

-TRANSCRIPT-

Anthony Banbury (Head of UNMEER), David Nabarro (Special Envoy on Ebola)

And Mr. Sam Kutesa (President of the General Assembly):

Media Stakeout

New York, United Nations Headquarters

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Mr. Sam Kutesa (GA President):

Thank you. Greetings to you all. The Members States of the United Nations have just been briefed on the latest developments regarding the Ebola crisis. I thank all those who participated in this meeting including Madame Susanna Malcorra, Secretary General's Chief de Cabinet and the officials who briefed the Assembly from Monrovia and Freetown.

Two distinguished senior officials are here with me today: Mr. Anthony Banbury, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and Head of the United Nations Mission for Emergency Ebola Response, and Dr. David Nabarro, Envoy of the Secretary-General on Ebola. On behalf of the United Nations, I want to thank the governments and people of the affected countries, and to express my solidarity to them, to the local workers and caregivers for their remarkable efforts.

Let me also reiterate my deep appreciation to Mr. Banbury and Dr. Nabarro, as well as the hundreds of UN staff and international workers who are on the frontline. The international community must sustain our efforts [...] to avoid stigmatisation and give great focus on the recovery from this epidemic as the outbreak has impacted all facets of everyday life in the affected countries.

Now is not the time to become complacent. We must stay vigilant and committed to stopping this scourge. We cannot afford to take our eyes off this crisis and must remain focused until the job is done.

In this regard, it is my intention to convene regular briefings in this matter. Mr. Banbury, here is the microphone. I would like you to address members of the press.

Mr. Banbury:

Thank you Mr. President. I'd like to express my deep appreciation for the leadership shown by the President of the General Assembly, not just in convening the meeting today, but in convening the Assembly immediately after he took office and shepherding through the passage of Resolution 69/1 that brought into life the UN mission that I now have the honour of leading.

Ebola is an insidious and vicious disease. It kills people, it destroys families, it robs livelihoods, it ruins healthcare systems and education systems, deprives children of the ability to have an education, it has stretched the health care systems of the countries beyond the breaking point, it deprives governments of financial resources by reduced economic activity just while it dries up the needs of governments to respond. And it has recently resulted in us passing the grim milestone of more than 5000 officially confirmed people who have died of Ebola.

At the same time much progress is being achieved. We see significantly decreasing infection rates in key areas; that is a result of two things: it's a result of the communities themselves taking their lives, their way of life into their own hands, changing their behaviour, protecting themselves, and they deserve great credit for their resilience.

The other reason is because of the response, the national and international response, the Ebola treatment centres, the communities care centres, the safe burials, the contact tracing, the training that is going on, social mobilisation. These are all having an impact, and what this means is our strategy: The national plans, UN strategies, the UNMEER operation is working.

The problem is the disease has spread so much geographically. We will not defeat this virus by chasing it. We need to get ahead of it and the way to do that is to have a much greater geographical dispersal of our interventions: the Ebola treatment units, and the safe burial teams and all those interventions. And we need to have a much greater mobility, we are to respond quickly, move fast; get ahead of the virus.

This is happening now thanks to the mobilisation of international resources in support of the governments. We see more and more commitments, important capabilities, but we need to do more and we need to do it faster. Otherwise, Ebola will continue, not only to pose great risk to the people of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea, but also of Mali, where we've seen a new transmission case, a new chain of transmission posing risk to the people of that country, and now there are risks to all the countries of that region and indeed the world, until the last case of Ebola is snuffed out.

The risks posed by Ebola are too great to do anything less than everything possible. It is United Nations' intention to do everything we can to bring the crisis to an end as quickly as possible. Thank you.

GA President: Dr. Nabarro.

David Nabarro (Special Envoy): Thank you very much indeed. Good afternoon. It really is great that the President of the General Assembly brought governments together. Together with some partners to review progress in the last six weeks since we had our last discussions here.

And I'd just like to express my personal and professional gratitude to the governments, as well as to the many generous individuals, who have put so much into the support for this enormous global response. It's only just begun. We got a long way to go. But with all of your

help, and all of your support, we are going to get there and support the people and countries that have been affected by the virus to deal with the outbreak, and to come back stronger so they are better able to address such challenges in the future, whatever they might be. Thank you Mr. President.

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