

WHO Director-General on COVID-19: The rule of the game is never give up



The World Health Organization (WHO) has renewed its commitment to combating the COVID-19 epidemic, as the number of confirmed cases has now crossed 100,000 in 100 countries.

“It’s certainly troubling that so many people and countries have been affected, so quickly,” WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a press briefing on COVID-19 on Monday.

“Now that the virus has a foothold in so many countries, the threat of a pandemic has become very real,” he stressed, adding that “it would be the first pandemic in history that could be controlled.”

The WHO chief stressed that the world is not at the mercy of this virus.

“The great advantage we have is that the decisions we all make – as governments, businesses, communities, families and individuals – can influence the trajectory of this epidemic.

“We need to remember that with decisive, early action, we can slow down the virus and prevent infections. Among those who are infected, most will recover.”

He stressed that the strategy should not be just about containment or mitigation, but both.

“All countries must take a comprehensive blended strategy for controlling their epidemics and pushing this deadly virus back,” he stressed.

“For all countries, the aim is the same: stop transmission and prevent the spread of the virus.”

The WHO Director-General noted that the Organization continues its support for all member countries alike, through WHO’s Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan.

“We have shipped supplies of personal protective equipment to 57 countries, we’re preparing to ship to a further 28, and we’ve shipped lab supplies to 120 countries.

“We’re also working with our colleagues across the UN system to support countries to develop their preparedness and response plans, according to the 8 pillars.

“And we have set up a partners platform to match country needs with contributions from donors.”

“The rule of the game is never give up,” said the WHO chief and called again for global solidarity in the common fight against our shared threat.

“Let hope be the antidote to fear. Let solidarity be the antidote to blame,” he stressed.

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