



PRESS RELEASE

PR41 - 27.03.2020

“United and determined, we will defeat the COVID-19”, says the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes in a solidarity message to the region

Nairobi, 26 March 2020 - The United Nations Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for the Great Lakes, Huang Xia, is closely following the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region with concern at the alarming rate at which the Corona virus is spreading. The Special Envoy wishes to express his profound solidarity with the people and the Governments of the region, during these trying times for the Great Lakes and the world.

While encouraging the authorities and the peoples of the region to pursue with determination their efforts to strengthen preventive measures to curb the progression of the COVID-19, the Special Envoy also encourages the Governments of the region to continue to coordinate their efforts as much as possible to meet the challenges posed by this new pandemic, building on the vast experience accumulated in the continent, notably in the fight against diseases such as Ebola. In this regard, he welcomes and expresses his full support for coordinated, regional initiatives such as the meeting of the Ministers responsible for Health of East African Affairs held on 25 March, as well as decisions taken thus far to contain the COVID-19 and its impact in the region.

The Corona virus pandemic is a global threat that spares neither country, region, nor continent. It affects communities’ social fabric and economies regardless of status, race or creed, and it hits the most vulnerable amongst us the most. It is therefore of utmost importance for all countries and all stakeholders, governments, civils society and private sector alike, to come together in a spirit of solidarity to overcome this threat, and to preserve lives. “We need to remain united and determined to fight this unprecedented threat to humanity”, Mr. Xia said.

The Special Envoy welcomes ongoing international efforts, including generous donations to assist the countries of the region to cope with the disease and limit its negative impacts at all levels. He takes this opportunity to extend his encouragement to families and communities affected by the pandemic and expresses heartfelt condolences to those who have lost loved ones.