NEWS STORIES

A look back at the EBOLA Conference

The Ebola outbreak mobilized a rich mix of expertise - political, humanitarian, public health, development, research, military, and security - by many DGs/Institutions. The existence of solid inter-institutional cooperation on Ebola and excellent relations with global partners and affected countries, proved crucial to organise this important international conference on Ebola in a very short timeframe.

The conference was structured in five working sessions co-chaired by significant parties in the fight against Ebola. The first session "Getting to zero" was chaired by Mr. Stylianides, EU Ebola Coordinator and Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid & Crisis Management and Dr. Nabarro, Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General on Ebola. "Preventing the Spread" was chaired by Dr. Andriukaitis, EU Commissioner for Health & Food Safety and Dr. Margaret Chan, WHO Director-General. Three country sessions were chaired by the Presidents of Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia with key interventions by the UK, USA and France. Nearly 60 other speakers took the floor to make remarks.

What are the main conclusions of the conference?

1. US$2.4 billion has been disbursed of the US$ 5.1 billion pledged to date for emergency & recovery. It is important to disburse the remaining funds and to cover a US$ 400 million funding gap for immediate actions by UN agencies.
2. The principal objective is to stop transmission of the virus. The Mano River Union strategy for "Getting to zero" supported by the WHO has to be implemented in full.
3. Preparedness and Prevention: The co-chairs endorsed the WHO's plan to support country readiness; commended establishment of the African CDC; praised efforts to develop diagnostic tests, vaccines and treatments and the level of cooperation between academic and research institutions, public and private entities. The WHO's efforts to improve its alert systems and its ability to respond to future emergencies and its commitment to draw lessons from this crisis was welcomed.
4. **Boosting the recovery and accelerating development:** The governments of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone presented emerging national recovery plans focusing on resumption of basic services and, in the medium term, on systemic and structural weaknesses in health agriculture, food and nutrition security, education, peace and state building. They recognized the contribution of development partners mainly through the Ebola Recovery Assessment (ERA). The Co-chairs committed to improved governance, transparency and accountability of national and local systems and to provide for more inclusive and effective results in service delivery for citizens.

5. **Designing a roadmap:** Early recovery activities will proceed immediately while ERA partners will continue supporting the development of national and regional strategies. Upcoming high-level meetings will take forward the principles, priorities and actions agreed at Brussels Ebola Conference.