

World coronavirus death toll tops 180,000 as WHO warns virus will endure for a long time



Brussels, April 23 (RHC)-- More than 180,000 people across the world have died from the novel coronavirus, nearly two-thirds of them in Europe, since the deadly disease emerged in China last December, according to an AFP tally based on official sources.

In total, 180,289 deaths have been recorded worldwide for 2,596,383 infections, according to the tally at 1740 GMT on Wednesday.

There were 112,848 deaths in Europe for 1,263,802 cases on the hardest-hit continent.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Wednesday that there were “worrying upward trends” in early epidemics in parts of Africa and central and South America, while also warning that opening up global travel needed to be managed carefully.

“Most countries are still in the early stages of their epidemics and some that were affected early in the pandemic are starting to see a resurgence in cases,” WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told Geneva journalists in a virtual briefing.

“Make no mistake we have a long way to go. This virus will be with us for a long time,” he added, while noting progress in Western Europe.

The WHO’s top emergencies expert Dr. Mike Ryan also warned against opening up global travel too quickly, saying it would require “careful risk management.” He noted surges in infections in Africa such as a nearly 300 percent increase in cases in Somalia in the past week. “We are at the beginning in Africa,” Ryan said. The WHO official urged countries to continue investing in preparedness, saying that only 76 percent had surveillance systems to detect cases.

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