

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

Press Release No: 019/2020

Date: 23 March 2020

Venue: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**Africa's fight against COVID19 receives major boost with Alibaba donation of 1.5 million test kits and 100 tons for infection prevention and control commodities**



Africa's response to the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) outbreak has received a major boost, after the donation of medical equipment, including over 1.5 million laboratory diagnostic test kits and over 100 tons for infection prevention and control commodities, by the Jack Ma Foundation and the Alibaba Foundation.

The shipment arrived in Addis Ababa on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March.

This relief initiative was launched by the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Dr Abiy Ahmed, together with the Jack Ma Foundation and the Alibaba Foundation, as part of actions towards implementation of the Africa joint continental strategy for COVID-19, led by the African Union through the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC).

“On behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union, His Excellency, Cyril Ramaphosa, we thank the Jack Ma Foundation and the Alibaba Foundation for this generous contribution to the continent. We thank His Excellency the Prime Minister, and the

Government of Ethiopia, for facilitating the donation”, said H.E. Mr Edward Xolisa Makaya, South Africa’s Permanent Representative to Ethiopia and the African Union.

“This is a great honour and initiative and a great sign of the solidarity that the world needs at this critical time. The test kits and other materials will support African countries in their fight against this outbreak. We are facing a humanitarian situation, an economic situation and a security situation in the continent and Africa CDC clearly applauds the initiative of the Prime Minister and the Jack Ma and Alibaba Foundation,” said Dr John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC.

The COVID-19 outbreak continues to spread rapidly across the world, claiming thousands of lives and huge resources. In just about three months it has caused over 12,000 deaths worldwide and impacted socio-economic activities, particularly tourism and transport.

Each of the Member States of the African Union is expected to receive 20,000 laboratory diagnostic test kits, 100,000 medical masks, and 1000 protective suits and face shields, to support their fight against COVID-19 in Africa. Ethiopian Airlines will help distribute the equipment across the continent.

“We appeal to our ministries of health to ensure that these materials are distributed and used where they are mostly needed,” said H.E. Ambassador Mohamed Idriss Farah, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Djibouti, who is the Dean of African Diplomatic Corps, and Chair of the African Union Peace and Security Council.

**For further information please contact:**

**Directorate of Information and Communication** | African Union Commission | **E-mail:** [DIC@africa-union.org](mailto:DIC@africa-union.org) | **Website:** [www.au.int](http://www.au.int) | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia Follow Us: [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [YouTube](#)