

Security Council Press Statement – Ebola (15 October 2014)

On 14 October 2014, the members of the Security Council heard briefings by Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Mission for Emergency Ebola Response (UNMEER) Anthony Banbury, as well as Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous and Assistant-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Tayé-Brook Zerihoun.

The members of the Security Council reiterated their grave concern about the unprecedented extent of the Ebola outbreak in Africa, which constitutes a threat to international peace and security, as well as the impact of the Ebola virus on West Africa, in particular, Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone.

The members of the Security Council recognized the strenuous efforts made by the Member States of the region, especially Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, to lead the ground-level response against the Ebola outbreak, as well as to address the wider political, security, socioeconomic and humanitarian impact of the Ebola outbreak on communities. The members of the Security Council affirmed the importance of preparedness by all Member States to detect, prevent, respond to, isolate and mitigate suspected cases of Ebola within and across borders. They also recalled the International Health Regulations (2005), which aim to improve the capacity of all countries to detect, assess, notify and respond to public health threats.

The members of the Security Council welcomed the swift establishment on 19 September 2014 by United Nations General Assembly resolution 69/1 of UNMEER. They expressed their appreciation for the efforts undertaken by the Mission to provide overall leadership and direction to the operational work of the United Nations System, as mandated by the United Nations General Assembly. They requested that the Secretary-General help to ensure that all relevant United Nations System entities, including the United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions in West Africa, within their existing mandates and capacities, collaborate closely and urgently to respond to UNMEER's requests and to provide immediate Ebola response assistance to the governments of the three most affected countries.

The members of the Security Council reiterated their deep and abiding admiration for the the first-line responders to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, including national health and humanitarian relief workers, educators, and those providing burial services, as well as international health and humanitarian relief workers contributed by the Member States of diverse regions and non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations. The members of the Security Council expressed their condolences to the families of the victims of the Ebola outbreak, including national and international first-line responders, and wished swift recovery to those infected. They also underscored the critical importance of putting in place necessary arrangements, including medical evacuation capacities and treatment and transport provisions, to facilitate the immediate and unhindered deployment of health and humanitarian relief workers in the affected countries.

The members of the Security Council called on the governments of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone to continue to strengthen coordination with all national, regional and international actors, including bilateral partners and multilateral organizations, including the Mano River Union,

African Union, Economic Community of West African States, European Union, World Bank Group and the United Nations System, in order to more fully and efficiently utilize all Ebola response assistance.

The members of the Security Council stressed that the response of the international community to the Ebola outbreak has failed to date to adequately address the magnitude of the outbreak and its effects. In this regard, they urged all Member States, and bilateral partners and multilateral organizations, to accelerate and dramatically expand the provision of resources and financial and material assistance, including mobile laboratories; field hospitals; dedicated and trained clinical personnel and services in Ebola Treatment Units and isolation units; therapies, vaccines and diagnostics to treat patients and limit or prevent further Ebola infection or transmission; and personal protective equipment for first-line responders. They further urged Member States and all relevant actors to provide logistical, aeromedical, transport and construction capabilities for the Ebola response. They called on Member States, especially in the region, to facilitate immediately the delivery of such assistance, to the most affected countries.

The members of the Security Council strongly urged Member States, as well as airlines and shipping companies, while applying appropriate public health protocols, to maintain trade and transport links with the most affected countries to enable the timely utilization of all efforts aimed at containing the Ebola outbreak within and across borders of the region. They expressed their continued concern about the detrimental effect of the isolation of the affected countries as a result of trade and travel restrictions imposed on and to the affected countries, as well as acts of discrimination against the nationals of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.