



PRESS RELEASE

Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention activates the Emergency Operational Centre to monitor the Ebola Outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Team of experts on standby for deployment to respond to the emergency

Addis Ababa, 14 May 2017- The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention on Saturday activated the Emergency Operational Centre to monitor the Ebola Outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo and developed a concept of operations for the emergency.

'The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention has activated its Emergency Operation Centre to closely monitor the situation. A team of experts is on standby for deployment to respond to the emergency based on the needs on the ground as we work on the modalities with the government authorities in the DRC and coordinate with the WHO and partners' said Dr. John Nkengasong, the Director of the Africa CDC.

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention Surveillance and Response Unit is an Africa wide mechanism to monitor disease outbreaks on the continent. Since 22 April 2017 the ministry of health of the DRC reported 11 suspected Ebola cases in the Likati health zone, Bas Uele Province in the north, bordering the Central Africa Republic. The National Institute of Biomedical Research in Kinshasa on 11 May 2017 confirmed one positive case among the five samples collected. The first suspected case is of a 39-year-old male who presented onset symptoms on 22 April 2017 and died on arrival at a health facility. The DRC has reactivated the inter-agency national committee against Ebola that is meeting every day to coordinate the response. Strengthening of surveillance and investigation including contact tracing are ongoing.

The DRC has experienced Ebola outbreaks since 1976. The previously reported outbreaks in the DRC include in 2014 where 66 cases of Ebola including 49 deaths occurred in the Equateur province; 2012 where 36 cases including 13 deaths were reported in Orientale province; 2008 to 2009 were 32 cases including 15 deaths were reported in Kasai; 2007 where 264 cases including 187 deaths were reported in Kasai; 1995 were 315 cases and 250 deaths occurred in Kikwit and in 1976 where 318 cases including 280 deaths were reported in Yambuku.

The Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) epidemic poses a public health emergency that can affect the whole world and affect the socio-economic and structural transformation of Africa. The first human outbreaks occurred in 1976 in northern DRC in Central Africa, then in South Sudan and recently in 2014 Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea faced the most acute Ebola epidemic. Worldwide, more than 28,600 people were infected and 11,300 died. The countries at the epicentre of the epidemic then have all been Ebola-free since at least June of last year. The virus is named after the Ebola River, where the virus was first recognized in 1976, according to the United States Center for Diseases Control

(CDC). Humans can be infected by other humans if they come in contact with body fluids from an infected person or contaminated objects from infected persons. Humans can also be exposed to the virus, for example, by butchering infected animals.

About the Africa CDC

The Africa CDC supports all African Countries to improve surveillance, emergency response, and prevention of infectious diseases. This includes addressing outbreaks, man-made and natural disasters, and public health events of regional and international concern. It further seeks to build the capacity to reduce disease burden on the continent.

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