

ESWATINI PREPARED TO TREAT CHOLERA - PM

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Africa-Press – Eswatini. Prime Minister Russell Mmiso Dlamini says Eswatini is highly-prepared to treat cholera in the event the disease manifest itself in the kingdom.

He said this yesterday on behalf of His Majesty King Mswati III in a speech during a virtual SADC Extra-ordinary Summit on the cholera outbreak.

At the summit, Dlamini presented a report on Eswatini’s cholera situation, wherein he said the country had not yet recorded any case this year.

However, the prime minister noted that the country recorded only two cholera cases in 2023, and that the bacteria was successfully contained through support from international partners, as well as other interventions.

On the cholera response, Dlamini stated that the World Health Organisation’s (WHO) Africa Region Office afforded Eswatini technical assistance. In addition, the premier said health workers along with laboratory personnel at national and regional levels were trained on how to diagnose, isolate and treat cholera patients.

“We also received a stock pile of equipment for cholera use, which includes cholera beds, spraying kits, testing kits and protective wear to protect our health personnel from contracting this infectious disease,” he asserted.

Further, the prime minister said not having any recorded cholera case this year did not mean the country is out of the woods yet.

“We are cognizant of the fact that even though we have no recorded cases as yet in 2024, we remain at risk and therefore we support a regional approach to fighting cholera,” he said.

Also, Dlamini said Eswatini, with assistance from Africa Centre for Disease Control (CDC) and WHO Africa Region Office, conducted a national simulation exercise (SIMEX) for cholera and it placed the country at 72 per cent in terms of readiness for this epidemic.

“We are currently embarked on an exercise to assess the extent of health facility readiness. We have also procured medicine through emergency procurement,” added Dlamini.

On behalf of His Majesty’s government, Dlamini expressed his gratitude to international partners who have pledged support to the region in the fight against cholera.

On another note, the prime minister mentioned the saddening news of a Liswati student who died of cholera while in Zambia. Dlamini expressed gratitude to the republics of Zambia and South Africa for their cooperation as preparation for the repatriation of the deceased body is made.

To SADC member states where lives were lost due to the cholera epidemic, the premier, on behalf of Their Majesties and citizens of Eswatini conveyed his deepest condolences.

“The Kingdom of Eswatini welcomes and appreciates the contents of the report on cholera. We regret to learn of the slow pace at which the interventions and recommendations to contain this global emergency are implemented.

Accelerate

“We would like to urge ourselves to accelerate implementation so as to prevent the spread of the bacteria and protect our people,” he said.

Dlamini concluded by expressing Eswatini's support for the appointment of His Excellency President Hakainde Hichilema as the Regional Cholera Champion to spearhead the fight against cholera in the region.

"We believe in your leadership and the experience amassed by your country in the fight against cholera, we will successfully eliminate this epidemic in the region," Dlamini said.

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