

Address to emergency session of the UN Security
Council: Peace and security in Africa (Ebola)
New York, New York, USA, 18 September 2014

Distinguished members of the Security Council,

Many of the governments you represent have been helping, with treatment facilities, mobile labs, hundreds of medical staff, and money.

Thank you.

This virus, this deadly and dreaded Ebola virus, got ahead of us in a fast-moving outbreak that keeps delivering one surprise after another.

Now we must catch up, in the most urgent and pragmatic way possible.

In the hardest hit countries, an exponentially rising caseload threatens to push governments to the brink of state failure.

WHO has successfully managed

WHO has successfully managed many big outbreaks in recent years.

But this Ebola event is different.

This is likely the greatest peacetime challenge that the United Nations and its agencies have ever faced.

None of us experienced in containing outbreaks has ever seen, in our lifetimes, an emergency on this scale, with this degree of suffering, and with this magnitude of cascading consequences.

This is not just an outbreak. This is not just a public health crisis.

This is a social crisis, a humanitarian crisis, an economic crisis, and a threat to national security well beyond the outbreak zones.

This week, the World Bank Group warned of a “potentially catastrophic blow” to the economies of the hardest-hit countries.

In some areas, hunger has

In some areas, hunger has become an even greater concern than the virus.

For example, the fertile fields of Lofa County, once Liberia's breadbasket, are now fallow.

In that county alone, nearly 170 farmers and their family members have died from Ebola.

For these reasons, the Secretary-General and I are calling for a UN-wide initiative that draws together all the assets of all relevant UN agencies.

In my talks with the presidents of affected countries, in my recent speeches made in the US and Europe, I have consistently called out for an immediate and massive increase in international support.

We have spelled out our most urgent needs in the WHO Ebola Response Roadmap and in the 12 Mission critical actions, launched recently.

in the appeal

I and my staff wholeheartedly

I and my staff wholeheartedly welcome the announcements like those from the US and the UK Governments earlier this week.

This is a massive ramp-up of support that brings a transformational change in our collective capacity to get a grip on this outbreak and bring it under control.

These announcements are a ^{strong} statement of concern at the highest level of government, but also a clarion call for other countries to follow. Many are doing so.

The fact that the US, UK, China, Cuba and other countries are using a variety of assets, including the military, speaks to the complexity of the challenge.

This surge of support could help turn things around for the roughly 22 million people, in the hardest-hit countries, whose lives and societies have been shattered by one of the most horrific diseases on this planet.

Support from the UN and its agencies is also undergoing a transformational ramp-up.

The scale of deployment to

The scale of deployment to Africa of WHO staff, and international staff under its outbreak umbrella, is unprecedented in the history of this Organization.

Everything now is “unprecedented”. Everything now is happening faster than ever before. The needs are immense, and we know it.

Distinguished members of the Security Council,

Reports show that more than 5,500 people have been infected. Well over 2,500 have died. And these shocking figures are vast underestimates.

Health, medical, and clinical care issues must remain the heart, the soul and the spirit of this *response* initiative.

It will take some time, but the Ebola outbreak can be contained.

Look at the stable situation in Nigeria and Senegal. When the first imported cases in these two countries occurred, we knew very well what we were dealing with.

Governments, WHO, CDC, and

ownership and leadership supported by
Governments, WHO, CDC, and Doctors without Borders
responded immediately with the right emergency actions.

And remember, people crisscross West Africa's porous borders all the time.

Other countries will have to deal, in the same aggressive way, with imported cases.

As support for the UN ~~and WHO~~-coordinated response continues to pour in, I am confident we can do so.

Thank you.