



Directorate of Information and Communication

## **250 Nigerian Health Professionals to be Deployed to the Ebola Affected Countries under the African Union Support to Ebola Outbreak in West Africa operations**

**Lagos, Nigeria 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2014** – About two hundred and fifty health volunteers from Nigeria to be deployed to Ebola affected countries under the framework of the African Union Support to Ebola Outbreak in West Africa (ASEOWA), have commenced pre deployment training as part of the protocol before deployment. The contingent was assembled by the Federal Government of Nigeria in response to the appeal made by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma in October for Member States to contribute health personnel to join the fight against Ebola.

The team, comprising medical doctors, nurses and other medical and paramedical personnel and epidemiologists will depart for the affected region on Thursday this week. On arrival the team will also undergo two weeks of intensive training before deployment.

Speaking at this groundbreaking ceremony, the AU Commission Director of Social Affairs Dr. Olawale Maiyegun expressed appreciation on behalf of Dr. Zuma to the Government and people of Nigeria for volunteering experienced health professionals in the fight against Ebola. He called for a united front against Ebola. “The African Union is appealing to you all to lend your support in ensuring that Africa is Ebola free. Let’s support the heroes working on the ground to stop this disease and save lives’, Dr. Maiyegun remarked. He further called for the isolation of the Ebola disease but not the affected countries.

In response, the Lagos State Commissioner of Health Dr. Jide Idris praised the courage of the volunteers and pointed out that Nigeria was glad to share its experience with sister African on how to stop Ebola. He however pointed out that “we contained Ebola in Nigeria but Africa is not yet out of the woods... Nigeria fully supports the AU drive to fight Ebola on the continent”.

Other speakers including the River State `Commissioner of Health Dr. Sampson Parker and the Director of the National Centre for Disease Control Professor Abdul Salami Nasidi expressed optimism that with concerted efforts Ebola can be defeated.

At present, the AU has deployed 87 health experts in the three most affected countries to fight the Ebola disease. Due to the high demand for more personnel needed to join the fight against Ebola, Member States have been responding favourably to the AU Commission Chairperson's appeal for more contributions of health personnel to the AU team.

In a related development, another 200 health volunteers from the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 52 from the Democratic Republic of Congo and 10 from Kenya will be deployed to the sub region in a fortnight under the African Union Support to Ebola Outbreak in West Africa (ASEOWA) operations.

### **For further information contact**

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