## Global – COVID-19 Pandemic

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

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<td>Date</td>
<td>February 23, 2022</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:

#### Africa
- Africa’s CDC halts vaccine donations.
- Uganda plans to impose fines on those who fail to get COVID-19 vaccine.
- South Africa changes vaccination rules to encourage vaccine uptake.

#### Americas
- Costa Rica President Alvarado is indicating that most social distancing measures, including nightly vehicular restrictions, could be eliminated in the coming weeks as conditions improve.
- Guyana has fully reopened its land border with Brazil’s Roraima state as of Saturday, February 19.
- Mexico’s most recent Semáforo state designations Monday have all states at Yellow (2. Medio) or Green (1. Bajo) as case counts continue to decline.

#### Asia-Pacific
- Hong Kong mandates COVID-19 testing for all citizens.
- Australia fully reopens its borders.
- South Korea approves Pfizer vaccine for children ages 5-11.

#### Europe
- European Council recommends fewer travel restrictions.
- England to lift remaining Covid restrictions.
- World Health Organization signs contract for global Covid vaccine app.

#### Middle East & North Africa
- Israel will end requirement to show proof of vaccination to enter businesses.
- Oman is lifting some entry restrictions for incoming travelers.
- Jordan will ease some entry restrictions for incoming travelers as well as the quarantine requirements for positive COVID-19 cases.
- Bahrain will no longer require travelers to undergo a mandatory quarantine upon arrival at the airport.
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 23, there have been 428,190,863 confirmed cases of COVID-19 globally with 5,909,581 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 Africa Center for Disease Control and Prevention will ask that all COVID-19 vaccine donations be paused until further notice. The director of Africa’s CDC stated that the primary challenge for vaccinating the continent is no longer supply shortages but other challenges like vaccine hesitancy among the population. As supply and demand for doses become more predictable, African leaders have been able to better plan distributions of the vaccines and make sense of many they need for a certain period of time.

Under a new public health law, which is being reviewed by law makers, Uganda plans to impose fines on people who refuse to get the COVID-19 vaccine. Although the nation has been inoculating citizens for almost a year, only 16 million doses have been administered in Uganda with a population of 45 million people. The Ugandan Parliament is currently reviewing the new Public Health Bill which seeks to make the COVID-19 vaccine mandatory and proposes a fine of 4 million Ugandan shillings ($1,139) for those who fail to get vaccinated. The statement does not say when the bill will be passed into law.

South Africa is changing its vaccination rules to encourage more people to get vaccinated. The government is shortening the interval between the first and second dose to 21 days and will allow people to get their booster three months after their second dose as opposed to six months. The government will also allow mixing and matching booster shots. So far South Africa has vaccinated 28% of its population, which is short of the government's target.

AMERICAS

Costa Rica’s President Alvarado is indicating that most social distancing measures, including nightly vehicular restrictions, could be eliminated in the coming weeks as conditions improve. There are currently driving restrictions in effect nightly from 12:00am to 5:00am LT. Additionally establishments are currently permitted to may ask for proof of vaccination to enter (at digression of owners). Case counts rose sharply in Costa Rica beginning in late December, peaking in early February at almost 6,000 new cases per day. That count has since been dropping at a similarly sharp rate, currently at 3,258.
Guyana has fully reopened its land border with Brazil’s Roraima state as of Saturday, February 19. Prior to this week overland travel across the border was only permitted on weekdays to limit traffic. The border gateway is located on the Guyana side at Lethem, across from the Brazilian town of Bonfim.

Mexico’s most recent Semáforo state designations Monday now have all states at Yellow (2. Medio) or Green (1. Bajo) as case counts continue to decline. There are now 16 states designated Yellow and 16 designated Green. All norther border states with the exception of Baja California are designated Yellow while Oaxaca is the only state in southern Mexico still designated Yellow. Under the Yellow (Medio) designation there is no stay-at-home advisory and most businesses and establishments are permitted to operate at 75%. Masks remain mandatory on public transit and recommended when social distancing cannot be achieved.

ASIA-PACIFIC

In an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19 in Hong Kong, the government has made testing mandatory for all 7.5 million citizens. The compulsory testing for COVID-19 will start in mid-March and COVID-19 restrictions will be in place until mid-April. The surge of COVID-19 cases has left hospitals and quarantine facilities overburdened with a rising number of patients. Hong Kong has reported that since the start of February, infections have increased by over 70x its previous rate.

Australia has fully reopened its international border for the first time in almost two years. Tourism is one of Australia’s biggest industries, but the sector was crippled during the pandemic when the country shut its borders. Under new travel rules, fully vaccinated travelers will no longer need to quarantine, but unvaccinated travelers must do so in their own accommodation for 14 days. Travelers can now enter all states in Australia except for Western Australia which remains closed until 3 March.

On Wednesday, South Korea’s health officials approved the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5-11, as the country expands its immunization program to combat the Omicron variant. The Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency states that it will announce a vaccine roll out plan for the age group in March. The country has also strengthened some social distancing measures and extended restrictions on private businesses to combat the rising cases.

EUROPE

The European Commission announced Tuesday that the temporary restriction on non-essential travel from third countries should be lifted for fully vaccinated or recently recovered travelers. The council stated that all EU and WHO approved vaccines should qualify, provided they were received no longer than 270 days before arrival. Negative test results could still be required if travelers are unable to obtain an EU digital COVID certificate. While European Union recommendations leave the final decision to individual member states, many European countries followed the council’s recommendations in 2021 when restrictions were gradually lifted. The new guidance is set to apply beginning March 1.
British Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced Monday that the remaining COVID restrictions would be lifted in England starting Thursday. Routine contact tracing and self-isolation will no longer be legally required, though citizens are still recommended to self-isolate if they test positive. Beginning April first, free Covid tests will only be available to the vulnerable population. The new legislation is still awaiting approval in Parliament, and does not apply to Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

On Wednesday, the World Health Organization signed a contract with T-Systems, a subsidiary of Deutsche Telekom to develop a globally recognized digital vaccine certificate. The app will feature a QR code that can be used to display Covid vaccines as well as other vaccinations such as the flu shot or yellow fever. T-Systems previously developed Germany’s Covid contact tracing mobile application and the European Union digital vaccine pass.

MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA

Israel will end the requirement to show proof of vaccination to enter businesses. Prime Minister Naftali Bennett made the announcement on February 18 saying, “we will stop using the Green Pass”. The Green Pass has been used in Israel for the last year and it shows an individual’s proof of vaccination that was required for entry into establishments such as bars, restaurants, hotels, and gyms.

Oman’s Civil Aviation Authority has announced the easing of some entry restrictions for travelers. Travelers will no longer be required to pre-register via the Ministry of Health’s link. Travelers can now present the mandatory negative PCR COVID-19 test result upon arrival or within 24 hours of arrival.

Authorities in Jordan announced the lifting of some restrictions on February 18. Travelers will no longer be required to undergo a PCR COVID-19 test upon arrival in country. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 while in Jordan will only need to quarantine for five days starting on the day the test was taken. A test at the end of quarantine is no longer required.

Bahrain will no longer require travelers to undergo a mandatory quarantine upon arrival. This update went into effect on February 20. In addition, passengers will no longer need to take a PCR COVID-19 test upon arrival at the airport.
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.