

# The Cooperation Council of the Turkic Speaking States - 10 April 2020

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Your Excellency President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, H.E. Ilham Aliyev,

Your Excellency the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev,

Your Excellency the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, H.E. Sooronbai Zheenbekov,

Your Excellency the President of the Republic of Turkey, H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan,

Your Excellency the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, H.E. Shavkat Mirziyoyev,

Your Excellency the President of Turkmenistan, H.E. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov,

Your Excellency the Prime Minister of Hungary, H.E. Viktor Orban,

Your Excellency the Secretary General of the Turkic Council, H.E. Baghdad Amreyev,

Excellencies, dear colleagues and friends,

Thank you for inviting me to speak to you today, and I'm delighted I'm able to join you from Geneva, thanks to the wonders of modern technology.

Since the beginning of the global spread of COVID-19, the Leaders of the Turkic Council have been cooperating closely, including on sharing hospital facilities, providing humanitarian aid and testing kits, and exchanging clinical expertise and medical support.

This is an example of the kind of cross-border cooperation we need to get through this pandemic.

Since it first erupted more than 100 days ago, the global spread of COVID 19 has overwhelmed health systems, disrupted the global economy, and led to widespread social disruption.

The fatality rate is estimated to be 10 times higher than influenza. And in addition to that, this virus is very contagious and it spreads fast.

So far more than 1.3 million people have been infected, and almost 80,000 people have lost their lives.

So far, the five Member States of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States have reported more than 36,000 cases of COVID-19, and a total of 750 deaths.

This pandemic is much more than a health crisis. It requires a whole-of-government and whole-of-society response.

In the last 100 days, COVID-19 has shown us the damage it can do, even in wealthy nations.

We are yet to see the devastation it could cause in more vulnerable countries. We're committed to doing everything we can to prevent that from happening.

The window for containing the virus at the subnational and national level is closing in many countries.

Since the beginning of the outbreak, WHO has shipped personal protective equipment and testing kits to the Turkic speaking states.

We have learned much about this new virus since we first encountered it at the start of the year.

While each of your countries is in a different phase of the outbreak, all must have the same focus: to scale up efforts to minimize the impact of the epidemic on health systems, social services and economic activity.

Restrictive social measures alone only buy us time. Stopping the transmission of the virus requires a comprehensive strategy to find, test, isolate and care for every case, and trace every contact.

At the same time, equitable access to healthcare is critical, especially among vulnerable groups. In the COVID-19 era, access to essential health services must be ensured for all. Otherwise, the outbreak will be harder to control and puts everybody at risk.

National strategies must be supported at the international level in five key areas. These are the five areas WHO is focused on:

First, to support countries to build their capacities to prepare and respond;

Second, to provide epidemiological analysis and risk communication;

Third, to coordinate the global supply chain;

Fourth, to provide technical expertise and mobilize the health workforce;

And fifth, to accelerate research, innovation and knowledge sharing.

Our second Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan, to be published in the coming days, will estimate the resources needed to implement national and international strategies during the next phase of the response.

I want to thank all Member States and partners who have responded to our first Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan. More than US\$800 million has been pledged or received.

I especially want to thank the government and people of Azerbaijan for their contribution of US\$ 5 million to the SPRP.

Turkey also deserves recognition for its support to its European neighbors by sending essential supplies.

We'd like to invite all of you to participate in the Solidarity Trial, an international study that will show us which treatments are most effective. Many countries from throughout the world are already participating.

To stop this pandemic, we have to continue and improve on the kind of cooperation that you have already been demonstrating.

We're all in this together, and we still have a long way to go.

And as President Aliyev just said, what is important here is solidarity and determination. We will overcome this common threat together.

I thank you again for this opportunity and it has been a great honor to join you, Your Excellencies