Global – COVID-19 Pandemic

On Call International’s Incident Level: WATCH

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<td>Date</td>
<td>February 16, 2022</td>
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<td>Issued by</td>
<td>On Call International Global Security &amp; Medical Teams</td>
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**NOTABLE WEEKLY UPDATES:**

| Africa                          | • Gauteng, South Africa offers grocery vouchers for COVID-19 vaccination.  
|                                | • Uganda receives supply of oxygen cylinders.  
|                                | • Zimbabwe reopens land borders. |

| Americas                      | • Canada beginning February 28 will allow fully vaccinated international travelers to present an antigen test rather than a PCR test for entry.  
|                                | • Canadian provinces including ON and BC accelerate easing of social distancing measures.  
|                                | • Uruguay allows fully vaccinated travelers to provide a negative antigen test result from within 72 hours rather than a PCR result. |

| Asia-Pacific                  | • New Zealanders protest against COVID-19 restrictions and vaccine mandates.  
|                                | • Thailand downgrades COVID-19 coverage.  
|                                | • Singapore simplifies COVID-19 measures. |

| Europe                        | • Germany to propose three-step reopening plan.  
|                                | • Switzerland eases Covid restrictions.  
|                                | • Greece removes testing requirement for travelers from Australia, Canada, and the United States. |

| Middle East & North Africa    | • Egypt’s Cabinet Media Center denies social media reports claiming COVID-19 vaccines are available in pharmacies.  
|                                | • Libya’s Director of the National Center for Disease Control announced the Greater Tripoli region is no longer considered in the “red zone”.  
|                                | • Bahrain lifts restrictions on movement and public gatherings on 15 February.  
|                                | • Tunisia lifted its nightly curfew on 10 February. |
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 February 16, there have been 415,769,578 confirmed cases of COVID-19 globally with 5,839,809 deaths. 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

The province of Gauteng, South Africa is offering grocery vouchers to people over the age of 50 to encourage them to get their COVID-19 vaccine. Currently, the province, which includes South Africa’s capital, Pretoria, and its largest city, Johannesburg, accounts for the majority of COVID-19 cases in the country. Despite its high case counts, South Africa remains on the lowest alert level of its 5-tier system.

Uganda’s Ministry of Health has received a set of one thousand oxygen cylinders worth over $233,000 USD, from the World Health Organization. The shipment includes medical oxygen cylinders, with regulators and humidifier bottles, which can administer oxygen for up to one thousand COVID-19 patients at any time. After managing the critical COVID-19 patients, the equipment will be made available to treatment centers to ensure the continuity of essential health services and management of other diseases that require oxygen.

Zimbabwe is reopening all ports of entry, effective immediately, as coronavirus cases in the country continue to decline. Travelers to Zimbabwe will be required to present a negative COVID-19 test taken no more than 48 hours prior to entry. The government has also announced it is lifting a ban on private sector imports of crops.

AMERICAS

Canada beginning February 28 will ease entry restrictions to allow fully vaccinated international travelers to present an antigen test rather than a PCR test within 72 hours for entry. Additionally, Canada no longer requires testing for its citizens reentering Canada from the US for overland trips less than 72 hours in length. The global travel advisory for Canadians is also being changed. Previously the government recommended against all non-essential travel, and now it is only urging citizens to take precautions.

In Canada’s Ontario province a gradual easing of restrictions has been sped up with capacity limits on restaurants and bars to cease Thursday and the vaccine passport system scheduled to end March 1. Large sport venues and theatres will also be allowed to operate at 50% capacity. These moves come as case and hospitalization counts have been in consistent decline since peaking in early January.
Beginning Wednesday night in British Columbia capacity limits have been removed for establishments and bars and dance clubs are being permitted to reopen. Masks are still required in indoor public spaces and vaccination will still be mandatory to access some settings. Quebec currently plans to discontinue its vaccine passport requirement March 14 and Manitoba intends to end all COVID-19 restrictions by March 15.

Uruguay will ease entry requirements by allowing fully vaccinated travelers to provide a negative antigen test result from within 72 hours rather than a PCR result. This adjustment comes ahead of the upcoming Carnaval festivities, which government officials have cited as directly relevant to the adjusted requirements.

**ASIA-PACIFIC**

Hundreds of New Zealanders are protesting the government’s vaccine mandate. On Monday, the Prime Minister claimed that these demonstrations felt like an imported phenomenon as the country had never seen anything like this before. Protestors occupy the lawns in front of New Zealand’s Parliament and are calling for an end to all public health COVID-19 restrictions and measures.

Thailand’s government plans to remove COVID-19 from the list of conditions covered by the Universal Coverage for Emergency Patients (USEP) scheme. USEP allows patients to seek treatment at any hospital, free of charge, for three days. Starting 1 March, only those with a critical, secondary infection brought on by COVID-19 will be covered by USEP. The removal of COVID-19 treatment from the USEP scheme is part of the government’s new policy to downgrade the virus to endemic.

Starting 25 February, Singapore will simplify its COVID-19 rules, and get rid of some social distancing measures. Safe distancing will no longer be required in places where masks are worn. The government believes that simplifying measures will make it easier for business and people to understand and comply with. Singapore plans to ease measures more once cases begin to fall.

**EUROPE**

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz is expected to meet with the country’s state governors on Wednesday to propose a reopening plan that would remove most Covid restrictions by March 20. A draft of the proposal, which was first seen on Monday, outlines a three-step plan that would immediately allow fully vaccinated citizens or citizens who can provide proof of recovery to attend private gatherings of up to 20 people. Proof of vaccination or recovery would no longer be required to enter shops. The second step of the plan is set to begin on March 4 and would drop the requirement to show proof of immunity for entry to bars, restaurants, museums, and outdoor events of up to 25,000 people. The third step would be implemented on March 20 and would remove all remaining internal restrictions except a mask requirement when in crowded spaces. The reopening plan is said to be dependent on hospitalization rates staying under control.

The Swiss Federal Council announced Wednesday that starting Thursday, masks and vaccine passes will no longer be required for entry to restaurants, bars, shops and most other public venues. Capacity limits on large
gathering will also be removed. Citizens are still required to self-isolate after a positive test result and masks are still required on public transportation and in health care facilities. International travelers to Switzerland will no longer need to provide proof of vaccination or a negative test result, and entry forms are no longer required.

The Greek Civil Aviation Authority stated in a press release Monday that travelers arriving from Australia, Canada and the United States will no longer be required to provide a negative Covid test result upon arrival. The press release states that travelers from these countries can now enter Greece under the same requirements as European Union citizens who hold the EU Digital Covid-19 Certificate, which displays either proof of vaccination, proof of recovery, or a negative PCR test result taken within 72 hours. All travelers to Greece are still required to complete the Passenger Locator Form before arrival.

**MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA**

**Egypt**’s Cabinet Media Center denies social media reports claiming COVID-19 vaccines are available in pharmacies. The Ministry of Health and Population also denies these claims. It stated there is no grounds for providing COVID-19 vaccines in pharmacies. In Egypt, COVID-19 vaccines are only available within designated inoculation centers.

**Libya**’s Director of the National Center for Disease Control announced the Greater Tripoli region is no longer considered in the “red zone”. Greater Tripoli was downgraded to the “red zone” in late January 2022. Out of five epidemiological levels, the region has now been upgraded to the fourth level.

**Bahrain** lifted COVID-19 restrictions on movement and public gatherings for both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals on 15 February. The country transitioned to the “green level” of restrictions and now allows for 100% capacity at indoor businesses such as restaurants, cafes, retail shops, malls, and conference halls. The mask mandate for indoor public places is still in place.

**Tunisia** lifted its nightly curfew on 10 February. The curfew was imposed a month ago in an attempt to curb the spread of COVID-19 infections. The government announced the ban of gatherings in public spaces and the ban on all types of demonstrations will remain in place, at least for one more week. People are still asked to continue wearing face masks and practice social distancing.
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 maintain entry/exit restrictions, applicable to citizens and non-citizens alike. Review a country’s specific travel restrictions prior to making travel arrangements.
- Consider that commercial flight availability may be 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 social distancing 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.