DR Congo's first coronavirus case confirmed in Kinshasa

10 March 2020

The DR Congo confirmed its first coronavirus case in the capital Kinshasa, the third most populous city in Africa, the health ministry said on Tuesday.

The patient is a Belgian citizen who has been in the country for several days, Health Minister Eteni Longondo said.

"He is confined to a hospital," the minister said. "We are tracking people who came into contact with him so that they too can be placed in quarantine, and tested."

Kinshasa, which has a population of more than 10 million people, is served by direct flights from Brussels and Paris.

Passengers have their temperature taken upon arrival and must fill out a medical questionnaire.

DR Congo officials have drafted "a strategic national plan" to deal with the new coronavirus, the head of the national biological research institute, Jean-Jacques Muyembe, said Monday.

The Democratic Republic of Congo hopes to declare next month an end to a 19-month Ebola epidemic that has killed 2,264 people, as no new cases have been discovered for three weeks.

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