

Twitter CEO Dorsey to 'reconsider' Africa plans

March 5 2020



Twitter CEO and co-founder Jack Dorsey, seen during a 2018 visit to India, said he is rethinking his plan to spend as much as six months in Africa this year

Twitter chief executive Jack Dorsey said Thursday he is rethinking plans to spend as long as six months in Africa, partly due to concerns over the new-coronavirus epidemic.

The news came with Dorsey facing a challenge from an activist investor seeking to oust the [social media](#) executive, who is also CEO of the digital payments firm Square.

Dorsey, speaking at an investor conference sponsored by Morgan Stanley, said his announcement about his Africa plans last year was "a mistake" because he failed to explain his reasons for the move.

He maintained it was not a plan to "just hang out or take a sabbatical" but to help demonstrate the value of working remotely and to "figure out how to not be burdened by [time zones](#)."

Still, he said he was re-evaluating the plans in light of the global health crisis.

"(Because of) everything happening in the world particularly with coronavirus I have to reconsider what's going on and what that means for me and for our company," he said.

News reports last week said Elliott Management, founded by billionaire Paul Singer, a major Republican political supporter, has acquired a stake in the social media firm and wants to remove Dorsey.

The firm pushed for the change stating that Dorsey's attention is divided between running Twitter and his financial transactions startup Square, and that Dorsey intends to live part of each year in Africa.

Dorsey said he remained capable of managing the two San Francisco-based tech firms.

"I have enough flexibility in my schedule to focus on the most important things and I have a good sense of what is critical on both companies," he said.

Dorsey unveiled his plan in November, saying in a tweet concluding a visit to several countries: "Africa will define the future... Not sure where yet, but I'll be living here for 3-6 months mid 2020."

On Thursday, a Dorsey statement tweeted from the Twitter Investor Relations account said the plans are in flux.

"I had been working on my plans where I'd work decentralized, as my team and I do when we travel, but in light of COVID-19 and everything else going on I need to reevaluate," he said. "Either way we'll continue to pursue opportunities in Africa."

More than 90,000 people have been infected and over 3,000 killed worldwide since the new coronavirus first emerged in China in December.

Africa has 29 cases, including South Africa's first case confirmed on Thursday, after those already detected in Egypt, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, as well as Senegal and Nigeria.

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