21 August 2020

UNKT COVID-19 UPDATE

WHO figures for cases detected in Kosovo (as of 19 August 2020)

| Identified: | 11,963 | 45,385 - Total tests performed |
| Active: | 3,675 | 580 - patients hospitalized, from which: |
| Recovered: | 7,865 | 16 are intubated, 45 are in intensive care and 403 on oxygen-therapy |
| Casualties: | 245 | 3,523 patients in homecare. |

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data updated globally, as of 3:41pm CEST, 13 August 2020.

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1 Basic principles of statistics dictate that cases should be registered only once in the place of detection rather than the place of residence or nationality to avoid double-counting. Due to Kosovo’s status under Security Council resolution 1244 and the fact that health care facilities in Kosovo are not fully integrated, there have been occurrences of some cases being counted by the Institutes of Public Health in Pristina as well as in Belgrade. The Institute of Public Health in Pristina has provided data of cases detected in Kosovo as well as cases of some Kosovo habitual residents detected in Serbia. This number is not reflected in the data above. The Institute of Public Health “Batut” in Belgrade provides data segregated by origin/residence for cases detected in Serbia, making it possible to identify the number of COVID-19 cases detected in Serbia related to habitual residents from Kosovo. In an effort to provide numbers segregated by place of detection, and to avoid double-counting, WHO has been reporting numbers for cases detected in Kosovo (including non-residents detected in Kosovo and excluding residents of Kosovo diagnosed outside of Kosovo), which may slightly differ from figures provided by institutions or in the media. The WHO number is the source of all graphs presented in this document.
Global Guidelines and Recommendation

**WHO guidelines and information to facilitate effective management of COVID-19 pandemic**

**COVID-19 Testing**

Public Health system in Kosovo currently is conducting up to 471 tests per 24 hours due to the limited lab capacity. WHO recommendation is between 2000 and 4000 PCR tests per day. In order to achieve this level WHO is supporting the IPH by delivering lab equipment to increase capacities of Public Health Institutions in Pristina with 2, Graçanicë/Gračanica with 3 additional PCR lab test equipment sets by the end of August. In addition to the list of laboratories licensed on 10 August for conducting PCR and Seriological testing, the Ministry of Health is looking at licensing additional private entities to conduct COVID-19 testing in Kosovo. Currently, 45 of them are doing serological testing and two of them are doing PCR. **[LINK1, LINK2 & LINK3]** full list. Under the redirected funding from the Kosovo Health project of World Bank, in order to increase the testing numbers and meet the WHO recommendations, the Ministry of Health is purchasing 100,000 PCR test kits in the following 3 months, and additional 100,000 PCR and 30,000 rapid test kits in the beginning of 2021.

WHO has developed specific guidance to prevent and combat COVID-19. The guidelines have been shared with relevant institutions in Kosovo and translated into Albanian and Serbian languages:

- **Returning to Workplace**: emphasising employers’ responsibility to provide f or gradual and safe return and working from home when possible. **[LINK]**
- **Use of Personal Protection Equipment -PPE** **[LINK]**
- **WHO produced infographics for promotion and easier comprehension in English, Albanian & Serbian**
- **Mass gatherings** are not recommended by WHO, as indoor gatherings are the highest single amplifier of transmission. See **[LINK]**
- **Contact Tracing of COVID -19** cases and potential cases is a community-based, person-centered approach with a 14 day self - isolation focus **[LINK]**
- **WHO’s Guidance on Global Surveillance for COVID-19** provides definitions of case s, such as suspected, probable and confirmed (updated) **[LINK]**
- **WHO’s Laboratory Testing Strategy Recommendations** **[LINK]**
- **Laboratory Testing in Suspected Cases** **[LINK]**
- **Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) advice for the public: When and how to use masks:** **[LINK]**
- **Public health criteria to adjust public health and social measures** in the context of COVID-19: **[LINK]**
- **Considerations for school-related public health measures** in the context of COVID-19: **[LINK]**

**UNICEF guidelines regarding safe return to school**

**UNICEF Guidance for Re-Opening of Preschools and Kindergartens** post COVID-19 **[LINK]**, as well as **Prevention and Control in Schools** was shared and discussed with Kosovo institutions in case the return to school takes place in September 2020. **[LINK]** Recommendations include mandatory absence of students and staff with symptoms; hygienic measures; access to water, sanitation, and decontamination procedures; as well as promotion of physical distancing and use of PPEs.

The Ministry of Health published the following guidelines:

**A Manual for COVID -19 Prevention and Control** was issued on 16 June 2020 based on the recommendations of WHO, containing guidelines on protection and preventive measures at workplaces, shopping malls, gastronomy, as well as polling station guidelines. For more details please see Links in **[Eng / Alb / Ser]**.

A **Protocol for Health Safety in Aviation** based on recommendations of the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EUASA) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) was issued on 20 May 2020. It includes technical detail on preventive measures for staff, management, and passengers. Available in **[Albanian and Serbian]**. Note: Pristina Airport was re-opened on 20 June 2020. **Travellers must be at the airport 3 hours prior to the flight.**

The reproduction/transmission rate of COVID-19 in Kosovo has not changed and is continuing at a 1.7 rate, according to WHO. This means that 100 people will transmit the virus to 170 other people. To contain the pandemic, the undertaken measures need to bring down the Reproduction rate to under the factor of 1. **Current Case Fatality Rate-CFR** in Kosovo is 3.6%.
Measures by Kosovo Institutions

After the increasing trend of positive cases during July and the first part of August, the government has been introducing a series of measures. Currently, a potential stabilization of the curve is observed with cases below 200 per day, albeit still in the 100-170 cases per day range. For a detailed timeline of updated measures by Kosovo authorities, please see [LINK]. The most recent one is as following:

From 30 July, the curfew has been set from 22:30 to 05:00 the following day. Decisions on opening of kindergartens continue to be under the discretion of individual municipalities. Masks continue to are mandatory. Mandatory physical distance is to be kept at 2 meters. All public entities that offer services to a large group of people, must provide masks and hand disinfectant at their entrances. Currently under these measures, the citizens of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina are required to present a negative PCR test not older than 72 hours upon entering Kosovo. The same continues to apply to Kosovo passport holders travelling to these countries.

Exemption are diplomatic staff accredited in Kosovo and those traveling through airport. A full set of measures is available at [LINK]. An unofficial English translation is available at [LINK].

The Assembly of Kosovo has adopted the Law on the prevention and the fight against COVID-19 Pandemics (14 August 2020), and after being signed by the President as well as published in the Official Gazette will empower the Kosovo Police and the Inspectorate of Health. All set of measures by Kosovo authorities continues to strengthen the health care system and will contribute to a stricter enforcement of the government measures and potentially affect the stabilization of the infections curve.

Kosovo healthcare system

Public Health Care system in Kosovo: The University Clinical Center of Kosovo (UCCK) in Prishtinë/Priština has a capacity of total 2,100 beds, with additional 2,000 beds in 7 regional hospitals: Prizren, Peja/Peć, Gjakovë/Dakovica, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (south), Gjilan/ Gnjilane, Ferizaj/Uroševac, Vushtrri/Vučitrn. The Infectious Diseases ward at UCCK has 120 beds, currently fully utilised. It also has 6 Intensive Care Units, also fully utilized.

To ensure surge capacity, the University Clinical Center of Kosovo, in addition to the Infectious Diseases ward, has adjusting to purpose of using for the treatment of the patient with COVID-19 the Dermatology and Pulmonology Ward, as well as Sport Medicine. Regional hospitals are taking some caseload. However, severe cases are being referred to the University Clinical Center. In line with the requests from the Emergency Center and the ICU, additional personnel have been assigned to the two departments of the UCCK to ensure full operability. Given the operational risks in treating COVID-19 patients, the Ministry of Health is exploring venues with NATO and other international partners to increase the capacities for up to 1000 beds for COVID-19 patients. So far, the MoH has secured additional 60 beds from the Kosovo Security Force hospital that will adapted to treat COVID-19 infected patients. The current rate of infections has almost filled the capacity of the public health care system and has put the whole system under a great deal of stress.

Despite numerous reports on issue with oxygen, according to officials there are not shortages of oxygen, and that all patients that need oxygen therapy are receiving it.

Health workers infected by COVID-19: 1,245 cases out of 11,963 are healthcare workers, out of which 485 doctors, 678 nurses & 82 others, making up approximately 10.4% of total COVID-19 infections as of 19 August 2020.
Support provided by UN family and International Community

WHO is continuously supporting the Kosovo institutions through technical assistance and advice to improve the prevention and response mechanisms in fighting COVID-19 outbreak. Experts from US, Sweden and Spain have been deployed to provide a set of recommendations based on their assessment and advice to the health institutions in scaling up the health capacities in better response to COVID-19.

- Professor Mark Katz, Medical Epidemiologist and Consultant for WHO-Europe in Kosovo (5 August -26 September). The purpose of his consultancy is to evaluate in-depth the response from the authorities based on 9 pillars of SPRP and subsequently provide a set of recommendations for improvement of surveillance, risk communications and infection prevention. Mr Katz is a US citizen with extensive experience from the CDC (Center for Disease Control) in Atlanta and based in Israel.
- Dr Katarina Febe Niward (20 – 29 August 2020) - Swedish Infectiology specialist will focus her support to case management system by the clinicians dealing with COVID-19 patients.
- Mr. Armand Bejtullahu, Technical Officer WHO HQ Specialist on outbreak investigation platform GoData, will be supporting IPH in setting up the GoData database and importing the information for COVID-19 patients.
- Professor Golubinka Boshevska conducted a 2 days (5-7 August) training on molecular testing for all microbiologist following the decision of the Ministry of Health to scale up laboratory and testing capacities.
- WHO in addition delivered 27 pcs of oxygen Concentrators on 18 July 2020 and will deliver additional 211 oxygen Concentrators on 25th of August 2020.
- On 6th of August 2020, with the support of the Government of Luxembourg, UNICEF Kosovo Office delivered another donation to the Ministry of Health of Kosovo, including 40 Oxygen concentrators dedicated to the Primary Health Care Facilities in Kosovo.

- World Bank’s Kosovo Health Project (KHP): A new component has been added to this project to support urgent needs of the Government to respond to COVID-19 pandemic. The component has already supported procurement of PPEs and infusion pumps in the value of ~1.1million USD. Another package of ~0.7million USD for PPEs is in the process. In addition, this component will support mobilization of healthcare providers and support staff, as well as rehabilitation of the main quarantine are. The recruitment of 75 doctors, 150 nurses, 20 laboratory technicians, 55 technical support staff, and 75 sanitary inspectors for a period of 3 months for all levels of care.
- World Bank’s Kosovo COVID-19 Emergency Response Project (US$ 50 million): The Project’s objective is to prevent, detect, and respond to the threat posed by COVID-19 and strengthen national systems for public health preparedness in Kosovo. The Project supports two key components: (i) Emergency COVID-19 Response in the health sector (US$ 17.6 million), and (ii) Supporting households to comply with public health containment measures in the social protection sector (US$ 31.4 million).
- World Bank’s Pandemic Emergency Facility Trust Fund (PEF) (US$ 2.1 million) is a stand-alone Recipient Executed Trust Fund aiming to support the Government in its efforts to strengthen detection capacities related to COVID-19. There is one key component under this Project: support the enhancement of disease detection capacities for COVID-19. This component will support procurement of public health laboratory equipment and supplies such as kits, serological tests, RT-PCR equipment, PCR set up, automated immunoanalyzer, immunoassays, laboratory refrigerators, freezers etc.
United Nations Kosovo Team response to COVID-19 health and socio-economic impacts

To have a clearer picture of the impacts of COVID-19, a Rapid Socio-Economic Assessment on the impact of COVID-19 was implemented by UNDP, UN Women and UNFPA. Full document is available in English, Albanian & Serbian

Gender dimension of COVID-19 Response

UN Women, is supporting this year’s online edition of International Animation Festival Anibar, calling for young women artists to address the gender stereotypes with their artworks in the forms of comics with the COVID-19 lens taken into strong consideration. All the artworks will be published in special edition publication, while the three best works will be awarded a prize. This activity is organized through the joint UNKT “Youth for Kosovo” Project funded by the UN Peacebuilding Fund.

The underrepresentation of women in decision making structures in the media was raised as a concern in the meeting between UN Women and Association of Journalists in Kosovo. Potential ways to address this issue in the future and concrete plans were discussed during the meeting.

Asylum Seekers, refugees and migrants, Internally Displaced Persons and Voluntary Returnees

Around 80 asylum-seekers are currently present in Kosovo. They are receiving psychological and psychosocial assistance, counselling and support in lodging asylum claims and social assistance application. Information and advice for asylum-seekers about COVID-19, services and support offered in Kosovo, is available free of charge through Helpline number 0800 60 200. This activity is carried on by UNHCR in Pristina/ Pristina; funded by EU Service for Foreign Policy Instruments within the project “Addressing COVID-19 Challenges within the Migrant and Refugee Response in the Western Balkans”.

UNHCR is supporting internally displaced persons (IDPs), voluntary returnees and persons at risk of statelessness through the joint IOM, UNHCR, UN Women “The UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund” project focused on socio-economic response to COVID-19. The project under joint implementation of UN Agencies aims at supporting vulnerable non majority communities, IDPs, returnees and gender-based violence survivors to recover from the pandemic effects. So far 23 IDPs and returnees benefitted from psychological and/or legal aid. Through this project, over 100 returnees and IDPs have been identified to benefit from the vocational trainings. At the same time, UNHCR partners, constantly disseminate updated information related to COVID-19 with a focus on the measures introduced by the relevant authorities. UNHCR and partner organizations Forum for Development and Multi-ethnic Collaboration (FDMC) and Advancing Together (AT) continue to monitor situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and voluntary returnees. Advancing Together has a free
COVID-19 containment measures restricting the freedoms of movement, peaceful assembly, and religion remained in force. These measures also continue to have the potential to affect a wide range of human rights in Kosovo, including the realization of economic, social and cultural rights.

The ongoing increase of COVID-19 cases and deaths continues to raise serious concerns for the rights to life and health. The Director of Emergency at the University Clinical Center of Kosovo noted that that persons living poverty cannot afford to pay for COVID-19 treatment, which can cost up to 700 EUR. Reports of infected medical workers and insufficient COVID-19 testing continue to be problems of particular concern. The Ombudsperson also began an investigation into whether failing to provide medical support workers with the 300 EUR wage subsidy, which is given to medical doctors and nurses, amounts to discrimination.

The Assembly of Kosovo (AoK) adopted the Law on Prevention and Combating the COVID-19 Pandemic in Kosovo on 14 August, which may be regarded as providing a legal basis for restricting human rights and to sanction those who violate COVID-19 prevention measures. It authorizes the Ministry to Health to limit human rights if necessary prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to impose fines for non-compliance. However, non-derogable human rights, such as the rights to life, fair trial, and equality before the law, cannot be restricted under the law. Two civil society organizations argued that people can challenge the legality of fines they received prior to this law’s as there was no legal basis for such actions.

According to the findings of a civil society organization’s public opinion poll, the “failure of Kosovo institutions to effectively communicate with non-majority communities has created a wide space for the spread of conspiracy theories and ‘false news’” and has significantly impacting “perceptions regarding the danger posed by COVID-19”.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare announced that the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the number of families receiving social assistance by 599 families. To mitigate the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis, the GoK approved a COVID-19 economic recovery plan to distribute the 365 million EUR allocated under the recently revised budget, although the Mayor of Pristina stated that this amount is insufficient for Kosovo’s economic recovery. Although it failed to pass the Draft Law on Economic Recovery – COVID-19 due to a lack of quorum, the AoK adopted agreements with the European Union and the International Development Association to obtain funding to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 crisis continues to disproportionately affect the rights of groups and persons in vulnerable situations as well as members of non-majority communities in Kosovo, especially K-Roma, K-Ashkali, and K-Egyptians. Members of these communities still require urgent assistance with face masks and food. Through an UNMIK-supported initiative, an NGO delivered face masks to members of these communities in Deçan/Dečane.

Tailored assistance remains essential to address the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on communities and persons in vulnerable situations remains essential and to ensure they are not left behind. Vigilance should also be maintained to address instances of gender-based and sexual violence and incidents targeting non-majority communities that continue to occur in the context of the COVID-19 crisis.

Children and Youth: As a result of a long-term partnership with Kosovo Agency of Statistics on conducting Multiple Indicator cluster Survey (MICS), on the 18th of August 2020, UNICEF Kosovo donated to KAS additional 38 tablets following the delivery of 20 tablets in June 2020. The 2019-2020 MICS data will show progress made since the previous 2013-2014 MICS. They will enable further data analyses to bring the facts about the children in their families, before, during, and beyond the COVID pandemic.
United Nations Global Policy Initiatives and Operational Response Strategies

Secretary-General’s policy initiatives:
August 03 Education during COVID-19 and beyond
June 19 World of Work and COVID-19;
June 9 The Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security and Nutrition;
June 3 COVID-19 and People on the Move;
May 21 Verified campaign on trusted factual COVID-19 information;
May 20 Impact of COVID-19 in Africa;
May 13 COVID-19 and the Need for Action on Mental Health;
May 8 Appeal against Hate and Xenophobia;
May 6 A Disability-Inclusive Response to COVID-19;
May 1 Impact of COVID-19 on Older Persons;
April 23 COVID-19 and Human Rights: We are all in this together;
April 17 Debt and COVID-19: A Global Response in Solidarity;
April 16 Impact of COVID-19 on Children;
April 9 Impact of COVID-19 on Women;
April 5 Appeal against gender-based violence and COVID-19;
March 31 Shared Responsibility, Global Solidarity: Responding to socio-economic impacts; and
March 23 Appeal for Global Ceasefire

and anchored around 5 pillars, focusing on health first, followed by, protecting people, economic recovery, macroeconomic response and social cohesion and community resilience. The plan follows global guidance and offers an integrated approach by putting people first and addressing health, social and economic recovery simultaneously. It proposes sustainable solutions to “building back better” and has been prepared in coordination with local and international stakeholders.

Emergency Health Response and Assistance-The UN Kosovo Team agencies, funds and programmes have been working from onset of the COVID crisis to strengthen the Health system response through procurement of PPEs as well as other needed medical equipment and supplies. In parallel, agencies have distributed emergency food and non-food items to vulnerable families.

Currently in Kosovo UN facilitated assistance is financed by a combination of re-purposing of relevant programmes, core funding and special earmarked multilateral and bilateral contributions. Donors to date include:

- Austria
- Canada
- EU
- Germany
- Japan
- Luxemburg
- MPTF (Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden)
- Norway
- Switzerland
- USA. (Note: The table will be updated accordingly to the contributions received)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items/Delivered by</th>
<th>UNOPS</th>
<th>UNFPA</th>
<th>UNICEF</th>
<th>IOM</th>
<th>UN Women</th>
<th>UNDP</th>
<th>UNHCR</th>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>UNMIK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fully equipped Ambulance Cars</td>
<td>10 pcs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mobile ventilators</td>
<td></td>
<td>40 pcs</td>
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<td>27 pcs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other clinical equipment &amp; apparatus</td>
<td>1,192 pcs</td>
<td>978 pcs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tests and related items</td>
<td>6,000 pcs</td>
<td></td>
<td>85,085 pcs</td>
<td>23,440 pcs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Different PPE and disposable equipment &amp; disinfecte for staff &amp; patients – Pcs</td>
<td>587,550 packs</td>
<td>4,000 packs</td>
<td>167,520 packs</td>
<td>1,760 packs</td>
<td>42,613 packs</td>
<td>70 pcs</td>
<td>10,800 packs</td>
<td>8,383 packs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hygienic packs and other non-food items</td>
<td>40 packs</td>
<td>22,000 packs</td>
<td>252 packs</td>
<td>40 packs</td>
<td>3,073 pcs</td>
<td>46 packs</td>
<td>1080 packs</td>
<td>1450 packs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food packs</td>
<td></td>
<td>252 packs</td>
<td>40 packs</td>
<td>2046 packs</td>
<td>274 packs</td>
<td></td>
<td>2159 packs</td>
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<tr>
<td>IT equipment</td>
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<td>36 packs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immunization Items</td>
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<td>511,000 pcs</td>
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</tbody>
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Table 1. Medical assistances delivered by United Nations Agencies in Kosovo
Table 2. Future assistance expected to be delivered by UN Agencies in Kosovo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNOPS</td>
<td>August, 2020</td>
<td>Equipment/Apparatus – 30 pcs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PPE – 26,200 pcs</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>August, 2020</td>
<td>Lab Equipment/Apparatus – 17 pcs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>August, 2020</td>
<td>Testing Kits – 11,040 pcs</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>September 10, 2020</td>
<td>PPE – 52,130 PCS</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Equipment/Apparatus – 5,030 pcs</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Countries that delivered assistance independently

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>July 02, 2020</td>
<td>Protection Masks – 500,000 pcs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uniforms – 10,000 pcs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PPE Clothing – 5,000 pcs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Disinfectants – 30,000 pcs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>July 25, 2020</td>
<td>Test Kits – 6,500 pcs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Respirators – 6 pcs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>August 11, 2020</td>
<td>Masks – 100,000 pcs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Plastic protectors – 2,950 pcs</td>
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<td>August 12, 2020</td>
<td>Ambulance vehicle – 1 pcs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Planned</td>
<td>Masks – 1,000,000 pcs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gloves – 30,000 pcs</td>
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