

# Resolution on the EU's response to the Ebola outbreak

2014/2842(RSP) - 18/09/2014 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the EU's response to the Ebola outbreak.

The resolution was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ECR, ALDE, Greens/EFA, Fabio Massimo CASTALDO (EFD, IT) and Ignazio CORRAO (EFD, IT).

Deploing the loss of lives in the region devastated by the Ebola outbreak (affecting almost 4 000 people and causing more than 2 000 deaths) Parliament considered the Ebola outbreak posed a global security challenge and was **not only a West African problem but rather a problem on a global scale**, and accordingly, the international community must play a greater role while African countries must also take their share of responsibility. It called upon the Commission to **coordinate actions with the United Nations** to combat the Ebola virus outbreak. The UN Security Council, together with the affected partner countries, must look into the **possibility of using military and civil defence assets under the leadership of the Secretary-General** and coordinated by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Members regretted the underestimation of the crisis by the international community and the delay in providing any adequate coordinated strategy.

All partner organisations on the ground had stressed the fact that in order to isolate and treat patients there was an urgent need not only for funds but also for operational capacity, including qualified human resources and logistic materials.

**EU action:** Parliament called on the Commission to draw up **needs assessments and country-specific plans** to determine and coordinate the demand for, and deployment of, qualified health personnel, mobile laboratories, laboratory equipment, protective clothing and treatment centres with isolation wards. It also asked the Commission to:

- maintain, through the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), close contacts with the ECDC, the WHO and Member States via the Committee on Health Security;
- put in place control systems to ensure that the entire budget allocated to stopping the Ebola outbreak is actually used to fight the epidemic in the countries affected by the virus and not for other purposes;
- support the African Union with regard to the need for a **holistic action plan**, as the situation was continuing to deteriorate rapidly and was affecting the economy as well as public order in the countries concerned, as the Ebola crisis had become complex, with political, security, economic and social implications that would continue to affect the region well beyond the current medical emergency.

Member States were asked to:

- coordinate and strengthen medical research and the production of efficient medicines and vaccines against Ebola, and to advance the necessary clinical trials for existing candidate treatments;

- **coordinate flights** and establish dedicated air bridges to move health personnel and equipment to the affected countries and the region, and to provide medical evacuation if necessary;
- carry out scrupulous infection control and, in cooperation with the ECDC, provide fuller information to the public on the risks;

Members called also for a **clear distinction to be made between Ebola vaccination tests and the treatment provided** to Ebola-infected persons, and for clinical trials of the Ebola vaccine to respect the relevant WHO rules in force.

Lastly, Parliament asked 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, noting at the same time that the outbreak had revealed the serious inadequacy of the health systems of the affected countries and the urgent need for support to strengthen them.