



**REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH**

**PRESS STATEMENT ON THE FIRST CONFIRMED CASE OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE S 2019
(COVID-19) IN ZAMBIA**

Wednesday, 18 March 2020. Lusaka.

I regret to inform the nation that Zambia has confirmed its first two cases of COVID-19. The patients are a Zambian couple of Lusaka; a 37 year old woman and 39 year old man who returned to Lusaka from a 10 day holiday in France aboard an Emirates flight on 15th March 2020. The patients were screened at Kenneth Kaunda International Airport and placed under home quarantine as they did not display symptoms at the time of arrival.

On follow-up, the following day, the man reported feeling unwell and health officials collected samples from the couple for laboratory testing to rule out COVID-19. The couple were placed in isolation while investigations were being conducted.

I wish to now inform the nation that the laboratory results have revealed COVID-19 infection in both individuals. Currently the patients are stable and continue receiving appropriate care at a designated health facility.

I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge the positive response and cooperation from the Zambian public and incoming travelers in adhering to the key measures that have been put in place by the Government to prevent and control COVID-19.

I also wish to thank the various stakeholders such as the churches, traditional leadership, civil society, schools and training institutions and general public for their continued support and adherence to the guidance. We appreciate the various stakeholders who have put off holding important events, in particular, the Barotse Royal Establishment (BRE) for putting off this year's Kuomboka ceremony.

The Government appreciates the support from our seasoned cooperating partners who continue to provide technical, financial, logistical and material support to our national preparedness and response efforts to COVID-19. These include but not limited to Africa CDC, World Health Organisation, UNICEF, US Government, British Government, World Bank, Chinese Government, Japanese Government, European Union and other United Nations Agencies.

I now call upon the public to adhere to the measure put in place, particularly observance of high levels of personal hygiene, environmental cleanliness and social distancing to prevent transmission of COVID-19. I appeal to the public not to panic as the situation is under control. The public should be weary of false rumors that have circulating through social media platforms and note that official communication relating to the COVID-19 outbreak shall be issued by Ministry of Health.

I will continue to update the nation regularly as the outbreak evolves including further measures that will be brought into effect.

God Bless Zambia. I thank you.

Hon. Dr Chitalu Chilufya MP,MCC

Minister of Health