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**20<sup>th</sup> May, 2023**

**For Immediate Release**

**TO ALL MEDIA HOUSES**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **LIFTING OF COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS AT ALL POINTS OF ENTRY IN GHANA**

The World Health Organisation (WHO) announced on 5th May 2023 that COVID-19 is no longer a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). Globally, there are decreasing numbers of deaths and hospitalizations with high levels of population immunity against SARS-CoV-2. Though COVID-19 still remains a global health threat, it is time for countries to transition from emergency mode to managing COVID-19 alongside other infectious diseases.

#### **Current COVID-19 Situation in Ghana**

There has been a sustained decline of COVID-19 cases in the country over the past 5 months. As of 15th May 2023, there were only 18 active cases none of which is severe or critical. The only COVID-19 death in 2023 was in January.

Since January 2023, we have had 187,089 international passengers. More than 98% of these passengers were either fully vaccinated or persons less than 18 years who were exempted from testing based on our national guidelines. As a result, only 3,890 passengers were required to be tested out of which 24 were positive.

As of 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023, more than 13.5 million persons had received at least a dose of the Covid-19 vaccine while 10.5 million persons were fully vaccinated. Additionally, 4.5 million persons have taken vaccine boosters.

Based on the global and national situation, at the last national COVID-19 Task Force meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023, the following decisions were taken:

- Pre-departure testing and test at all Points of Entry are no more a requirement for all passengers.

- COVID-19 Health Declaration form for international travellers has been suspended.

**These measures are to take effect from today, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2023.**

For constant vigilance and protection of persons from COVID-19 infections, the following measures are to be maintained:

- COVID-19 Vaccination drive will continue.
- Persons with symptoms of fever, cough and sore throat would be tested for both Flu and COVID-19 at our sentinel sites across all 16 regions.
- surveillance will continue to help us identify any new COVID-19 variants of Concern.
- The public is to maintain general safety measures like hand washing with soap and water or use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Persons with complaints of fever, cough and sore throat should report to the nearest health facility for management.
- Persons who test positive to COVID-19 are to be managed with existing protocols.

Ghana has had outbreaks of Marburg Virus Disease, Lassa Fever, Monkey Pox, Measles and Yellow Fever since the declaration of COVID-19 as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).

The health systems in the country have maintained sufficient capacity in the midst of these threats. The Ministry of Health and the Ghana Health Service, with support of our partners, will continue to ensure operational readiness and flexibility to respond during surges of COVID-19, while maintaining other essential health services and preparing for the emergence of new variants with increased severity or capacity.

**SIGNED**  
**DR. PATRICK KUMA-ABOAGYE**  
**DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

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