

World Health Organization Welcomes Cuban Doctors for Ebola Response in West Africa



Geneva, September 12 (RHC) -- Cuba is sending 165 health workers to help tackle the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, the World Health Organization announced during a press conference.

Sixty-three doctors and 102 nurses, epidemiologists, specialists in infection control, intensive care specialists and social mobilization officers will travel to Sierra Leone in October and stay for six months.

At a World Health Organization press conference this morning in Geneva, Minister of Public Health of Cuba, Dr. Roberto Morales Ojeda, announced the Caribbean island's commitment of human medical resources.

Dr. Margaret Chan, WHO Director-General, said that the Cuban response was the first since her United Nations visit last week and "international rescue call" by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for a scale-up of aid and personnel to combat Ebola in west Africa.

"If we are going to go to war with Ebola, we need the resources to fight," said Dr. Margaret Chan. "I am extremely grateful for the generosity of the Cuban government and these health professionals for doing their part to help us contain the worst Ebola outbreak ever known. This will make a significant difference in Sierra Leone."

The director-general of the World Health Organization added: "Cuba is world-famous for its ability to train outstanding doctors and nurses and for its generosity in helping fellow countries on the route to progress."

The WHO Ebola response road-map, released on August 28th, highlights the need for a massively scaled response to support affected countries.

"The commitment from the Cuban government exemplifies the kind of international effort required to

intensify response activities and strengthen national capacities,” said an official statement released this morning by the WHO.

More than 2,400 people have died from the virus in recent months and some 4,700 people have been infected. The death toll remains highest in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea.

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