Dear Fellow Members of AFICS-K,

It is my pleasure again to update you with a few issues during this period of the on-going coronavirus pandemic:

A. Lockdowns

As you know, the figures for coronavirus positive cases are going up every day. The country might not reach the peak of the pandemic for another two months. Our worry is that if the figures continue to rise, it might present a challenge for the available hospital facilities and medical personnel to attend to patients. Let us hope that our hospitals will not be overwhelmed.

B. Cigna

I have summarized the main highlights of the webinar organized by Cigna, which may be useful to you during this extraordinary time. The webinar was based on the questions that Cigna had received from its clients globally about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and mental well-being.

The Cigna resource-persons focused on the impact of the COVID-19 experiences under lockdown or staying at home. Below are some of the consequences of the lockdown, curfew, or staying at home:

(a) Psychological stress;
(b) Feeling more lonely;
(c) Eating and drinking less or more;
(d) Job insecurity and unemployment, especially among staff who were on short term contracts;
(e) Uncertainty, fear about the virus. Specifically, anxious about when the pandemic will end;
(f) Isolated when quarantined;
(g) Some people who don’t normally spend a lot of time with their families because most of the time they are at work, have found that it has resulted in higher levels of domestic violence;
(h) Some people are stressed because of the additional responsibilities of taking care of their elderly parents and relatives;
(i) Some people have been restless because they find it difficult to work from home.

At the end of the session, the resource persons suggested the following as a remedy for mental well-being. Each person should have a PLAN:

P – period. Set aside time every day for relaxation.
L – location. Have a particular place or room at your home where you enjoy your relaxation.
A – activity. Do an exercise you like or enjoy for 10 to 30 minutes.
N – name. Have people you trust who you can call regularly to uplift your spirits or for positive motivation.
As part of our well-being during this period and beyond, the Cigna webinar reminded us of the following:

- Take care of your physical health
- Eat well
- Stay active
- Rest well
- Get enough sunshine
- Receive news from trusted sources and avoid some of the social media.

C. Certificate of Entitlement (CE)

As indicated in my last note, the 2020 deadline for submission of the Certificate of Entitlement for UN retirees was extended up to 30 June 2020. If the UN Complex will not be open by then, I will write to the Pension Fund to extend our submission to the end of July 2020.

May I end with encouraging words from Maya Angelou:

“You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them”.

I want to thank you for your support to AFICS-Kenya and please continue to follow the government guidelines to remain safe and healthy.

Warm Regards,

Amb. John O. Kakonge, President, AFICS-K. 03rd June, 2020