



PRESS RELEASE

UNMEER Chief thanks President Mahama for ‘extraordinary leadership and solidarity’

Accra, 8 June 2015 – The Head of UNMEER met with the President of Ghana today to express the United Nations’ gratitude for hosting the emergency health mission when Ebola was the world’s biggest fear. As the mission prepares to officially close its offices in Accra, Peter Graaff, Acting Special Representative of the UN Secretary General and Head of UNMEER, commended President John Dramani Mahama for volunteering to host UNMEER immediately after its creation and stressed the decisive role Ghana played in the fight against Ebola.

“By allowing us to set up our headquarter in Accra, President Mahama demonstrated extraordinary leadership and solidarity. He made Ghana the only open gateway to Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone thus allowing the movement of thousands of Ebola responders and medical and essential supplies when they were most needed,” says Peter Graaff. “Without Ghana’s open doors and hearts at the most critical juncture we would not be reaching the tail end of the Ebola epidemic now. For this, the President and the people of Ghana deserve our deepest appreciation; they are heroes.”

From Accra, UNMEER and its partners in the response shipped by air and by sea Personnel Protective Equipment, laboratories, ambulances, vehicles, motorbikes, telecommunications equipment, food and medicines. As a result, all three most-affected countries now have the necessary response capabilities in place to efficiently test, treat and isolate Ebola patients, as well as to activate alert and surveillance systems.

President Mahama said, "UNMEER is one of the UN's most effective missions in terms of how quickly it was deployed, the short and sharp interventions. We are happy to have been part of the success."

According to the World Health Organization, there were 25 new Ebola cases in Guinea and Sierra Leone during the week ending 31 May. The UN system has therefore, through UNMEER, reinforced its operational capacities in Guinea and Sierra Leone to intensify efforts to bring the outbreak under control.

UNMEER offices opened in Accra on 26 September 2014 but with the scaling down of operations in the region as the epidemic rolls back, most UNMEER staff and assets have been redeployed to Guinea, and Sierra Leone.

UNMEER is maintaining a small presence in Ghana to continue facilitating air operations until the end of June.

For more information:

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