# Global – COVID-19 Pandemic

**On Call International’s Incident Level: WATCH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Global</th>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>December 15, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Issued by</td>
<td>On Call International Global Security &amp; Medical Teams</td>
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## NOTABLE WEEKLY UPDATES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Updates</th>
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| Africa          | - South Africa’s president tests positive for COVID-19.  
                 - Kenya’s high court blocks vaccine mandate.  
                 - 400,000 unused vaccines expected to go to waste in Senegal. |
| Americas        | - Brazil will indeed require foreign travelers provide proof of vaccination prior to entry after a Supreme Court judge overruled a previous directive from the Bolsonaro administration.  
                 - Canada now advises all citizens avoid non-essential international travel regardless of vaccination status citing the risks of the new Omicron variant.  
                 - Peru has announced that it will remove nightly curfews for moderate risk provinces beginning December 25. |
| Asia-Pacific    | - Australia reopens its borders to foreign skilled workers and students.  
                 - Tens of thousands placed under lockdown in China’s Zhejiang province.  
                 - South Korea considers reimplementing restrictions as COVID-19 cases rise. |
| Europe          | - Cases in the United Kingdom surge due to Omicron variant.  
                 - France will tighten travel restrictions on travelers from the United Kingdom.  
                 - Austrians protest against COVID-19 restrictions. |
| Middle East &   | - Saudi Arabia announces new entry exemptions for certain foreigners.  
                 - UAE announces new COVID-19 safety measures for Christmas and New Year’s.  
                 - Morocco extends the suspension on all international commercial flights until at least December 31.  
                 - All participants wishing to attend The World Youth Forum in Egypt in January must be fully vaccinated. |
| North Africa    | |

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GLOBAL SUMMARY:

The On Call Security & Medical Teams are continuing to monitor the global outbreak COVID-19. As of the issuance of this report on Wednesday 15 December, there have been 271,615,381 confirmed cases of COVID-19 globally with 5,324,528 deaths. Due to the emergence of the Omicron COVID-19 variant, several countries have been reimposing travel restrictions, primarily affecting those with recent travel to various countries in southern Africa. For updated information on individual countries’ travel advisories, COVID-19 case trends, travel restrictions, and healthcare capabilities review On Call International’s COVID-19 Travel Outlook Map.

REGIONAL SUMMARIES:

AFRICA

South Africa’s President, Cyril Ramaphosa, tested positive for COVID-19 on Sunday and is now receiving treatment for his mild symptoms. It is unclear if he was infected by the new Omicron variant. President Ramaphosa said that he started feeling unwell after attending the funeral for former President Frederik Willem de Klerk. The President had also recently returned from a seven-day tour of Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Ghana, and Senegal. While on tour, some members of his delegation had tested positive for COVID-19 and returned directly to South Africa. President Ramaphosa says his infection should serve as a caution for people to observe safety measures and get vaccinated.

A Kenyan court has suspended a government order that requires people to be vaccinated in order to access public facilities and services such as restaurants, bars, parks, etc. In November the health minister announced that residents will be required to show proof of vaccination by 21 December in order to access public services. On Tuesday, however, a high court judge issued a temporary halt on the implementation of the mandate over questions of the mandate’s constitutionality.

At least 200,000 COVID-19 vaccines have expired in Senegal after not being used. Another 200,000 vaccines are set to expire at the end of the year due to low demand. African governments have been calling for more COVID-19 vaccines, yet vaccine hesitancy among Africans has kept thousands of doses from being administered. It is unlikely that the remaining 200,000 doses will be used up before they expire. Senegal has administered almost 2 million doses of the vaccine this year, enough to vaccinate about 6% of the population.

AMERICAS

Brazil will indeed require foreign travelers provide proof of vaccination prior to entry after a Supreme Court judge overruled a previous directive from the Bolsonaro administration. Last week Brazil’s government had stated it would only require a negative PCR test result from foreign travelers for entry. This was a controversial announcement as it went directly against advice from the Brazilian health regulator Anvisa that proof of vaccination was an important entry requirement to help keep Brazilians safe.
Canada now advises all citizens avoid non-essential international travel regardless of vaccination status citing the risks of the new Omicron variant. The statement is an advisory not a ban, resembling similar guidance which had been in place through much of 2020 before being removed in late October 2021 when Canada decided it had reached sufficient domestic vaccination levels.

Peru has announced it will remove nightly curfews for moderate risk provinces beginning December 25. For provinces still considered high risk a nightly curfew from 11:00pm to 4:00am LT remains in effect. Provinces considered high risk due to their current incident rates include: Virú, Chepén, Concepción, Huamanga, Santa, Sullana, Piura, Sechura, Huancavelica, and Talara provinces.

ASIA-PACIFIC

As of 15 December, Australia has partially reopened its international borders to skilled foreign workers and international students. The Australian government had originally planned to reopen its borders to these classifications of international travelers on 1 December; however, a decision was made to delay the reopening due to the emergence of the Omicron COVID-19 variant. Additionally, the government of Australia’s New South Wales (NSW) state has decided this week to lift most restrictions on the unvaccinated. This decision has been made despite NSW reporting increasing COVID-19 infection rates.

Tens of thousands of residents in the Zhejiang province of China have been placed under strict quarantine orders due to a rise in COVID-19 cases, primarily affecting the cities of Ningbo, Shaoxing, and Hangzhou. Transportation services into and out of the affected areas have also been reduced. Additionally, China reported its first case of the Omicron COVID-19 variant on Monday 13 December. The case was reported in the city of Tianjin and originated from an individual who had just returned to China from abroad. In general, China’s COVID-19 infection rate has remained fairly low in relation to other countries.

The government of South Korea has announced that it is considering reimplementing domestic COVID-19 restrictions due to a surge in new infection rates which began in November 2021. The country is now reporting its highest ever infection rate with nearly 7,000 new cases being reported daily. Restrictions that are being considered include limitations on public gatherings and mandatory early closing times for establishments deemed to be high-risk, including restaurants, cafes, and bars. South Korea’s international borders have remained fairly open to international travelers for most of the Pandemic and there is no information to indicate that the government now plans to overly restrict international travel.

EUROPE

The United Kingdom is experiencing a surge in infection rates from the new Omicron variant. At least one person has died from the variant, Prime Minister Boris Johnson confirmed on Monday. Around 20% of COVID-19 cases throughout England are from the new variant. However, in London, Omicron represents over 44% of the cases and is expected to soon become the dominant variant in the capital. The UK has increased its COVID-19 alert level and is accelerating its rollout for the vaccine in response to the new wave. Safety
guidelines have also been brought back such as the mask mandate in public spaces and proof of vaccination or a negative test for large events.

**France** is looking to increase restrictions for travelers coming from the **United Kingdom**, in response to the spread of the Omicron variant. Right now, travelers from the United Kingdom are required to show a negative test taken less than 48 hours before their arrival in France, however, there are talks of tightening this framework in the coming days. France is currently experiencing a fifth wave of COVID-19, mostly from the Delta variant. On Tuesday, the country reported 63,405 new infections, the second highest number since April of this year.

Thousands of people have rallied in Vienna, the capital of **Austria**, to protest against COVID-19 restrictions on Saturday. These restrictions include mandatory vaccines for residents as well as home confinement for the unvaccinated. Last month, Austria became the first country in Western Europe to reimpose lockdowns and make vaccinations mandatory. An estimated 44,000 people showed up and about 1,400 police officers were on duty to oversee the protests. There were also similar demonstrations in Klagenfurt, with about 2,500 people, and Linz with about 150 protesters.

**MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA**

**Saudi Arabia** has announced new exemptions for certain non-Saudi people entering the Kingdom. The Ministry of the Interior has decided to exclude the spouses of Saudi citizens, non-Saudi children, parents of Saudi citizens, and domestic workers who accompany citizens from outside the Kingdom from the requirement of conducting a PCR test prior to arrival.

The **United Arab Emirates** announces new COVID-19 safety measures for Christmas and New Year’s celebrations. Venues will be required to limit capacity to 80%. To attend an event, people must present their Al Hosn green pass if required and must present proof of a negative PCR test result from within the past 96 hours. In addition, hugging and hand shaking will be prohibited at gatherings.

On Thursday, **Morocco** extended the suspension on all international commercial flights until at least December 31. Air borders have been closed since November 29 and were initially supposed to reopen on December 13.

The town of Sharm El-Sheikh, **Egypt** will host The World Youth Forum from January 10-13, 2022. All participants are required to be fully vaccinated. All participants must also provide proof of a negative COVID-19 PCR test taken within a maximum of 72 hours prior to their arrival to Sharm El-Sheikh. All participants and event staff will be required to wear a face mask at all times.
STANDING ADVICE:

- Review On Call International’s [COVID-19 Travel Outlook Map](#) for updated information on individual countries’ travel advisories, COVID-19 case trends, travel restrictions, and healthcare capabilities.
- Maintain enhanced personal hygiene. This includes washing your hands often with soap and water, clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe, wear a face covering at all times while in public locations, and avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Practice good cough etiquette by covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when coughing or sneezing. Do not use your hands because subsequent contact of your hands to surfaces or other people can spread the infection.
- If feeling ill, remain indoors and limit your contact with others.
- Be advised that many countries are implementing complete entry/exit bans, applicable to citizens and non-citizens alike. Review a country’s specific travel restrictions prior to making travel arrangements.
- Consider that commercial flight availability is limited. Even if a country does not restrict entry, it may be difficult to find flights to the area.
- Expect enhanced health screening procedures to be conducted at transportation hubs such as airports.
- Many countries have imposed domestic lockdown measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. If traveling to a country, review its domestic restrictions prior to setting out.
- If you believe you may be infected with COVID-19, contact a medical facility by phone or email prior to arrival to ensure the medical facility have the proper time to prepare for your arrival. Be advised that due to the volume of confirmed cases in some locations, medical workers may advise you to self-isolate at home if your symptoms are not severe.
- Review the [CDC’s website](#) and the [WHO’s website](#) for the most up-to-date information relating to COVID-19 exposure, risk, and prevention.
Incident Classification

**MONITOR**
**Definition:** Continue to conduct normal operations without significant security concerns.
**Conditions:**
- Standard security operations protocols are in place
- Operating environment is considered stable
- Daily activities within the locality are proceeding as normal
- Operations expected to proceed with no impediments
**Advice:** Continue to follow best practices and travel safety tactics. Follow standing advice indicated in briefing.

**WATCH**
**Definition:** Continue to conduct normal operations. Indicators and warnings suggest heightened awareness and additional precautions may need to be implemented.
**Conditions:**
- Noticeable changes in daily activities within the locality
- A small-scale increase of civil unrest or crime
- Natural Disaster seasons are approaching
**Advice:** Review Emergency Action protocols, liaise with embassy sources and trusted local contacts to ascertain latest on the ground information, and report any pertinent information to travelers and security provider. Follow standing advice indicated in briefing.

**WARNING**
**Definition:** A specific threat or threats have been identified determined by accurate intelligence and assessment of the situation. The threat has the potential to be ongoing or escalate.
**Conditions:**
- State Department or relevant health authority issues a warning
- Significant natural disaster is forecast
- Significant intelligence indicating a potential disruptive incident
**Advice:** Consider restricting movement of personnel in impacted areas, have choice of action in place if situation worsens, ensure constituents have adequate emergency supplies, and establish daily communication windows with constituents in country.

**TAKE ACTION**
**Definition:** The current, credible, and specific threat is imminent, occurring or has occurred and has caused significant disruption to daily operations and activities in country.
**Conditions:**
- A major event occurs with significant economic, political or security disruptions expected over a short or long term period
- Large presence of military or police in streets with continuing presence expected; state of emergency declared
- US State department raises the travel rating or evacuates non-essential personnel or staff
**Advice:** Establish immediate communication with personnel, consider communicating with affected personnel’s emergency contacts and family, and liaise with both local and non-local authorities and like-minded organizations to support your response.
The information provided to you within this briefing has been compiled from a multitude of available sources and is based on current news and analysis at the time of writing. The security team at On Call International, LLC. has provided this analysis, supporting advice, and recommendations in good faith to assist you in mitigating risks that could arise. However, no implied or express warranty against risk, changes in circumstance, or other fluid and unforeseen events can be provided. Based on your request for this assessment, you agree that any reliance you place on this information is therefore strictly at your own risk and that you will not hold On Call International, LLC. or the authors responsible for any inaccuracies, errors or oversights herein.