



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

PRESS STATEMENT ON THE DECISION BY UK TO “Red List” KENYA

The decision by Government of the United Kingdom to “Red List” Kenya and to stop all travel from Kenya for those resident in Kenya, and those transiting through Kenya, to the United Kingdom has been received with regret and disappointment.

This decision by the United Kingdom will have deep and far-reaching consequences on Kenya-United Kingdom trade, travel, tourism and security cooperation.

The decision is particularly disturbing in light of the fact that the United Kingdom and Kenya enjoy a strong and long-lasting relationship embedded in a strategic partnership that has multiple dimensions including health, education, security, travel, trade, and people to people relations.

Furthermore, and equally disturbing this unilateral decision does not reflect prevailing logic and scientific knowledge of the disease or the spread of the pandemic. Rather the decision seems to be motivated by a discriminatory policy against certain countries and peoples.

Kenya has been consistent in maintaining a positive stance towards the United Kingdom despite the challenges and disruptions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Kenya has also remained in constant contact with the Government of the United Kingdom throughout this pandemic in order to maximize opportunity for cooperation.

Indeed, Kenya's performance in managing, combating and containing the spread of COVID-19 has been singled out and lauded by many partners, including the World Health Organization (WHO) as being exemplary and worthy of recognition and support. The third wave that Kenya is currently managing with stringent COVID-19 protocols and restrictions is an example of the sacrifice that Kenyans are willing to make to ensure that this disease does not spread in Kenya or anywhere else in the world for that matter. Kenya remains a responsible actor, nationally, regionally and globally.

Kenya had therefore expected that in building back better from this crisis the Government of the United Kingdom would have sought to reach out with solidarity and support rather than with punitive measures that are discriminatory, divisive and exclusive in their character.

Kenya remains of the opinion that in solidarity and in seeking to build back better from this pandemic, the Government of the United Kingdom would have offered support to Kenya through the provision of vaccines. This is further to Kenya's request that the United Kingdom shares vaccines which Kenya is aware that the United Kingdom has in bigger quantities than it currently has use for.

Kenya believes that it is only through solidarity and collaborative partnership in responding to the crisis, that this pandemic can be brought to a close and new normal be allowed to emerge in its wake.

Sadly, however, Kenya continues to see, with deep regret, that vaccine producing countries around the world have begun practising a form of vaccine nationalism, possessiveness and discrimination, coupled with a vaccine hoarding attitude that can only be described as a form of "vaccine apartheid."

During a global pandemic such as the world is witnessing, it is difficult to imagine what could inform such behavior by nations.

This vaccine apartheid, coupled with the reckless calls for vaccine passports while not making the vaccines available to all nations, widens existing inequalities and makes it near impossible for the world to win the war against the pandemic. Vaccine producing countries like the United Kingdom must

remember that this virus did not originate in Africa, it knows no geographic boundaries, neither has it existed long enough for humankind to understand what it will morph into in the future.

In light of the foregoing and in response to the United Kingdom's unilateral restrictions of travel from Kenya, the following measures will be enforced.

1. All passengers originating from or transiting through UK airports will now be required to go through mandatory 14-day isolation at a government-designated facility at their own cost upon entry into Kenya.
2. While in isolation, they will be subject to take two PCR COVID-19 tests, on day 2 and day 8 of their quarantine, at their own cost.

The following are exceptions to the above restrictions, which commence midnight 9th April 2021,

1. Cargo flights between the two countries. These will continue to operate through specific protocols to be announced.
2. Kenyan nationals resident in the United Kingdom or transiting through United Kingdom airports into Kenya are exempt.

Kenya has a genomic surveillance program and has been among the first in Africa to identify variant strains including the highly virulent UK and South African strains. The Government of the United Kingdom offers support to our surveillance system through the Wellcome Trust KEMRI Kilifi facility.

It is imperative not to lose sight of the fact that it was through the Kilifi Research Center, that the World Health Organization approved the Astra Zeneca vaccine trials that were conducted in collaboration with the Oxford University. These are now the vaccines that are widely used throughout the world including in the United Kingdom.

Kenya commits to continue genome sequencing the virus and share its data with the United Kingdom and the world to fight and win the war against this pandemic.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nairobi

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