

# Statement by the Secretary General at the ACP Symposium on the Ebola Outbreak in West Africa, 17 October 2014, Brussels

## Statement by the Secretary General at the ACP Symposium on the Ebola Outbreak in West Africa, 17 October 2014, Brussels

Mr. Chairman, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I welcome you all, to this Symposium on the Ebola Outbreak in West Africa, in which we will reflect on the current situation in the affected countries, as well as on the interventions by the international community to contain this epidemic. As described by Dr. Margaret Chan, Director-General of WHO, this Ebola outbreak in West Africa is “unquestionably the most severe acute public emergency of modern times”.

In this regard, I wish to thank H.E. Dr. Ousmane Sylla, Ambassador of Guinea and Chairperson of the ACP Committee of Ambassadors, for proposing the organization of this Symposium.

As has been stated in other fora, this Ebola outbreak constitutes a threat to global peace and security, and a public health risk of great proportions, particularly in the affected countries. It is thus, paramount that the international community, urgently reinforces its financial and material support to the efforts aimed at containing the disease.

This Ebola outbreak in West Africa has now taken the lives of over 4000 people. It has also exposed what can happen when the health systems are not resilient enough to withstand a public health emergency of such proportions. As such the short and medium-term interventions in the affected countries must address the strengthening of the respective health systems.

Health plays a key role in the promotion of human security and development. To this end, within the context of the post-2015 Development Agenda, ACP States need to renew their commitments to improved investment in quality health care for all, including the strengthening of the national health systems and a well facilitated health work force.

It is important to note that investments in basic health services in developing countries are only a fraction of what is needed. The weak health systems compound the challenge to the timely provision of these services to the populations which need them most. It is therefore imperative, regardless of income, for countries to design their health systems that are responsive to the needs of their populations and aimed at improving access to services for the poor.

The complex nature and processes of the spread and transmission of communicable diseases and epidemics, necessitate highly efficient national health care systems and effective global partnerships.

The Ebola outbreak in the affected countries in West Africa, has clearly demonstrated the urgent need to put access to affordable health services for all, on the top of the development agenda in developing countries. The provision of these health services should, at a minimum, cover basic, preventive and primary medical care services as well as referral services.

In addressing the needs of our people, it is important to integrate in the health development programmes, multi-sectoral and inter-disciplinary interventions that constantly employ new understandings and technologies in treatment, vaccination, vector control, and research.

Today the sub-region of West Africa is the epicenter of the Ebola crisis and the world is expecting, indeed demanding a demonstration of purposeful leadership and sublime statesmanship that will conduce to the containment of the Ebola scourge thereby safeguarding human security in the region and globally.

As a Ghanaian and West African myself, I wish to appeal to our citizens in the region especially the politicians, intellectuals, civil and opinion leaders both at home and abroad to rise above petty jealousies and parochial agendas and to robustly mobilize all the necessary material, political, moral and human resources to defeat Ebola and redeem the image of our region.

Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we have a number of speakers this morning, let me end by quoting Dr. Chan once again, who stated that, “the risks of neglecting healthcare in developing countries are global, as when a deadly and dreaded virus hits the destitute and spirals out of control, the whole world is put at risk.”

I thank you for your kind attention.

**H.E Mr Alhaji Muhammad Mumuni**  
**ACP Secretary General**

\*\*\*\*\*

Tags: [SG speeches](#) <sup>[1]</sup>

---

**Source URL:** <http://acp.int/content/statement-secretary-general-acp-symposium-ebola-outbreak-west-africa-17-october-2014-brussel>

**Links:**

[1] <http://acp.int/category/story-type/sg-speeches>