



Joint Communiqué

REGIONAL HIGH LEVEL MINISTERIAL MEETING ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE TO EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE OUTBREAK

Wednesday, 17th September 2014

Kenyatta International Conference Centre (KICC), Nairobi, Kenya

The East African Community (EAC) Secretariat in collaboration with the Republic of Kenya, IGAD and WHO convened a two days High Level Multi-Sectoral Ministerial meeting on emergency preparedness and response to Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak. The meeting was attended by Regional Ministers Responsible for Health, Transport, EAC Affairs and Immigration from the Republic of Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Republic of Kenya, Republic of Rwanda, Republic of South Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania, the Republic of Uganda, African Union Commission (AUC), World Health Organization, International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), EAC Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency (CASSOA), and the East African Community Secretariat.

Noting the outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease in Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Senegal and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the threat it poses to the Africa region and beyond;

Recognizing the recommendations of the International Health Regulations (IHR) Emergency Committee in Geneva, the Emergency Ministerial Meeting on Ebola in Accra, the Extra-ordinary Session of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the emergency meeting of the AU Executive Council on Ebola held in Addis Ababa, the meeting of the East African Community Partner States' National Civil Aviation and Airport Authorities on Ebola Virus Disease Emergency Preparedness and Response convened by the EAC Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency (CASSOA);

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Acknowledging the efforts made by affected countries, regional and the international community in responding to the current EVD outbreak;

Concerned by the rapid increase in the number of cases and deaths as well as the impact of EVD outbreak on socio-economic development, security and the wellbeing of the people of Africa;

Cognizant of the challenges faced by countries in preparing for and responding to the EVD outbreak specifically in the areas of: coordination; communication; cross border collaboration; supplies and equipment logistics management; financing; case management; infection prevention and control; surveillance and contact tracing, diagnostics and community sensitization and participation.

Considering that information critical to the control of the Ebola Virus Disease is not shared in a timely manner, thereby undermining efforts to forestall its spread;

The Ministers considered and adopted the Regional Ebola Emergency Preparedness and Response plan and recommended:

1.) Countries to:

- a) Strengthen the Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response System at district, community and Points of Entry (PoE) for early detection and response to EVD outbreak;
- b) Enhance preparedness for EVD and other public health events of international concern by updating and harmonizing national epidemic response plans, securing funds and conducting simulation exercises;
- c) Countries should ensure their Ebola emergency and preparedness response plans meet the minimal WHO standards;
- d) Enhance cross border collaboration and information sharing between countries;
- e) Accelerate the implementation of IHR plan of action and attainment of IHR core capacities in accordance with the resolution AFR/RC62/R12;
- f) Encourage research on Ebola and other Viral Haemorrhagic Fevers; including research on medicines, serums and vaccines;
- g) Provide technical and logistical support to affected countries;
- h) Provide high level national leadership and commitment in the management of Ebola preparedness and response;

- i) Strengthen existing Laboratory Capacities to facilitate early detection and diagnosis of Ebola and other Public Health Events of International Concern;
- j) Expeditious release of laboratory test results and ensure the turnaround time is as short as possible;
- k) Undertake resources mobilization to support preparedness and response plans to EVD;
- l) Participate actively in the African Union Network of infectious diseases surveillance;
- m) Participate actively in ICAO Collaborative Arrangement for the Prevention and Management of Public Health Events in Civil Aviation (CAPSCA);
- n) Ensure compliance with the International Health Regulations-Emergency Committee (IHR -EC) recommendations and AU decisions on travel and trade restrictions;
- o) Ensure the remittance of their financial contributions to the African Public Health Emergency Fund in accordance with resolution AFR/RC61/R3 and decision AU Dec416-449(xix); and
- p) Call upon the maritime organizations/authorities within countries and International Maritime Organization (IMO) to join in the management of the EVD outbreak.

2. EAC Secretariat and institutions/agencies to:

- a) Coordinate the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action on EVD Emergency Preparedness and Response ;
- b) Coordinate and facilitate the activities of the existing Standby Regional Rapid Response Teams for Ebola and other public health events of international concern;
- c) Coordinate strengthening of animal health surveillance systems, to monitor animal movement and detection of Ebola Virus Disease;
- d) Promote the implementation of the one-Health Concept;
- e) Undertake resources mobilization to support preparedness and response plans to EVD;
- f) Collaborate with other regional networks in the RECs through the AU Network on Infectious Disease Surveillance;
- g) Encourage the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Republic of South Sudan and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to join the East African Integrated Disease Surveillance Network (EAIDNet);
- h) Collaborate with the AUC in the implementation of the AU decision AU/Dec.499 (XXII) on the establishment of the an African Centre for Disease Control and Prevention;

- i) Coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of recommendations of the emergency meeting on Ebola convened by CASSOA; and
- j) Coordinate, advice and support regional countries to participate in ICAO's CAPSCA programme.

3. Development Partners and the international community to:

- a) Provide technical and financial support for implementation of regional and country emergency Preparedness and Response Plans to Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak;
- b) Ensure coordinated approach to resource mobilization.
- c) Work with countries to progressively build capacities to manage disease of public health importance

In conclusion the Ministers expressed their satisfaction in the way the meeting was organized and requested the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Hon. James W. Macharia, Republic of Kenya to thank His Excellency, Uhuru Kenyatta, the President of the Republic of Kenya for hosting the meeting. The meeting called upon President Uhuru Kenyatta, to champion the cause of the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan to Ebola Virus Disease at the next Heads of State Regional Summits.

DONE at Nairobi, Kenya on the 17th day of September, in the year Two Thousand and Fourteen

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