist of all monies donated towards support of the pandemic.

6. County Reallocation to Emergency Funding

County Governments have so far committed a total of 6.2 Billion out of which 15 County Assemblies have approved a supplementary budget of Kshs. 2,347,000,000 Billion for expenditure on Emergency Response. The said amount will be geared towards the fight against the novel corona virus.

We urge the remaining 32 County Assemblies to fast-track approval of the supplementary budgets.

7. County Support from partners

We thank the Kenya Pipeline Company for the donation of 20,000 litres of hand sanitizers shared amongst all 47 County Governments. We also thank Crown Solutions Limited for donating 86 oxygen concentrators, 172 infr-red thermometers and 86 pulse oximetres worth of Ksh 20,984,000 to be shared equally amongst the Counties.

We wish to further appreciate the support of Thinkwell who have seconded two technical staff to support the CoG COVID-19 Secretariat.

As I emphasized in my statement last week, we still call upon all partners to support all the forty seven (47) County Governments through the Council of Governors Secretariat so as to ensure that donations are distributed equitably to all the Counties.

8. Challenges

Whereas Counties are making strides towards combating the pandemic, Counties are experiencing the following challenges:-

i) Support to County Governments

On 16th April 2020 vide a press statement by H.E the President, an amount of Kshs. Five (5) Billion was allocated to County Governments to complement their efforts. However, the said amount is yet to be disbursed to Counties. We therefore call upon the National Treasury and Parliament to fast-track the process of disbursing the funds to the Counties so as to complement their efforts.

ii) County Governments hosting refugees

Kenya has been a host to refugees from the neighboring Countries for more than three (3) decades who are currently residing in Northern Kenya, Rift Valley, Coastal and Nairobi region.

In the wake of the current pandemic, social distancing among the refugees has proved to be a complex issue due to the living conditions. To mitigate this challenge and other shortcomings in the fight against the pandemic, we call upon the National Government in collaboration with the UNHCR to urgently assist the host Counties with both technical and financial support.

iii) Protocol on Foreign Neighbouring Countries

While there are County Governments that border foreign Countries, there is no protocol in place to deal with cross border movements of persons accessing the Country through our porous borders to seek services during this time of COVID. Failure to

accord the required services may lead to serious challenges that may cause diplomatic problems.

It is therefore prudent for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to provide a protocol on how to deal with neighbouring Countries during this period.

iv) Counties affected by Floods and Landslides

As County Governments continue to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, the long rains have continued to wreak havoc in various Counties.

This has led to loss of lives, destruction of property and displacement of approximately Six thousand (6,000) people.

We thank the National Government through the Kenya Defense Forces for their efforts in evacuation and tracing of victims in Elgeyo Marakwet and West Pokot Counties.

The Council of Governors has set up a fund to support the affected Counties. Each County Government is contributing Kshs. 200,000 to this fund.

We call upon well-wishers to support this fund through the Council of Governors.

Conclusion

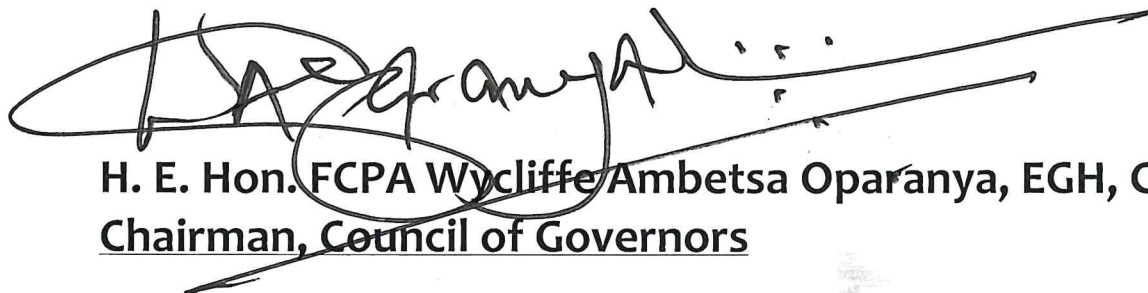
Noting that the nationwide dusk-to-dawn curfew and the cessation of movement into and out of Nairobi, Kilifi, Kwale, Mandera and Mombasa Counties has been extended for a further period of 21 days, we urge Kenyans to continue observing the preventive measures laid down.

We also urge the police manning the roadblocks and entry points to be more stringent and seal all the unmarked routes. This will be very helpful in curbing the spread of virus in Counties.

We request Kenyans to observe the curfew, exercise social distancing, wash hands frequently, wear a mask and stay at home. We must all ensure adherence to these measures for us to succeed in the fight against this pandemic.

Asanteni Sana.

Signed

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wycliffe Ambetsa Oparanya', is written over the printed name and title.

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

