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SUBJECT: UKRAINIAN LAB CONFIRMS FIRST "SWINE FLU" CASE

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1. (SBU) Summary. Ukraine's Deputy Health Minister Oleksander Bilovol confirmed yesterday that a local lab had positively diagnosed A/H1N1 with "99 percent certainty" in a 24 year-old Ukrainian man, who had arrived in Kyiv on May 29 from New York via Paris. His is the first known case of "swine flu" in Ukraine. Official confirmation from a WHO-designated lab is not expected before mid-June. The efficient response demonstrated by Ukrainian authorities suggests that the country's emergency preparedness has thus far been adequate. Health authorities have already identified and are monitoring roughly seventy people who had been in contact with the afflicted man, including ten U.S. citizens seated nearby on the Air France flight. The Embassy's consular section has reached out to the U.S. citizens, urging that they contact the special H1N1 unit established at the Ministry of Health were they to experience any flu-like symptoms. End summary.

2. (SBU) Deputy Minister of Health Bilovol told journalists on June 2 that local lab tests confirmed with "99 percent certainty" the country's first known case of A/H1N1. Bilovol stated that the patient was being closely monitored at a Kyiv hospital. The Ministry of Health's special H1N1 unit has led efforts to contact roughly 70 other individuals in Ukraine who had been in proximity to the 24 year-old Ukrainian citizen. Head of the H1N1 unit Irina Kolesnikova told us that lab specimens had been sent to WHO virology experts in London for conclusive testing. Ministry of Health officials expect a definitive diagnosis before mid-June.

3. (SBU) Of those who had been seated within two rows of the the H1N1 patient on the May 29 Air France Paris-Kyiv flight, ten are American citizens. The Ministry of Health provided Post with a list of the U.S. passport holders. In concurrence with CA/OCS, the Embassy's consular section has spoken with or passed messages to seven of the ten Americans. The three not yet reachable were members of the same family.



4. (SBU) None of the Americans contacted by Post has reported flu-like symptoms. At the request of the Ukrainian Ministry of Health, Post has urged potentially affected American citizens to call a special hotline established by the Ministry's H1N1 unit if they began to experience flu-like symptoms. According to Ministry of Health officials contacted by the consular section, a follow up health examination would only be necessary if symptoms occurred before the end of the incubation period on June 4.

5. (SBU) The Ukrainian H1N1 patient reportedly is a Detroit resident. According to local and international media reports, he experienced no abnormal symptoms during his flights, only complaining of head and muscle pain at the Kyiv airport. The patient's friend took him to a local hospital, from which he was transferred by ambulance to a special medical facility prepared for A/H1N1 cases. After a physical examination, the man was admitted and is undergoing treatment. The patient's friend and the taxi driver have also been examined and will undergo regular monitoring in the coming days.

6. (SBU) Comment. It appears that the official GOU response to the A/H1N1 case has been adequate. The Ministry of Health, in concert with Kyiv-based WHO detailee Katia Bulavinova, has been forthcoming with us regarding the case. Their efforts to contact potentially afflicted individuals, establish an H1N1 unit and hotline, and communicate with the public have seemingly mitigated panic within the local population.

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