



China –Africa Anti –Epidemic Report from Center of West African Studies of UESTC.

Case of Moroccan Kingdom

The WHO announced CoViD-19 a “public health emergency of international concern” on January 30, 2020, at the recommendation of the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee. Originating in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China in late 2019, over 80,000 cases of the virus have been reported internationally, with approximately 77,800 cases in China alone. South Korea has surpassed 1000 confirmed cases, Italy has recorded more than 229, Japan reached more than 144 cases and Iran has reported 15 deaths to date due to the virus.

African continent too has recorded few confirmed cases in several countries. According to the WHO, “13 of Africa’s 54 countries are at risk of becoming centers for diseases on volume of traffic with China and weak health system”. As of Monday 9th of March, the continent has recorded more than 76 confirmed cases in different countries in addition to many suspected cases that are under medical control. Egypt(48cases),Algeria(17cases),Nigeria(2cases), Tunisia(1case),Senegal(4case), South Africa (2 cases) in addition to Morocco (2cases). In the case of Morocco, the first case is a patient is a Moroccan man living in Italy, who is currently in non-critical condition in a hospital in Casablanca. In early stages of the declaration of the Coronavirus as a global health emergency by the WHO, Morocco has acted swiftly to take the necessary precautions and interventions to prevent the spread of the virus. First they have repatriated Moroccan nationals living in Wuhan, directly to two military hospitals well equipped under a strict medical surveillance for 20 days. After this quarantine, all the nationals coming back from Wuhan City have showed negative tests results to the CoViD-19. As in the case of Morocco no case has been directly transmitted from China, this proves that the Chinese Governments have given higher priority to the safety of all foreigners on its land even the ones living in Wuhan, the fact that they have provided them with all materials needed for their health protection and safety till they got back to their home country. According to Morocco World news, the WHO has reported that Morocco’s readiness to prevent the spread of coronavirus, stating that its medical facilities are well equipped to deal with the cases and the testing equipment to diagnose cases of infection.



Source of the photo: metro.co.uk- Casablanca, Morocco.

Recent studies concerned with coronavirus risk in Africa stated Morocco at “moderate risk” of importing the virus and this was the lowest risk tier used to rank African countries in the studies. The risk rating considers two main contrasting variables: the high volume of travel between Morocco and countries affected by this epidemic, the thing that gives Morocco high Infectious disease Vulnerability Index (IDVI) and Morocco preparations for any introduction of coronavirus into its borders. The situation is currently stable in Morocco , with only one recorded case, the government is trying to gain control over its borders and stop flight coming or going to the infectious countries as a measure of protection and relies on airport screening all passengers entering the country in this critical global emergency.

On the other hand, in the early weeks of the epidemic, the Moroccan police have arrested a woman for spreading rumors online about the outbreak of the coronavirus in the country. The woman shared a video on Facebook claiming that the authorities had detected a case of the new strain of the virus, 2019-nCoV in the city of Fez at a Chinese restaurant called “the Great Wall”. Filming outside the restaurant, the woman said that everyone is covering their noses to avoid infection she added that they found a coronavirus case here. Chinese people who entered the country brought the disease. A man fainted inside the restaurant, according to what the woman claimed. However, after the video went viral *Morocco World News* has reported that a member of staff from the restaurant had dismissed the allegations as lies, explaining that the restaurant’s manager had a fever and called an ambulance. The doctor declared that the man is only suffering from a cold. Moroccan authorities have already condemned the rumors of the virus outbreak and the manager reportedly is seeking to file a lawsuit against the woman for spreading false rumors.



Morocco's Prime Minister, Saadeddine Othmani

Othmani also warned that those publishing rumors about the outbreak “bear great responsibility” for causing terror and panic among members of the public. The coronavirus is a potentially fatal and highly contagious disease that causes severe acute respiratory infection. The WHO has declared a global health emergency over the outbreak, but has not yet classified it as a “pandemic”. According to Freedom House, Morocco’s strict laws mean internet users may be punished for their online activities under the penal code, the antiterrorism law and the press code and this law was applied in the case of this woman for her criminal act.

The alarming rate at which the new coronavirus has spread throughout China has raised concerns about how it passes from person to person. In both Morocco and China strict precautions measures followed by these two countries and many other around the globe. To fight Coronavirus china has shown miraculous action plans by constructing a new hospital within days only to help assist quarantine the infected people in Wuhan city. The whole world should learn lessons from China’s government outbreak preparedness. In her work, Kiera Bulter, mentioned China has taken drastic measures to contain the virus. She added that Garzon, an American emergency medicine physician, highlighted that the vastly different capacities for mobilizing a work force; some China’s preparations would be nearly impossible to replicate in the United States. He was so impressed how the Chinese government succeeded to build new hospitals well equipped to contain additional 2600 hospital beds in a matter of days.



Leishenshan Hospital in Wuhan City

The reason according to Garzon was that Chinese workers in construction field have worked days and nights, something according to him the United States could not do. As a Moroccan student at University of Electronic Science and Technology of China, residing in Chengdu City, I really do respect the efforts our university and both local and central government are doing to protect us from this epidemic and how they are working very hard to stop this global nightmare which is threatening everybody's life. The People's Republic of China is a clear example of, "Actions speak louder than words". Under this global health crisis of coronavirus, China has acted creatively and was proactive by introducing "Online Teaching Classes" not only in my university but also in other provinces and cities'. By this way; China showed how responsible and accountable its government is, very brave and sustainable. This amazing country was the most to suffer from this epidemic but it is combatting it with braveness and strength and what they are doing to help other countries suffering and struggling with this global emergency is really great.



Wuhan New Hospital construction



CoViD-19 Infected people treatment Wuhan Hospital

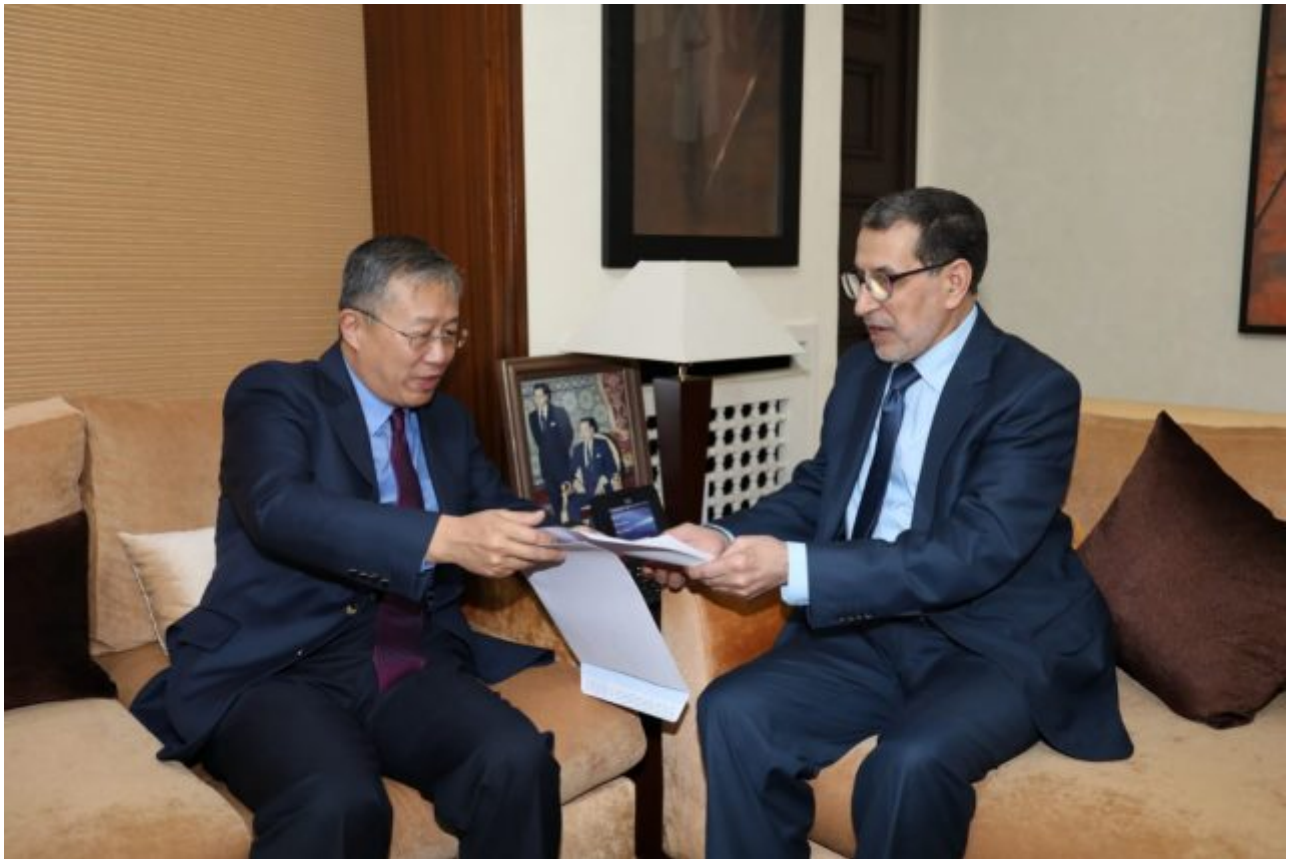
On the other part, the Moroccan government is getting well prepared to handle the virus and prevent it from spread. With its second confirmed case on the 5th of March. Morocco has prepared in every single city's hospital quarantine and isolation rooms, use media to sensitize people to take the necessary precautions and preventions for their safety. The director of public health office in the region of Casablanca-Settat has declared that the situation is under control in the kingdom, the 2 confirmed cases both are Moroccan nationals living in Italy.



Moulay Youssef Hospital – Morocco-First case of CoViD-19 quarantine

All passengers who were in the same flight with the patients, their family were all asked to quarantine for 14 days in their houses. A medical team was assigned by the Ministry of health to follow up with daily in order to confirm whether the virus was transmitted to them or not. The kingdom preparedness rate and measures make at low risk in terms of virus spread. Morocco and countries in the African continent are following the prevention guidelines recommended by the World Health Organization: washing hands regularly with soap or disinfectant, covering nose and mouth when sneezing, and avoiding contact with people showing cold or flu-like symptoms as well as avoiding contact with live wild animals or livestock and cook meat and eggs before consumption. By following those prevention tactics the infection risk can be decreased as people are more aware about how critical the current situation is. What's more the medical labs in African continent are working hard to handle this epidemic by improvement of diagnose equipment and conducting more scientific research to find an antivirus for this epidemic as it is a global emergency.

This year 2020, Morocco and China celebrates their 60th anniversary of Morocco-China Diplomatic relations. The head of Moroccan Government Saad Eddine El Othmani has made a statement during his meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Morocco, Li Li, on Thursday 20th of February in Rabat. The Moroccan prime minister has declared that the kingdom is fully supporting China to combat COVID-19. On the other hand, Mr. Li Li also carried a message from Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang, in which the Chinese diplomat has introduced an overview of his country's valuable efforts to deal with the coronavirus epidemic. He also described China's strategy and safety plan in reducing the number of any new possible infections, especially after they have closed Wuhan City and taken serious safety measures to prevent the spread of the epidemic.



Chinese Ambassador to Morocco Li Li (L) and Morocco's Head of Government Saad Eddine El Othmani (R). Photo credit: Ambassador Li Li/Twitter – Source Morocco World News.

During the meeting, the senior Moroccan official have expressed the ongoing support of the King Mohamed VI for the Chinese-Moroccan, Bilateral relations. Furthermore he described the Moroccan-Chinese ties as” historic and deep”, especially after the monarch’s visit to Beijing 2016. Li also concluded that China appreciates Morocco and wishes to develop its bilateral relations with the Kingdom. He also thanked Morocco and the King for the moral support and friendship they expressed to China after the novel COVID-19 outbreak.

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