

In the Name of Allah the Most Merciful  
the Most Beneficent

**Executive Board**  
of the Health Ministers' Council  
for Cooperation Council



## Final Statement

Extraordinary Meeting, Health Ministers of the Cooperation Council States  
about Swine Influenza A(H1N1)  
Doha, State of Qatar 7<sup>th</sup> Jumada I, 1430H/ 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2009

Based on a request from the former Public Health Minister of Qatar, ***Sheikha Dr. Ghalia***, and affirmation of H.E the current Minister of Public Health of Qatar, ***Mr. Abdullah Bin Khalid Al-Gahtani***, for holding an extraordinary meeting for the Health Minister's of the Cooperation Council States to discuss the subject of A(H1N1) "**Swine Influenza**", which afflicted the United States of America, Mexico, and started to show in other countries such as Canada, Spain, Israel, New Zealand, Austria, Germany, UK where many A(H1N1) virus infections were reported, and to review the situation and the possibility of importing the disease into the Cooperation Council States, and taking precautionary and preventive measures to avoid this possibility.

And, in response to this invitation on the part of their Excellencies the Ministers of Health in the Health Ministers' Council for Cooperation Council States, and the ***Director General of the Executive board of the Health Ministers' Council for the Cooperation Council States***.

And, with an effective participation of ***H.E. Mr. Abdul Rahman Bin Hamad Al Attia***, the Secretary General of the Cooperation Council for the Arab Gulf Countries, and ***H.E Prof. Hussein A. Gezairy***, Director General of the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office in Cairo.

The meeting was held in Doha-Qatar on Saturday 7th Jumada 1, 1430H corresponding to May 2, 2009 where the epidemiological developments of Swine Influenza and the recent global updates of the situation, as well as the WHO reports in this respect were discussed. Views of the members of the Cooperation Council States were presented as well, and after in-depth discussions and deliberations in all aspects of the subject, the Health Ministers decided the following:

1. Raising cable of thanks and appreciation to His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Prince of Qatar, and H.H. Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani, Crown Prince, President of the Supreme Council for Health, and H.E Sheikh Hamad Bin Jasim Bin Jabr Al-Thani, Prime Minister and Minister of Exterior, and H.E Mr. Abdullah Bin Khalid Al-Gahtani, Minister of Public Health, Qatar and Secretary General of the Supreme Council for Health.
2. Activation and giving effect to preparedness plans for Swine Influenza, and sustaining giving effect to early alert system and epidemiological surveillance of Swine Influenza, as well as, updating national plans in the light of the recent information coming from the affected countries.
3. Continuous follow up of international epidemiological developments about Swine Influenza, assessment of the local situation and dissemination of influenza to the public about the imminent epidemic before its occurrence.
4. The importance of day-to-day exchange of information and experiences among Ministries of Health in the Council States, and assigning a focal point from each country to act as a permanent committee to be the direct link, in addition strengthening networking among them, as well as, the related health organizations.
5. Early and immediate notification of the Member Countries of suspicion of the disease in any of the member states through the focal point, as well as, the Executive Board of the Health Ministers' Council for the Cooperation Council States.
6. Setting all available facilities and capacities, technical and human, in each member state at the disposal of the rest of the countries when needed.
7. Commitment with integration of efforts among the Cooperation Council States to combat the disease in case it appears in the Gulf States.

8. The member states shall undertake the responsibility of availing necessary requirements for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of the disease.
9. Endorsement of the 3 laboratories in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as reference laboratories identifying A(H1N1) virus in addition to NAMRU 3 and other laboratories endorsed by the World Health Organization.
10. Establishing health awareness programme to orient people with the disease, its hazards, how it is transmitted, precautions that should be taken to minimize the possibility of infection, and a website has to be made for that purpose.
11. Close follow up of international developments in the issue of production of appropriate vaccine for the disease and initiation of discussion with the manufacturing companies about the possibility of promotion of the vaccines in the proper time.
12. Continue effective exchange of information and consultations, and cooperation with the specialized international organizations and agencies such as WHO, and CDC.
13. The citizens of the Cooperation Council States should take utmost precautions in travelling to Mexico or any other country which become affected with the disease in the future. This is just like what has been taken by the European Union, Canada, Argentina and other countries.
14. Continue effective cooperation between ministries of health, agriculture and commerce, as well as, with other concerned governmental agencies in the Council States towards exchange of information about the disease and strengthening precautionary and preventive national measures.
15. Emphasis on the credible evidence-based scientific approaches or those issued from WHO about to prevention, treatment, the effective drugs for control and treatment of the disease.
16. In view of the international epidemiological situation of A(H1N1) influenza and its spread in an alarming way, the Cooperation Council States recommend that the minimum percentage for strategic stockpile of drugs is 10% of the population and requests national qualified and capable factories to manufacture similar drugs after abiding with the international regulations and standards related to Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) and completion of legal aspects

in this regards, as well as, coordination with the General Secretariat of the Cooperation Council.

17. The Council, praising the MOH Kingdom of Saudi Arabia invitation hosting 3 of the high officials of the MOH and related agencies to participate in the forthcoming Gulf Arab and Regional Conference to be held in Riyadh on Saturday 14 Jumada 1, 1430H corresponding to May 9, 2009 to combat Swine Influenza, and emphasizing the importance that the countries should nominate their representatives and forward their nominations to the hosting country and to the Executive Board.
18. The permanent Committee should hold a meeting with the Health Deputy Ministers in the Cooperation Council States alongside the above mentioned conference to put the conception and frame of the Gulf strategic plan for prevention of swine influenza. Utilization of the successful Gulf experiences in this respect should be made including the National Saudi Plan and the Plan of Bahrain Kingdom in control Swine Influenza.