



The Republic of Uganda

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

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## PRESS RELEASE

### NO EBOLA IN MBARARA DISTRICT

**Kampala, 18 June 2019:**— Some sections of the media are awash with rumors of '*Ebola in Mbarara District.*' The Ministry of Health would like to clarify that there is NO confirmed case of Ebola in Mbarara District.

The Ebola Treatment Unit (ETU) in Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital does not have any patient admitted in the ETU at the moment.

As of today, Uganda has not registered any new confirmed Ebola case in Kasese District or any other part of Uganda since the last registered case four days ago. There are 2 new suspect cases who are under isolation at Bwera ETU. Blood samples were withdrawn from the suspect cases and sent to Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI) for testing and results are pending.

Currently, 92 contacts to the confirmed Ebola cases in Kagando and Bwera are being followed up daily.

Ring vaccination of contacts of the confirmed Ebola cases, as well as non-vaccinated frontline health and other workers, commenced on Saturday 15th June 2019. As of Monday 17th June, a total of 128 contacts and non-vaccinated Frontline and health have been vaccinated.

There are 3 total confirmed cases of Ebola who include; 5 year index case from Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), his 50 year old grandmother both who passed on at Bwera ETU and the 3 year old boy, brother to the index case who tested positive for Ebola and was under isolation at Bwera ETU passed on in DRC.

Meanwhile, on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June, the World Health Organization Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus held bilateral talks with the President of Uganda, His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, to discuss potential interventions to end the Ebola outbreak both in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and in Kasese District.

Dr. Tedros arrived in Uganda on Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> June 2019, after visiting Butembo and Katwa- areas affected by the outbreak in North Kivu province in Eastern DRC.

During his brief to President Museveni about the situation in Eastern DRC, Dr Tedros reiterated WHO's ongoing support to the Government of Uganda to control the Ebola outbreak. "I am pledging our continued support, in order to control this outbreak as soon as possible" he said.

Dr Tedros praised the steps Uganda had taken to prepare for a potential outbreak. “We must invest in preparedness—this is the smartest investment we can make,” he stated. He expressed his confidence in Uganda’s strong and sustainable resilient systems to respond to the current Ebola outbreak in Kasese, western Uganda.

President Yoweri Museveni appreciated the response by the Ugandan health workers in their efforts in containing the outbreak and encouraged them to continue the good work they are doing.

President Museveni also committed to support the efforts of WHO in the DRC and also reach out to the leaders in DRC.

Also in attendance were; teams from the Ministry of Health led by Minister of Health, Hon. Dr. Jane Ruth Aceng, and officials from the WHO Uganda country office.

During his visit, he made a comprehensive tour of the Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI) which hosts the Viral Hemorrhagic Fever testing laboratories.

In addition, the Ministry of Health would like to note that it has received clearance from Uganda National Council for Science and Technology and National Drug Authority (NDA) to bring therapeutic treatment for Ebola patients into the country.

The current therapeutic approach to EVD has focused on the implementation of experimental strategies including convalescent plasma and monoclonal antibodies; and testing compounds that inhibit the entry and fusion of Ebola virus into target cells or possess viral polymerase enzyme inhibitory activity.

Finally, we would like to reassure International travelers that Uganda is safe and all our national parks and tourist sites remain open and accessible to the public.

We appeal to the public and malicious individuals to desist from spreading false rumors about the Ebola outbreak generally and on social media. The outbreak is REAL and we urge all residents of Uganda to remain vigilant and report any suspected cases to the nearest health facility or call our toll-free number **0800-203-033 or 0800-100-066**

The Ministry of Health appreciates all of its partners for their unwavering support in the preparedness phase and their commitment in the now response phase.

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