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Self-declaration by Egypt as country historically free from Dourine.

Declaration sent to the OIE on 8 November 2020 by Dr. Abdelhakim Ali, OIE Delegate for Egypt, and Chairman of General Organization for Veterinary Services, Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation.

I. Introduction

The objective of this self-declaration is to claim free status as country historically free from infection with Dourine in accordance with the provisions of Article 1.4.6. of Chapter 1.4., and Chapter 12.3. of the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* as of 8 of November 2020. The self-declaration covers the entire country.

II. History and situation of Dourine in Egypt

Egypt occupies the north-eastern corner of the African continent. Egypt lies between latitude 22 - 32° North and longitude 24 – 37° East. The land stretches from north to south 1,073 Km approximately and maximum width from east to west 1,226 Km. The total area of Egypt is 1,002,000 km². It is bordered in the north by the Mediterranean Sea, in the south by Sudan, in the East by the Red Sea, in the west by Libya (See map in Annex 2).

Dourine, or its causative pathogenic agent (*Trypanosoma equiperdum*) has never been recorded in Egypt. The infection is not known to be established in wildlife within the country. Wild equids are non-existent in Egypt due to the geographical characteristics of the country (a predominant desertic area covering 96.5% of the territory, while the rest of the land is used for agricultural purposes). Captive wild equids are only present under captivity in zoos under complete supervision of the veterinary authority. Equids in Egypt are of high economic importance because the breeding Arabian horses are High Health High Performance (HHP) and are used for keeping pure hereditary characters and have a good international reputation, so they are exported to other parts of the world. In addition, sport and racehorses are also HHP and share in international competition within and outside the country. Equids also play an important role in tourism and as a means of transportation of humans and goods in villages and the countryside. Total population of equids in Egypt is 659,631 (See Tables 1 & 2 in Annex 3).



Equids in Egypt are classified into:

- Valuable horses: There is a total number of 18,123 HHP horses, most of them are located in Zahra station (16,700 are original Arabian horses distributed in 1,302 farms), while the rest of the HHP horses are jumping and racing equines registered with the Egyptian Equestrian Federation and equine racing organization.
- Working Equids (native horses, donkeys and mules).
- 34 captive wild equids are kept under captivity in zoos completely supervised by veterinary services.

III. Surveillance and early detection systems for Equidae in the country

Dourine is a compulsory notifiable disease in Egypt as established in the [Animal Health Law 53/1996](#), and [Ministerial decree No. 2303/2011](#); owners – keeper- workers on animal health must immediately notify any suspicion of disease or death in their Equidae to the General Organization for Veterinary Services (GOVS). The GOVS receives notifications from all veterinary service directorates' offices and stakeholders and is responsible for responding to those notifications.

Veterinary service implements both passive and active surveillance to ensure early detection of an introduction of the dourine pathogenic agent. These surveillance systems are in compliance with Articles 1.4.3., and 1.4.6. of the *Terrestrial Code* and [Ministerial decree No .2303/ 2011](#).

3.1 Passive surveillance

As the disease has never been reported in Egypt, the passive surveillance is the main system for detection of the disease. It is based on the fact that all stakeholders must immediately notify any suspicion of dourine to GOVS according to Egypt's case definition of the disease¹.

The passive surveillance is implemented through:

- Community-based animal health and outreach teams (CAHO team), i.e. groups of trained veterinarians on participatory disease surveillance assigned for detection of diseases. CAHO teams carry out surveillance activities in case of suspicion of endemic notifiable diseases or exotic diseases, based on the following criteria:
 - 1) Routine work in high-density animal population villages (considering each village as an epidemiological unit)
 - 2) Selection of high-risk areas for enhanced surveillance based on health records and epidemiological investigations performed in previous visits and on rumours of any health issue in a specific area, village, sub-village or farm.
 - 3) When communications are received from animal keepers who observed clinical signs or suspect the existence of a notifiable disease.

To facilitate the notification of diseases and prompt response from the GOVS, the following have been implemented:

- Hotline: GOVS established a hotline (19561) for receiving disease notification.
- (GOVS) The local Veterinary Authorities that receives a notification, alerts by email or fax the Veterinary Authorities at National level to implement a rapid response including the

¹ [Egypt's case definition of a dourine case](#)



deployment of a rapid response team to carry out epidemiological investigations and data entry in the database.

- Transboundary animal disease information system (TAD info) in epidemiological units which receive all epidemiological data.
- [Monthly reports](#) are sent from all governorates indicating the health status of the equids.
- Continuous training for veterinarians is carried out in all governorates targeting early detection and disease reporting.
- The passive surveillance system is in accordance with Chapters 1.1. and 3.1. of the *Terrestrial Code* on disease notification and quality of veterinary services, respectively. For additional details on the performance of veterinary services please see Annex 4.
- Notifications of any suspicions of dourine by stakeholders were not reported during the last 24 months.
- Egypt has implemented a National Preparedness and Response Plan for dourine² in case of suspicions and confirmation of cases.

3.2 Active surveillance

Although the disease has never been reported in Egypt, GOVS carries out regularly active surveillance for some diseases of equids including dourine to ensure the maintenance of freedom, in accordance with Ministerial decree No 2303/ 2011.

Active surveillance for dourine is performed in Egypt and the laboratory diagnosis is in compliance with Chapter 3.5.3 of *OIE Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals (Terrestrial Manual, 2019)*. Serum samples are collected (whole blood without anticoagulant) under aseptic condition and must be stored at -20c. CFT test is performed by the national laboratory (Animal Health Research Institute). A positive CFT result is considered as a suspected case of dourine and the positive reactor should be resampled after 21 days from the first sample. All samples collected over the past 3 years tested negative as shown in tables 1 and 2. Measures to be implemented should positive reactors occur are: movement restriction of sick animals from the infected area to other areas, the farm/village should be put under strict quarantine, where the movement of animals in/out is prohibited, investigations are conducted by tracing back and forward for the positive case and on the possible source of the outbreak like history of last breeding. Confirmed positive cases are culled by euthanasia and hygienically disposed by incineration using environmentally friendly incinerators. A targeted surveillance is applied in a zone of 3 km radius within the infected premises to ensure no more cases are present.

Table 1 Results of the tests performed over the past three years

Year	Number of samples	Results
2018	410	Negative
2019	410	
2020	410	

² [National Preparedness and Response Plan for dourine](#)



Table 2 Number of samples collected over the past three years per Governorate.

Governorates	Total number of farms	Total number of farms sampled	HHP samples	Working equids samples
Cairo	9	4	30	45
Giza	100	8	15	60
Qaliobyia	11	5	15	0
Monofiya	10	5	15	60
Minya	0	0	0	150
Alexandria	17	3	5	15
Total	147	25	80	330

Three surveillance programs were carried out during the period from 2018 until 2020. The samples were collected according to methodology in compliance to Article 1.4.4 of Chapter 1.4 of the *Terrestrial Code* and following a sampling plan which was set out by central Epi-unit to ensure freedom of Dourine. Dourine is one of the main diseases of concern to the Competent Authority. Therefore, a targeted active surveillance with a sample size of 410 horses was designed in clusters of 5 animals per site (a site can be a farm or the high-density area) per year from areas with high horse population density (El Menya – Giza "the Pyramids area (Mansouriah – Nazlet El Seman – Sakkara)" - Cairo "Heliopolis (Racetrack and the Egyptian Agriculture Authority)" - Qualiobyia, Menoufia and Alexandria.

Areas were selected following a proportional distribution of villages and farms according to total number of villages and farms in the governorate.

Samples are tested at the Animal Health Research Institute (AHRI) according to the chapter 3.5.3. of the *OIE Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals (Terrestrial Manual)*.

3.3 Laboratory Capacity

The Animal Health Research Institute is the authorised laboratory (accredited according to ISO 17025 for diagnosis of equine diseases) to test any samples for equine disease throughout a dedicated diagnostic unit. Samples are tested for Dourine according to the provisions of Chapter 3.5.3. of the *Terrestrial Manual*.

IV. Measures to maintain freedom of disease

4.1 Regulations of exportation:

Horses destined for export are inspected by a delegation consisting of veterinarians from preventive medicine, quarantine department, animal health research institute and the approved quarantine. The delegation also checks the [biosecurity measures](#) in their holding and fulfil the specific animal health checklist. Holdings must have license for working and apply all biosecurity measures (mandatory) based on ministerial decree No. 773/ 2017.

- In the pre-export inspection in the farm, horses must be clinically healthy, and samples are collected and tested for dourine.



- These horses are transferred to the approved Quarantine sites (veterinary military hospital) and remain under quarantine for 40 days in case of temporary exportation and 90 days for permanent exportation. During this period, other samples are collected and sent to the OIE Reference Laboratory [for Glanders] in Dubai to be retested.
- Certificates are issued by GOVS.
- All measures of exportation are based on the [Ministerial Decree No. 888 /2016](#)³.

Egyptian equids are exported to European Union countries and many Arabian countries. The HHP equids exported to the European Union, as well as the ones that participated in international events were sampled and tested for dourine by AHRI and retested again for confirmation in the Central Veterinary Research Laboratory – Dubai, UAE, the OIE Reference Laboratory for Glanders and all showed negative results for dourine⁴. A total of 21 HHP horses were exported in 2019 and 13 in 2020.

4.2 Regulation for importation of equine

According to Ministerial decree No. 2303/2011 as well as the OIE *Terrestrial Code*, Equids should be imported from Dourine free countries, imported equids must be accompanied by a veterinary health certificate from the veterinary authority of the country of origin and submitted by the Embassy of Egypt.

- The veterinary certificate attests that:
 - 1) The equids are free from diseases (Equine infectious anaemia - Dourine – Glanders - African horse sickness - Equine viral arthritis).
 - 2) The equids were kept since birth or for the last six months before shipment in a country free from contagious and infectious equine diseases, including dourine.
 - 3) Equids showed no clinical signs of any disease on the day of shipment.
 - 4) All vaccination and tests applied to the equids have been recorded in the certificate.
- Equids should be quarantined in the country of origin for one month before shipment.
- A descriptive certificate and a clear photo of the equids from all directions have to be attached to the health certificate.
- Equids arrive directly from the country of origin to Egypt without stopping in any other harbour.
- Upon arrival, equids must be quarantined under the full supervision of the Egyptian veterinary services for 10 days. In case of the emergence of any clinical signs on the horses during the period of quarantine, samples should be collected by the veterinarian of the competent authority and sent to the approved labs for diagnosis. The final destination of the imported horse should be registered for future follow up by the Veterinary Authority.

The imports of HHP horses between 2019 and 2020 and their origin are displayed in table 3. No semen from horses have been imported into Egypt during the past 24 months.

³ [Ministerial Decree No. 888 /2016](#)

⁴ [Test results of the exported horses tested](#)



Table 3. Equine importation to Egypt during 2019 and 2020

Country of origin	Dourine situation according to OIE WAHIS “Animal Health Situation”	Number of imported horses in 2019	Number of imported horses in 2020
Belgium	Disease has never been reported	298	160
Germany	Disease is absent (Last occurrence 2002)		
Argentina	Disease has never been reported		
Bulgaria	Disease is absent (Last occurrence 1954)		
Kuwait	Disease is absent		
The United Arab Emirates	Disease has never been reported		
Bahrain	Disease has never been reported	3	2
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	Disease is absent		
Total		301	162

4.3 Improving public awareness

Promoting notification

GOVS has a program to promote timely notification of suspected cases of dourine which is conducted by distributing information material at points of contact such as farmers’ associations and unions, veterinary clinics and paramedical, agricultural colleges and universities, animal health laboratories, etc. Its purpose is to encourage timely reporting of a high-impact disease such as dourine. Likewise, talks and training courses are given to official veterinarians, private veterinarians, farmers, and veterinary medicine students so that the participants acquire the tools to recognize diseases and plagues such as dourine, placing the emphasis on its prevention and timely notification to GOVS.

Table 4. Training courses on Equine diseases, including Dourine carried out between 2016 and 2020

Name of courses	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	Number of courses	Number of Trainees	Number of courses	Number of Trainees	Number of courses	Number of Trainees	Number of courses	Number of Trainees	Number of courses	Number of Trainees
Equine disease & Biosecurity of farms	2	30	3	50	5	80	4	45	1	20
Sampling and diagnose of Equine disease	4	60	6	90	10	150	8	120	3	60
Training on Epidemiology, Investigation and Rapid Response	10	70	8	90	12	100	10	90	7	50
Total	16	160	17	230	27	330	22	255	11	130



V. Conclusions

Considering that:

- Dourine is a notifiable disease supported by Egyptian legislation.
- Dourine has never been recorded in Egypt; therefore, it complies for historical freedom in accordance with Article 1.4.6 of Chapter 1.4. of the *Terrestrial Code*.
- Notification system and epidemiological information on Dourine and Egypt's Veterinary Services comply with Chapters 1.1. and 3.1., of the *Terrestrial Code* respectively.
- The epidemiological surveillance and national diagnosis systems have the capacity to detect the suspicion of disease in a timely manner through compulsory notification and the application of animal health measures.
- Egyptian Veterinary Services apply the necessary measures in imported animals into the country to ensure that these animals do not present a significant risk of introducing dourine.

The OIE Delegate for Egypt declares that the country fulfils the requirements for a country historically free from dourine as of 8 of November 2020 in accordance with the provisions in Article 1.4.6. of Chapter 1.4. and Chapter 12.3. of the *Terrestrial Code* (edition 2019) and consistent with information in OIE WAHIS.



Annex 1

**I, the undersigned, Abdelhakim Ali
Delegate of Egypt, Chairman of General Organization for Veterinary Services,
to the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), takes responsibility for the self-
declaration of freedom from Dourine (disease)**

DISCLAIMER

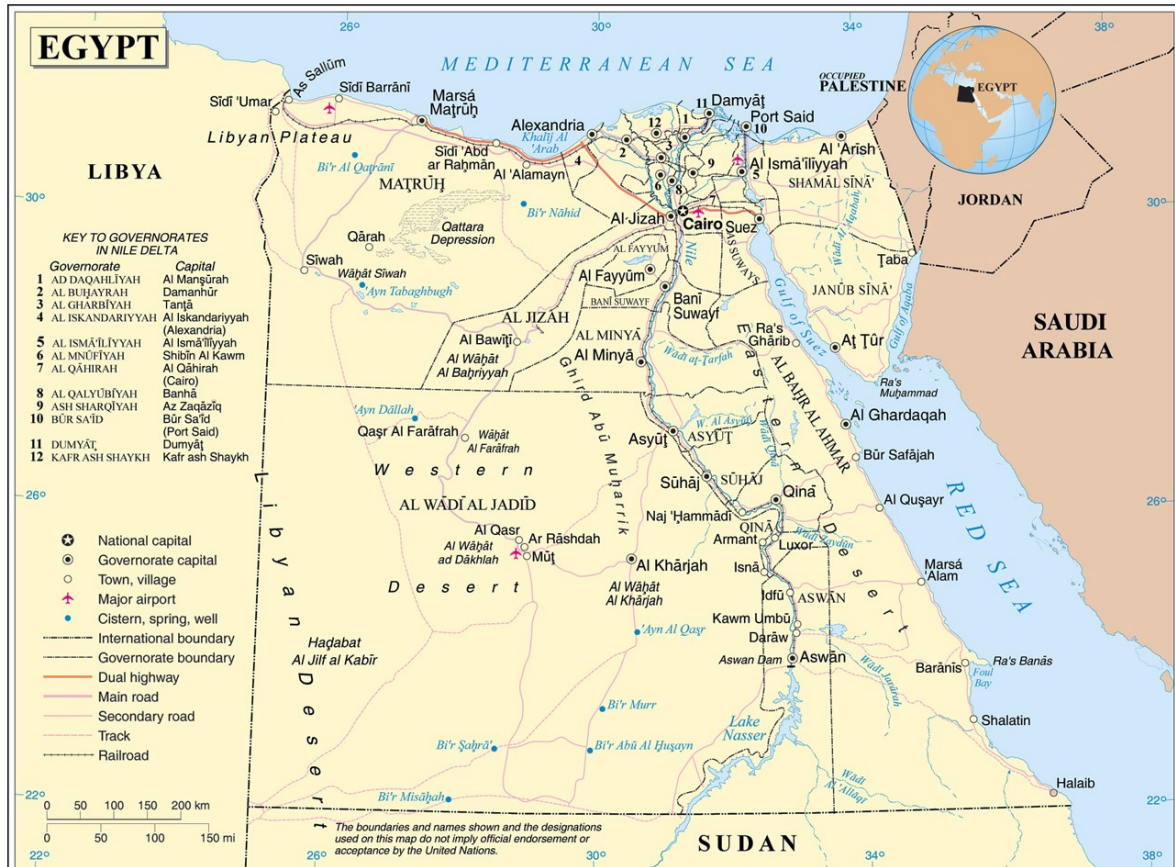
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Drawn up on 8/11/2020

Signature of the Delegate:



Annex 2 – Administrative map of Egypt



July 2011. Adapted from Map No. 3795 Rev. 2 UNITED NATIONS January 2004. Every effort has been exercised to ensure the accuracy of this map; however, there might be some inconsistencies as administrative

Department of Peacekeeping Operations Cartographic Section



Annex 3 – Table 1 Egyptian Working Equids and HHP census

Serial	Governorate	Equine	Mules	Donkeys	Total Equids
1	Cairo	2289	113	575	2977
2	Alexandria	2289	1137	4196	7622
3	Port Said	25	26	251	302
4	Suez	176	85	1204	1465
5	Demiatte	2345	160	4438	6943
6	Dakahlia	12506	1545	27940	41991
7	Sharkia	5288	3182	42392	50862
8	Qualiobia	3372	1495	14980	19847
9	Kafr Elsheikh	10668	1175	19307	31150
10	Gharbia	6887	4654	49056	60597
11	Menofia	5997	4245	66433	76675
12	Behera	4616	1570	21009	27195
13	Ismailia	218	216	1655	2089
14	Giza	8113	3063	27044	38220
15	Baniswif	2976	1140	65792	69908
16	Fayoum	1989	2703	16333	21025
17	Menia	2886	1577	19414	23877
18	Assuit	4563	2439	53296	60298
19	Sohag	4623	421	39010	44054
20	Qena	6502	411	14080	20993
21	Aswan	1326	301	17150	18777
22	Red Sea	59	7	37	103
23	New Vally	753	24	12523	13300
24	Matrouh	1492	640	9145	11277
25	North Saini	150	200	1851	2201
26	South Saini	208	0	202	410
27	Loxur	1365	216	3892	5473
Total		93681	32745	533205	659631

Table 2 Census of equidea by strata

<u>HHP horses</u> (In farms)	<u>Working horses</u>	<u>Donkeys</u>	<u>Mules</u>	<u>total</u>
18123	75558	533205	32745	659631



Annex 4 - Veterinary services in Egypt

GOVS has committed to achieve compliance with OIE standards to evaluate and upgrade its capacity to ensure that it is capable to manage and respond to any disease outbreaks in Equids by identifying the capabilities needed the critical interventions to react and prevent new cases. In compliance to chapters 3.1 and 3.2 of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code, OIE had conducted an evaluation of Egypt Veterinary Services during 2007 followed by supplementary mission in 2009 after GOVS request. The objective of the evaluation was to provide the VS a framework for establishing priorities, strategic initiatives and action plans which will ultimately strengthen the VS infrastructure by evaluation of the four components which comprise the basic structure of the OIE-PVS Tool and which are viewed as the components of credible VS. The PVS mission has followed by PVS gap analysis mission in 2010. According to the recommendations that have been elaborated from the PVS and gap analysis official reports and to ensure the quality of veterinary services in compliance with to chapter 3.1 of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code, a future road map had been developed and concrete actions have been identified and summarized to sustain and elaborate the organizational set up including revising all regulations, improve the animal health situation by intensifying the efforts to control major diseases and intensify the training by improving the training facility to realize these goals. In addition, a new veterinary bill had been developed tacking into consideration mechanisms to update national legislation to reflect emerging issues related to issues of veterinary concern (emerging and re-emerging diseases, animal transport, animal health and welfare with clear reference to control of animal movements, animal disease control and reporting systems, epidemiological surveillance and communication of epidemiological information).The bill now at final stage for adoption by the Egyptian Parliament. GOVS had drawn up and implement the policy and strategy of the most important animal diseases including Equine diseases. The governmental resource mobilization has been directed to ensure availability of human and financial resources which are required for strict and precise implementation of all stages of its strategies. In compliance to chapter 3.1 of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code, and by 2014, GOVS has succeeded in developing national epidemio-surveillance network and early warning system involving development and management of the 1st epidemiological data networking in Egypt connecting central, governorate and district levels supporting rapid notification of animal disease suspicions and outbreaks. The notification procedure to the OIE (immediate notification, six monthly and annual reporting) has been improved.