

Closing remarks by Dr. David Nabarro, Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Ebola to General Assembly Informal Meeting on Ebola, 13 November 2014

What a fantastic morning we've had with really everybody coming into the same space and working together under the leadership of our President [of the General Assembly], and I'd like to just reflect on a few points that I have heard and some questions that were asked. But most importantly, just to say that this has been a really great moment and I'm proud to have had the chance to be here with you.

Everybody, I think, recognises that an adaptive, flexible and decentralised response to the multiple dimensions of the crisis is what the governments are asking for. We heard it very clearly from Tolbert Nyanzwa in Liberia, but also from colleagues here. Tolbert described the phasing and explained how that is moving forward at country level, but it's clearly a really complicated response, and it needs that adaptability or flexibility if it's going to work.

Second point is that we have heard, in various ways, the idea of a coalition of national governments, partner governments, civil society groups, even different mechanisms of development assistance, all being described – banks and others becoming involved. I think that everybody realises that this has been an extraordinary mobilisation. And I think that many of you are saying: "let's make sure that all of this is coordinated," and you are asking the United Nations to help bring people together to help identify priorities and to be as useful as possible in acting as a signpost for what is needed where. And I heard that very clearly, and I think that we need to ensure that we are continuously available to you in that role.

Thirdly, the focus on the neighbouring countries – our colleague from Benin, for example, saying very clearly that "we are not right there next door but we need your help" -- and so that is something that all of us will focus on. We have been really reminded of that by some of the episodes that have occurred in the neighbouring countries.

[Fourth]. Many of recognise that within the UN this is a collective effort –different UN funds, agencies and programmes – and I think that all of us would like at this point here to acknowledge the way in which they have stepped up and are working hard.

[Fifth]. Some have asked about post-Ebola and the mechanisms that are going to be adopted. Well, the UN Development Programme is taking a strong leadership role, but also the Economic Commission for Africa is coming in to be helpful. But I want to stress that it is the national governments, the presidents, the ministers and the people who, as always, will be at the centre of

the long-term, and our role through UNDP, the ECA and very much with the World Bank and the African Development Bank, and other banks and institutions, and donor governments coming in behind, providing collective support. And so, from my office, the Office of the Special Envoy on Ebola, we will be making sure that the arrangements for collective support to post-Ebola are in place --but all the time with governments, with regional institutions in the lead.

My sixth point is about generosity. Some of you have referred to going back again and again and coming back with new tranches. I heard it very much from several of the contributions. And I think that we really appreciate that willingness to continue to provide assistance, whatever might be needed. The volunteers from the African Union, mentioned by the delegate from Mauritania and mentioned by several of you – we are going to make certain that they get the best possible support from the UN system. We are working hard on that, together with the World Bank.

Long term support for health services – eighth point – mentioned by several. Again, this has got to be put in place. Basic health services must be returned as quickly as possible.

Ninth point is, some of you mentioned about what is in the media. And so the Secretary-General has asked us to make sure that we get clear and unambiguous messages to the media at all times so that there is no excuse for anybody to say that they acted without knowledge, especially with regard to some of the decisions that have been taken with regard to people from the region.

And lastly, our colleague from Sierra Leone mentioned the Multi-Partner Trust Fund, or the Secretary-General's Trust Fund. Thank you all for your generous contributions. That is working now, and don't hesitate to contact us if you want information. But importantly, that Trust Fund is the strategic mechanism through which UNMEER is able to finance urgent needs, and so we are really welcoming the kinds of contributions that have been described today.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.