



## PRESS RELEASE

### **UN and EU meet to take stock of the Ebola situation and identify ways forward**

**Brussels, 3 March** - Today's high-level meeting on the current state of the Ebola outbreak takes place at a welcome moment given the challenges still faced by the response.

Despite significant progress, the Ebola virus continues to take away people's lives and to have a deep impact on the societies and economies of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.

In highlighting the importance of today's event with the EU, the Presidents of Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone and high-level representatives of the African Union and ECOWAS, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said: "We face a critical turning point. There are encouraging signs that the worst of the outbreak is behind us. Thanks to our collective efforts, the end of the road is in sight. But nobody can afford to drop their guard. The last mile may well be the hardest. Let us therefore act resolutely and with unity of purpose to end this cruel outbreak and support recovery."

The progress so far in reducing the outbreak reflects the outstanding efforts by the people and governments of the affected countries and the extraordinary, generous and flexible support provided by the international community. However, the work is not complete: the disease can (and does) flare up at any time. This is most likely to happen when communities and responders become complacent.

Much hard work remains to be done in places from which the disease is being reported. Every single person with Ebola must be identified and treated promptly. All those who have been in contact must be traced and followed up. Communities must be fully engaged in the response.

Those providing support to the affected countries still need finance and experts to maintain their assistance. The countries will require help to revive and recover.

The UN system, led today by Helen Clark, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, remains fully committed to the people of the affected countries and to the evolving Ebola response. The World Bank, UNDP, WFP, UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, OCHA, UNMEER, FAO and other UN system partners, are here today in a demonstration of this commitment.

The Secretary-General stressed that "the UN system will work together vigorously with national governments and regional partners until the work related to this outbreak is finished."

The Conference is an invaluable opportunity for all parties engaged in the response to take stock of the situation and identify the most appropriate way forward. All partners must renew their focus on eliminating the Ebola outbreak, agreeing on ways to fill gaps, and preparing plans for recovery under national leadership.



More than 23,500 persons are known to have been infected with the virus in this outbreak: more than 9,500 people have died from Ebola disease.

The outbreak is a threat to the health of people throughout the world: hence the focus on ending it as quickly as possible and ensuring that it cannot recur. The outbreak has not ended in any country until it has ended in every country.

It is crucial that the intensity of the response be sustained and that sufficient human, technical and financial resources continue to be mobilized to boost recovery and strengthen preparedness and prevention.

The affected countries and the international community are now planning for the post-crisis phase, with a focus on inclusive public services including health, sanitation, food security, education, and livelihood support as well as economic recovery.

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