Beijing, 29 MAY 2015 – China's National Health and Family Planning Commission has notified the World Health Organization of a laboratory-confirmed case of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) in China. This is the first case of MERS-CoV in China.

The confirmed case is a Republic of Korea national in his mid-40s, who travelled to Guangdong province, China via Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) on Tuesday May 26. The patient is a close contact of a confirmed MERS-CoV case in the Republic of Korea.

The patient is in isolation in a hospital in Huizhou, Guangdong province. We understand he is currently in a stable condition, and is being well cared for.

Chinese health authorities acted swiftly in response to the initial notification from the Republic of Korea that the close contact of a confirmed-MERS case had travelled to China earlier this week. For example:

- local health authorities are tracing all known close contacts of the patient;
- the Guangdong Health and Family Planning Commission dispatched an expert team to Huizhou to conduct epidemiological investigation and sampling;
- Hong Kong SAR health authorities are tracing close contacts of the patient during his transit through Hong Kong SAR.

Based on the evidence about MERS-CoV gathered to date, the virus does not seem to pass easily from person to person unless there is close contact. There is no evidence of sustained human-to-human transmission.

WHO is communicating closely with the Chinese health authorities to support their response to the case.

For more information on coronavirus infections see the WHO website: http://www.who.int/csr/disease/coronavirus_infections/en/

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