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Republic of Congo reports first deaths from COVID-19 - Xinhua

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BRAZZAVILLE, March 31 (Xinhua) -- The Republic of the Congo reported the first two deaths from COVID-19 on Tuesday evening, hours after a nationwide home confinement was put into effect.

The country has reported 22 confirmed COVID-19 cases, including the two deaths and two recoveries, said Minister of Health and Population Jacqueline Lydia Mikolo at a press conference.

"We deplore the two deaths from COVID-19. Unfortunately, these are unknown cases from the health services," said the minister.

The Republic of the Congo reported the first confirmed case of COVID-19 on March 14, and announced the closure of its borders on March 21. President Denis Sassou Nguesso has declared a state of health emergency and a curfew between 8 p.m. (1900 GMT) and 5 a.m. (0400 GMT) starting from Tuesday.