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*Plenary sitting*

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16.9.2014

B8-0114/2014

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statements by the Council and the Commission  
pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure  
on the EU's response to the Ebola outbreak  
(2014/2842(RSP))

**Knut Fleckenstein, Kathleen Van Brempt, Norbert Neuser, Matthias Groote, Enrique Guerrero Salom, Linda McAvan, Maria Arena, Marlene Mizzi, Tonino Picula, Nicola Caputo, Christel Schaldemose, Gilles Pargneaux, Kashetu Kyenge, Liisa Jaakonsaari, Glenis Willmott, Andi Cristea, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė**  
on behalf of the S&D Group

**European Parliament resolution on the EU's response to the Ebola outbreak  
(2014/2842(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the ‘public health emergency of international concern’ announcement by the World Health Organisation (WHO) of 8 August 2014,
  - having regard to the WHO Ebola response roadmap of 28 August 2014,
  - having regard to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control’s Ebola risk assessment of 27 August 2014,
  - having regard to the Statement on the Ebola outbreak in West Africa by the Commissioner for Health, Tonio Borg, of 8 August 2014,
  - having regard to the Statement on the EU’s response to the Ebola outbreak by the Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs, and the Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, Kristalina Georgieva, of 5 September 2014,
  - having regard to the mission of the African Union (AU) ‘African Union Support to Ebola Outbreak in West Africa’ (ASEOWA), established on 21 August 2014,
  - having regard to the United Nations Special Briefing on Ebola by Dr Joanne Liu, international president of *Médecins Sans Frontières*, of 2 September 2014,
  - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), formerly known as Ebola haemorrhagic fever, is a severe, often fatal, illness in humans;
- B. whereas since the Ebola outbreak was officially declared on 22 March 2014 in Guinea, it has reached 4 other countries (Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Senegal), has affected almost 4 000 people and has caused more than 2 000 deaths;
- C. whereas the epidemic is fast accelerating and spreading in the West Africa region, although a separate outbreak of the virus is also occurring in the Democratic Republic of Congo;
- D. whereas the WHO recognises that the outbreak had been underestimated and estimates that the number of patients could exceed 20 000 over the next 3 months;
- E. whereas the WHO has announced that this is the largest recorded outbreak in terms of cases, deaths and geographical coverage, and has declared the crisis to be a ‘public health emergency of international concern’ which demands a coordinated international response;

- F. whereas the WHO roadmap lists a series of highly concrete and immediate measures aimed at stopping ongoing Ebola transmission worldwide within 6 to 9 months, while also rapidly managing the consequences of any further international spread and recognising the need to address, in parallel, the outbreak's broader socio-economic impact;
- G. whereas the NGOs most active on the ground, such as *Médecins Sans Frontières* and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, are criticising the international effort as being dangerously inadequate, since highly limited capacities on the ground are resulting in critical gaps in all aspects of the response: medical supportive care, training of health staff, infection control, contact tracing, epidemiological surveillance, alert and referral systems, community education and mobilisation;
- H. whereas the Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department has pledged more than EUR 147 million in humanitarian and development aid in order to contain the spread of the virus, provide treatment and essential equipment to infected persons and deploy humanitarian experts;
- I. whereas only EUR 11.9 million out of the EUR 147 million pledged specifically address some of the most urgent humanitarian needs;
- J. whereas the Commission monitors the situation through its Emergency Response Coordination Centre, which should serve as a platform for the coordination of EU assistance;
- K. whereas EU Member States have the capacity to mobilise immediate response teams to ensure early diagnosis, isolation (of suspected cases and confirmed cases in different wards), monitoring of contact persons and tracing of transmission chains, measures for burials, education and local support;
- L. whereas affected countries already suffer from shortages of food and clean water and economic collapse caused by the disruption of trade, commercial flights and harvest work following the outbreak of the epidemic, leading to social unrest, fleeing, chaos, threats to public order and further spreading of the virus;
- M. whereas the risk of transmission of the Ebola virus within the EU's borders is low;
- N. whereas the outbreak has revealed the serious inadequacy of the health systems of the affected countries and the urgent need for support to strengthen them;
1. Welcomes and encourages the continued scaling up of the Commission's financial commitment in terms of humanitarian and development aid in response to the crisis, and especially in terms of support for the African Union's ASEOWA mission;
  2. Welcomes the work being done on the ground by partner organisations;
  3. Reminds Member States that the financial aid provided to the affected countries should not be at the expense of long-term development aid but, rather, complementary;

4. Regrets the underestimation of the crisis by the Member States and the delay in providing any adequate coordinated strategy;
5. Urges the Council of the European Union to hold a ministerial meeting to establish a strategy to mobilise medical response and provide humanitarian aid from the Member States under the coordination of the Commission;
6. Calls on the Commission to draw up needs assessments and country-tailored plans in order to determine and coordinate demand and deployment regarding qualified health personnel, mobile laboratories, laboratory equipment, protective clothing and treatment centres with isolation wards;
7. Stresses the need to strengthen scientific collaboration and technological support in the areas affected by this outbreak, with a view to setting up clinical, epidemiological and diagnostic infrastructures and paying particular attention to the empowerment of local staff;
8. Calls on the Commission to maintain close contacts with the ECDC, the WHO and Member States via the Committee on Health Security;
9. Considers the WHO Ebola response roadmap to be a basis for priority activities, notably the differentiated response for countries with widespread transmission, initial cases and neighbouring countries in which preparedness has to be strengthened;
10. Calls on the Member States to coordinate flights and establish air bridges dedicated to moving health personnel and equipment to the affected countries and within the region, and providing medical evacuation if necessary;
11. Calls on the Council and Commission to support and encourage the African Union with regard to the need for a holistic action plan, as the situation is continuing to deteriorate rapidly and is affecting the economy as well as public order in the countries concerned;
12. Stresses that the current crisis cannot be solved by health systems alone, but that a concerted approach involving different sectors (healthcare, education and training, sanitation, food aid) is needed to address the critical gaps in all essential services;
13. Calls on Member States to carry out scrupulous infection control and, in cooperation with the ECDC, provide fuller information to the public on the risks;
14. Calls on the Member States and the Commission to coordinate and strengthen medical research and the production of efficient medicines and vaccines against Ebola;
15. Asks its Committee on Development to provide in-depth recommendations for mitigating the long-term consequences of the epidemic and strengthening the health systems of the affected countries in order to avoid similar outbreaks;
16. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the

governments and parliaments of the African Union, and the World Health Organisation.