



PRESS RELEASE

SADC Health Ministers discuss regional response to the 2018 Ebola outbreak and support to the Democratic Republic of Congo

24th May 2018 - Geneva, Switzerland: The Troika Ministers of Health in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) held an Extra Ordinary Meeting on 23rd May 2018, in the margins of the 71st World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland to discuss the recent Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The Ministers urged all SADC Member States to prioritize working together in support of a unified, coordinated and effective response to Ebola and any future disease outbreaks and issued a statement in which they:

- 1) **Reaffirmed and supported** the announcement by the World Health Organization (WHO) on the current Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and recognized the efforts by Governments, WHO, Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) and other partners including civil society for the quick response which included the deployment of medical personnel and the provision of supplies to the DRC during this time;
- 2) **Acknowledged** the efforts of the African Union (AU) through Africa CDC who have also begun to mobilize medical personnel for the response, and urged the Governments of SADC Member States to start to offer support through equipment, personnel and other means from Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector as a way of providing the desired assistance to DRC;
- 3) **Recognized that** the WHO remains a critical partner in providing technical guidance for the implementation of interventions at the national level;
- 4) **Urged** SADC Member states to work closely with Africa CDC and WHO in the response;
- 5) **Welcomed** these signs of solidarity, particularly with the deployment of skilled medical teams to DRC, and called on more countries and organizations to move swiftly to support the Government of the DRC, through the Road Map of the WHO, other United Nations Agencies, Africa CDC and other partners so as to meet the desired requirements for the containment of the Ebola outbreak;

- 6) **Urged** Member States to escalate preparedness activities, including intensified surveillance, designating isolation facilities for case management, comprehensive risk assessment, placing rapid response teams on alert, resource mobilization, stockpiling of personal protective equipment (PPE), laboratory and medical supplies and other commodities
- 7) **Renewed** their commitment and joined other partners in their efforts towards the containment of the virus in the DRC;
- 8) **Called** upon Member States to refrain from closing their borders and points of entry to people coming from DRC, and for airlines and shipping companies to continue to maintain transport and trade links;
- 9) **Emphasized** the importance of adherence to International Health Regulations, especially regarding cross border transit and urged immigration authorities in consultation with the Ministries of Health, Africa CDC and WHO country offices in the Member States to put in place the necessary prevention measures;
- 10) **Urged Member States to** work through the existing coordination structures of Africa CDC Regional Collaboration Centre, WHO and national level mechanisms
- 11) **Will** continue to work tirelessly in engaging actively with DRC and providing the necessary support in a coordinated manner.

Enquiries

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About SADC

SADC is an organisation of 16 Member States established in 1980. The mission of SADC is to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development through efficient, productive systems, deeper cooperation and integration, good governance and durable peace and security; so that the region emerges as a competitive and effective player in international relations and the world economy.