



Republic of Namibia

Statement

By

**Dr Nchabi Kamwi, MP
Minister of Health and Social Services**

On

SWINE INFLUENZA OUTBREAK TO PARLIAMENT

28 April 2009

Honourable Speaker

Honourable Members

I rise to give information on the recent Swine Flu Outbreak in Mexico and the United States of America.

Swine Influenza or “Swine flu” is a highly contagious acute respiratory disease of pigs caused by one of several swine influenza A viruses at times referred to as H1N1 Influenza. Outbreaks in pigs occur year round with an increased incidence in autumn and winter in temperate zones.

Swine Flu viruses is primarily a disease of pigs but sometimes cross the species barrier to cause disease in humans. What is of concern is that there have been cases of the virus spreading from human to human.

The Swine Flu infection in humans resembles seasonal influenza or Flu. Therefore infected persons experience fever or temperature of more than 37.8 Degrees Celsius, cough, lack of appetite, a sore throat, and/or generalized body aches. The case fatality in humans appears to be quite high.

Preventative measure for humans to reduce the risk of infection include practicing effective personal hygiene and by avoiding close contact with sick people.

The doctors prescribe the antiviral drug known as Tami-Flu for the treatment of Swine Flu.

The wearing of face masks is another non-pharmaceutical intervention for the prevention.

To date, the following countries have reported Swine Flu with human infection:

- i. Mexico - 103 deaths
- ii. U.S.A. - 20 confirmed cases:
 - a. California - 7
 - b. Kansas - 2
 - c. New York City - 8
 - d. Ohio - 1
 - e. Texas - 2
- iii. Spain - 1 confirmed case

iv. Canada - 6

My Ministry is monitoring the situation carefully. We are in constant communication with the World Health Organisation to obtain relevant information.

Our health Emergency Preparedness Committee is actively engaged with various stakeholders to ensure early detection of any imported cases, isolation of such cases, and relevant treatment. To date no human case has been reported in Southern Africa.

There is therefore no reason for any alarm to the general public. People who travel to affected countries or pass through airports are advised to keep themselves updated on any health warnings regarding the countries they travel to or in transit.

I am reliably informed that the Veterinary Services in the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry are considering taking measures to stop any animal products from the affected countries.

My Ministry will keep the nation informed of further development.

I thank you