

To: All Media

For Immediate Release

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**South Africa expresses concern at the President of the United States of America's
announcement to cut funding to the WHO**

The Government of the Republic of South Africa is very concerned and alarmed at the announcement by the President of the United States of America to cut funding to the World Health Organisation (WHO) with immediate effect.

South Africa is particularly alarmed that the decision is made amid a global health crisis that requires a full capacity World Health Organisation to provide support in combatting the deadly COVID 19 pandemic.

It is alarming that this very regrettable decision is announced as this deadly virus strikes Africa and the poorest and most vulnerable states.

The WHO, as the lead UN Agency, is mandated to promote health and to ensure universal health coverage globally, is tasked to lead global efforts to suppress the transmission and stop the COVID-19 pandemic. It is the sole global health agency, with the core focus on universal healthcare. As such, its efforts to coordinate a genuinely global response against this scourge should be recognized and supported.

With the coronavirus cases escalating at a rapid pace by the day, the announcement by the US to cut its funding to

the WHO will have a significantly adverse impact on its programmes, and the world's ability to fight and eliminate this pandemic.

This, at a time where now more than ever, the international community has to stand together and work in the spirit of human solidarity and cooperation with one another. We believe that, more than ever before, the WHO deserves increased support from member states in particular to bolster its efforts to suppress transmission and stop the pandemic.

We are hopeful that the government of the United States will reconsider its decision and re-join the international community in fighting this pandemic.

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