

Abuja, Nigeria, January 29 (Infosplusgabon) – Nigeria's Minister of Health, Dr Osagie Ehanire, says that the risk of importation of coronavirus into Nigeria is high, even though no single suspected case has been reported.

As part of efforts against the spread of the disease, the Minister said that the Nigerian Federal Government has raised surveillance at all entry points into the country.

He assured that preventive measures are being taken at the five international airports in Nigeria – in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), as well as Lagos, Enugu, Rivers and Kano States.

Dr Ehanire said in Abuja on Wednesday that already, the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Health has issued a health advisory following the outbreak of the disease.

He noted that Nigeria is worried about the presence of a suspected case in Cote d'Ivoire and Kenya, considering that coronavirus was being transmitted by humans who are infected with the disease.

A Spokesperson of the Nigerian Ministry of Health, Ms Enefaa Bob-Manuel, said meetings are being held with some Ministries towards setting up a committee responsible for scaling up “surveillance and vigilance to detect suspicious cases and ensure containment at all points.”

Critical stakeholders in the aviation, health, security and transport are members of the committee.

Ms Bob-Manuel reiterated that “attention will focus largely on Nigeria’s five international airports,” because “air travelers are more likely to be carriers of the virus rather than land border crossers.”

Meanwhile, despite the growing concerns on the spread of coronavirus, Nigeria’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs has no plan in place for Nigerians residing in China.

"For now, here are no plans being made to evacuate Nigerians in China," the ministry said.

Since the increase in the outbreak of the virus, countries around the world are planning to repatriate their citizens. So far, Wuhan, a province in China, has recorded over 100 deaths, while more than 4,500 persons have been confirmed infected.

With the continuing spread of the virus and the reported contact by an unnamed student in Cote d'Ivoire who had arrived from Beijing on Saturday, countries such as the US, South Korea, Germany, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Canada, Russia, and the Netherlands have kickstarted arrangements to repatriate their citizens from China.

As at the year 2014, about 100,000 Nigerians reside in China and they stay predominantly in Guangzhou, a city located in the Guangdong province in the Southern part of China. It is reported to have a large population of Africans.

FIN/INFOSPLUSGABON/OUP/2020

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