



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**STATEMENT**

Brussels, 8 August 2014

## **Statement by Commissioner Borg on the Ebola outbreak in West Africa**

*"Today we have learned that World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared the worsening situation regarding the outbreak of Ebola in West Africa a **Public Health Emergency of International Concern**.*

*Over the last eight months this outbreak has claimed the lives of over 900 people in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone and has recently affected people from Nigeria and the USA.*

*In the last few days we have heard that an EU patient - a Spanish national, who contracted the Ebola virus in Liberia, has been repatriated to Spain to receive health care.*

*My thoughts are with the victims and their families. I pay tribute to the affected communities in their struggles and the many thousands of people who are engaged in front line efforts to combat Ebola – including many volunteers from the EU.*

*As European Commissioner for Health I want to reassure citizens that the risk from Ebola to EU territories is extremely low. This is both because relatively few people travelling to the EU are likely to be infected with the virus, and because of the way in which it spreads, i.e. only through direct contact with the symptomatic patient's body fluids.*

*It is also important to consider that the EU has very high standards of health and preventive care.*

*The EU has been following the situation in West Africa for many months and, in the unlikely event of Ebola reaching the EU, we are prepared in the face of the virus.*

*The Commission is working on preparedness and coordination of risk management together with Member States and with the support of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and WHO. The **EU Health Security Committee**, established under the [Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on serious cross border threats to health](#) is coordinating the exchange of information and coordination of preparedness, in response to Ebola in the EU. Information for travellers to the affected regions is already available and regularly updated.*

*The Commission is also active on the ground in West Africa, and my colleague, Kristalina Georgieva, EU Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response recently announced scaled up EU funding in response to the outbreak. [See IP-14-891](#).*

*In this grave situation it is essential that we all cooperate together in a spirit of solidarity. I am confident that together, with the support of people in the affected countries and our own citizens that the present outbreak will be successfully contained."*

**For more information:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/health/communicable\\_diseases/diseases/ebola/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/communicable_diseases/diseases/ebola/index_en.htm)

**Statement from the WHO:**

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/statements/2014/ebola-20140808/en/>

**European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control:**

Updated rapid risk assessment "Outbreak of Ebola virus disease in West Africa" (Third update, 1 August 2014):

[http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/\\_layouts/forms/Publication\\_DispForm.aspx?List=4f55ad51-4aed-4d32-b960-af70113dbb90&ID=1141](http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/_layouts/forms/Publication_DispForm.aspx?List=4f55ad51-4aed-4d32-b960-af70113dbb90&ID=1141)

Ebola and Marburg Fevers:

[http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/healthtopics/ebola\\_marburg\\_fevers/Pages/index.aspx](http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/healthtopics/ebola_marburg_fevers/Pages/index.aspx)

Traveller information leaflet available in all EU official languages:

[http://ec.europa.eu/health/preparedness\\_response/risk\\_management/ebola/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/preparedness_response/risk_management/ebola/index_en.htm)

**Commissioner Borg's website**

[http://ec.europa.eu/commission\\_2010-2014/borg/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/borg/index_en.htm)