



**BRIEF ON MEASURES BEING IMPLEMENTED BY THE PETROLEUM
AUTHORITY OF UGANDA TO PREVENT AND MITIGATE THE RISK OF
CORONAVIRUS DISEASE(COVID-19)**

PRESENTED TO:

NRI

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1.0 BACKGROUND

Since the outbreak of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019, the disease has spread to more than 212 countries globally.

In order to prevent and mitigate the risk posed by COVID-19 in the country, the Government of Uganda through the Ministry of Health, has implemented rigorous public health measures to reduce further spread and mitigate the impact of the pandemic. These include:

- Public health measures such frequent and thorough hand washing, respiratory etiquette, and the use of face masks by persons with respiratory symptoms.
- Social distancing measures such as isolation of confirmed cases and quarantine of contacts; closure of workplaces and educational institutions; suspension of religious and social gatherings, restrictions in movement in-country and across borders.
- Testing and surveillance strategies including tracing of contacts to the confirmed cases.

2.0 MEASURES IMPLEMENTED AT THE PETROLEUM AUTHORITY OF UGANDA TO PREVENT AND MITIGATE THE RISK OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE

The Petroleum Authority of Uganda (PAU) has implemented various measures in its operations to prevent and mitigate the risk posed by the COVID-19. These measures were in accordance with guidelines issued by the Government of Uganda and have evolved over time.

Although Uganda had not reported a case of COVID-19 by March 9th March 2020, the PAU requested all staff and licensees to be on high alert and diligently exercise preventive measures to avoid contracting the disease. The World Health Organisation (WHO) had noted that the COVID-19 is a public health emergency of international concern. In order to reduce the risk, the following measures were implemented;

- Increased sensitization and awareness on the coronavirus outbreak among all PAU staff members;
- Procurement of personal protective equipment and infection prevention materials such as alcohol-based sanitizers, automatic dispensers, Infrared thermometers, and face masks.
- Engaged with the licensees (Total E&P Uganda, Tullow Uganda Operations Pty, Armour Energy Ltd, Oranto Petroleum Ltd and CNOOC Uganda Ltd) on strategies to mitigate the risk posed by the outbreak.
- All staff were directed to halt all planned international travels while staff returning from abroad were required to undergo quarantine and monitoring in accordance with the Government directives.

- Before confirmation of meetings with stakeholders, participants were requested to provide information for screening such as travel history and health condition.
- All planned engagements categorized as international meetings and conferences were postponed in accordance with the Government directives.
- All PAU engagements in Uganda were required to comply with the MOH guidelines on mass gatherings. For example, there was availability of health officials and equipment to undertake screening, surveillance, and response at the venues.

Following the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Uganda that was reported on 21st March 2020, the precautionary measures under implementation were enhanced. The following measures were implemented to mitigate the risk posed by the COVID-19 outbreak:

- An assessment of the working environment was undertaken to implement the recommended social distance of 2m from each workstation in the offices.
- Each Directorate was requested to evaluate the minimum physical personnel requirement for essential business continuity. Some staff members were therefore requested to work from home and in shifts.
- All staff with symptoms of COVID-19 such as flue, cough, fever, headache, shortness in breath etc. were requested to seek urgent medical attention and only return to office after healing.
- It was recommended that all document submissions to the PAU should be in electronic format.
- There was continuous sensitization of staff to ensure they are alert and precautionary measures are being implemented both within the working environment and in their day to day life. The sensitization focused on respiratory etiquette, hygiene, housekeeping and discouraging employees from using other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible. The sensitization campaigns were facilitated by epidemiologists from the MOH..
- All staff were discouraged from using public transport. The PAU organized institutional transport for staff without personal vehicles,.
- The Police Officers securing access points to the office premises were requested to only observe as opposed to touching the bags and carrying out body search.
- All contractors at the office premises with personnel involved in construction and refurbishment were requested to halt their operations until the situation normalizes.
- There was suspension of all field visits and face to face engagements with International Oil Companies and other stakeholders. All urgent engagements were conducted through video or teleconferencing platforms such as Zoom;
- There was suspension of all visits, physical inquiries and submissions to the PAU office premises. The general public is advised to make all inquiries and

submissions to the PAU via email ed@pau.go.ug including all statutory submissions by licensees.

- All the office premises and cars of the PAU are cleaned and disinfected on a weekly basis using alcohol and ammonia-based sanitizers.

Following the increase in COVID cases in Uganda and in line with the Government Directives, all staff members were requested to work remotely from home except when called upon under exceptionally urgent or emergency circumstances.

3.0 CONCLUSION

The measures being implemented at the PAU have been in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Government of Uganda and the World Health Organization. The PAU is continuously monitoring the situation regarding the COVID-19 outbreak to ensure health and safety of all staff and stakeholders.