

UN chief says mission set up to combat Ebola



UNITED NATIONS, Sept. 20, (RHC) -- UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced that he has established a UN mission to combat Ebola with the advance teams to be deployed to West Africa by Monday.

In a statement issued by his spokesperson, Ban said the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) will "provide the operational framework and unity of purpose to ensure the rapid, effective and coherent action necessary to stop the outbreak, to treat the infected, to ensure essential services, to preserve stability and to prevent the spread to countries currently unaffected."

Ban said he will appoint a special representative to head the mission and accelerate support to the countries and people most affected by the Ebola crisis.

The announcement came after the unanimous adoption earlier in the day of a General Assembly resolution on Ebola, in which the body agreed to harness capabilities and competencies across the UN system in a single, unified structure to ensure a rapid, effective, efficient and coherent response to the crisis.

The Ebola outbreak was first confirmed in Guinea on March 22 and soon spread to neighboring Liberia and Sierra Leone. Since the outbreak, the virus has killed at least 2,600 people in West Africa and nearly

twice as many have been infected, according to the WHO. The number of cases is doubling every three weeks.

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