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Cable title: **UKRAINE: AUTHORITIES CONFIRM H1N1 OUTBREAK, ANNOUNCE**

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SUBJECT: UKRAINE: AUTHORITIES CONFIRM H1N1 OUTBREAK, ANNOUNCE  
MEASURES

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED, NOT FOR INTERNET DISTRIBUTION

1. (SBU) Summary. Ukrainian Minister of Health Vasiliy Knyazevich confirmed this morning that Ukraine is experiencing an A-H1N1 epidemic. In response, Prime Minister Tymoshenko announced that all schools in Ukraine will be closed for three weeks, large public meetings will be cancelled, nine regions in western Ukraine with particularly heavy flu outbreaks will be quarantined, and the government will consider limiting the movement of people within the country. Meanwhile, lines have reportedly been forming at pharmacies throughout the country, as people stock up on medical supplies. End Summary.

H1N1 CONFIRMED  
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2. (U) Ukrainian Minister of Health Vasiliy Knyazevich confirmed this morning that preliminary results show an A-H1N1 epidemic has started in Ukraine. This confirmation, based on test results from Kyiv laboratories, came on the heels of an "unknown" flu outbreak in the Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Lviv oblasts in western Ukraine. So far, at least 37 deaths have been reported, with thousands of other people seeking treatment. Knyazevich stopped short of confirming that all deaths were caused by A-H1N1 but said that at least one fatality has been traced back to the virus. Ukraine has sent samples to laboratories in the U.K. for further confirmation of the type of virus that is spreading among the population. Test results will reportedly be released on or about November 3.

QUARANTINE IN NINE REGIONS  
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3. (U) Following a meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers on October 30 to discuss the A-H1N1 outbreak, Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko said the government has allocated UAH50 million to prevent the spread of the virus and announced a number of preventive measures. According to Tymoshenko, educational institutions including kindergartens, schools, and universities in all Ukraine will be closed for three weeks, and nine regions in western Ukraine with particularly heavy flu outbreaks will be quarantined. As part of the quarantine, large



public events like church services, concerts and movie showings will be cancelled. The quarantine may be extended to the entire country should the situation deteriorate. The government also plans to introduce a "special regime" to limit the movement of people within the country. In addition, Ukraine will seek help from the World Health Organization (WHO) and other international organizations to help it combat the epidemic, Minister of Health Knyazevich said.

#### SHORTAGES OF MEDICATIONS REPORTED

4. (SBU) According to news reports and eyewitness accounts, people in the most affected regions but also in Kyiv have begun to stock up on medications and surgical masks. Lines have been forming outside of some pharmacies, and people have reportedly been unable to buy anti-viral drugs and cold medicines, as stores quickly run out of supplies. PM Tymoshenko warned pharmacies against raising prices and suggested that the government would cancel the licenses of pharmacies that try to gouge customers. She also proposed that for a certain period of time all health care establishments, state and private, be managed by the Ministry of Health.

#### COMMENT:

5. (SBU) We are seeking to confirm details of how the government intends to implement the measures announced by PM Tymoshenko today, especially concerning quarantines and possible limitations on movement of people within the country. We will continue monitoring developments of the outbreak and the government's response. The Embassy's consular section has prepared a warden message to be sent to U.S. citizens in Ukraine.

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