



PRESS RELEASE

UN EMPLOYS 'DISTRICT-BY-DISTRICT' APPROACH IN FIGHT AGAINST EBOLA

Accra, Ghana (1 December 2014) – The United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) and its partners will focus on a tailored district-by-district strategy for the next 60 days in the three Ebola-affected countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

"That is what is going to be the focus of our efforts. For, the first 60, we were focused on deploying capabilities and turning the disease around – now we are focused on aiming down towards zero through this district-by-district approach," said the Head of UNMEER, the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Anthony Banbury.

The Special Representative said he was confident that 60 days from now the three countries would be in a "much, much better condition" than they are now, noting that the tailored interventions in each district would be appropriate to the circumstances in that district.

"The global response has successfully turned this crisis around in, I think, a remarkable way," Mr. Banbury said at a news conference in the Sierra Leonean capital of Freetown on Monday.

"What we are seeing is a global response to an unprecedented crisis that poses global risks. We have to get it under control," he said. "We're well on the way to doing that, we have quite some way to go but we're going to get it done."

Speaking at the same news conference, the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Ebola, Dr. David Nabarro, said there had been an extraordinary response to the Ebola crisis.

"The whole world has taken notice, with people everywhere providing unprecedented support," he said. "Communities have changed the way they live, and national governments are driving positive change."

Dr. Nabarro said the response strategy is based on stopping the spread of the virus, treating people with the disease, ensuring that communities access basic services, preserving stability of societies and preventing spread to new locations.

"And the current outbreak will be ended through enabling all people with Ebola to have the best possible chance to recover from their illnesses and preventing them from infecting others," said Dr. Nabarro.

The United Nations set targets of 70 per cent of burials being carried out safely and 70 per cent of new cases receiving treatment by 1 December and those targets have been surpassed in most areas, with the safe burial target exceeded in all three countries and the treatment target exceeded in two of the three countries – Liberia and Guinea.

While the targets have been exceeded in many parts of Sierra Leone, other areas remain where the targets have not been met. UNMEER will deploy a surge team to the country's Western Area with a specific strategy to assist communities and district authorities to bring the disease under control.

For more information:

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