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EU response to the Ebola outbreak

Greens/EFA motion for resolution

Tabled by Michèle Rivasi, Maria Heubuch, Keith Taylor, Judith Sargentini, Claude Turmes, Jean Lambert, Bart Staes on behalf of the Greens/EFA Group

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the ‘public health emergency of international concern’ announcement by the World Health Organisation (WHO) of 8 August 2014,
- having regard to the WHO Ebola response roadmap of 28 August 2014,
- having regard to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control’s Ebola risk assessment of 27 August 2014,
- having regard to the Statement on the Ebola outbreak in West Africa by the Commissioner for Health, Tonio Borg, of 8 August 2014,
- having regard to the statement made by Liberia’s Defence Minister, Brownie Samukai, before the UN Security Council on the threat to his country’s existence posed by the outbreak of Ebola,
- having regard to the Statement on the EU’s response to the Ebola outbreak by the Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs, and the Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, Kristalina Georgieva, of 5 September 2014,
- having regard to the United Nations Special Briefing on Ebola by Dr Joanne Liu, international president of *Médecins Sans Frontières*, of 2 September 2014,
- having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas the Ebola outbreak in West Africa has so far caused the death of more than 2 400 people; whereas this epidemic is out of control and threatens international public health;

B. whereas the number of reported Ebola cases is over 4 300 and bearing in mind that there are also

unreported cases of Ebola-infected persons and deaths;

C. whereas, for the first time in history, the world's population is confronted with an epidemic whose propagation could be accelerated by the global mobility of people;

D. whereas there is alarm at the inadequate EU and international response to address the worst ever outbreak of Ebola, which should be seen as an emergency international public health concern;

E. whereas many developed countries, including the EU, possess biological threat response mechanisms and can deploy trained medical teams in an organised manner and with a chain of command that ensures high standards of safety and efficiency in supporting affected countries;

F. whereas the further spread of the virus will not be prevented without a massive deployment of professional medical staff and adequate equipment, including an air bridge, to bolster epidemic control efforts in affected countries;

G. whereas the fight against Ebola has so far relied on overstretched ministries of health and private non-governmental organisations, such as *Médecins Sans Frontières*, to tackle the exceptionally large outbreak of Ebola;

H. whereas the ordinary public healthcare system has collapsed in the affected regions of West Africa;

I. whereas the outbreak is having an acute impact in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, where it has resulted in food shortages, rising prices, and the disruption of food supplies to the market;

1. Calls on the EU and its Member States to come up with a concrete rapid action plan that includes the deployment of professional medical teams, the provision of appropriate equipment, and the training of local professional staff;

2. Calls on the WHO to coordinate an appropriate and organised international response that matches the scale of the epidemic, with a chain of command that ensures high standards of safety and efficiency in supporting affected countries;

3. Believes that local medical staff must be involved at all levels of the chain of command to treat the affected population and to liaise between the population and the international medical staff;

4. Calls for the creation of Ebola treatment centres in order to increase isolation capacity and relieve the affected countries' health systems, some of which are on the verge of collapse;

5. Calls for a sustainable risk management policy to be put in place to train local health staff and improve weak healthcare infrastructures, including the provision of clean drinking water;

6. Calls for the establishment of stronger channels of communication through national and community radio stations to inform and raise awareness among the population about the epidemic and the steps that should be taken to avoid its transmission in order to help people protect themselves;

7. Calls also for a clear distinction to be made between Ebola vaccination tests and the treatment provided to Ebola-infected persons; calls for clinical trials of the Ebola vaccine to respect the relevant WHO rules in force;

8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Member States, the United Nations and the World Health Organisation.

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