



[France is set to construct eight nuclear reactors in South Africa after signing a \$US50 billion (\$A54.10 billion) agreement early this week. The deal likewise stated skills development, localisation of nuclear technology as well as research and development in South Africa, according to World Nuclear News. South Africa currently has two operating nuclear power plants.]

BURUNDI :

Les parlementaires européens invités à se rendre au Burundi pour avoir des informations vérifiées
2014-10-17/xinhua

Le Parlement burundais a invité jeudi les parlementaires européens à se rendre au Burundi pour avoir "des informations vérifiées et équilibrées".

Le Parlement burundais a lancé cet appel en réaction à une récente résolution du Parlement européen sur le Burundi dans laquelle le Burundi est indexé d'enfreindre les droits de l'homme et est menacé d'être exclu de l'Accord de Cotonou, accord économique conclu en 2000 entre l'Union européenne (UE) et les pays d'Afrique, Caraïbes et Pacifique (ACP).

"En cette période cruciale pour le Burundi, le Parlement du Burundi souhaiterait, chaque fois que de besoin, qu'une délégation de parlementaires européens rende visite au Burundi pour avoir des informations vérifiées et équilibrées", a déclaré Mo-Mamo Karerwa, la première vice-présidente de l'Assemblée nationale burundaise dans un communiqué.

Le Parlement burundais a affirmé que depuis 2005 le Burundi a mis en place des institutions qui aident le pays dans le domaine du respect des droits humains. Quant aux autres accusations du

Parlement européen sur la liberté d'expression limitée, le Parlement burundais a indiqué que les hommes politiques, les leaders des syndicats, la société civile et la population en général s'expriment librement sur la vie du pays et que le débat démocratique et citoyen au Burundi est une réalité et une voie privilégiée dans l'édification de la nation.

"Les Parlementaires européens parmi lesquels il y en a qui ont une grande connaissance de notre pays savent que cela n'a pas toujours été ainsi au Burundi", ajoute Mme Mo-Mamo Karerwa.

Burundi : les bègues réclament la prise en compte de leur handicap

French.china.org.cn/le 17-10-2014

Les bègues du Burundi réclament la prise en compte de leur handicap à la veille de la célébration de la journée mondiale du bégaiement prévue le 22 octobre 2014, indique l'Association Vaincre le Bégaiement au Burundi (AVBB).

Les bègues burundais sont confrontés à de multiples problèmes, a fait savoir le président de cette ONG, Pacifique Mahoro, lors d'une conférence de presse jeudi à Bujumbura.

Il s'agit notamment de la stigmatisation et de l'incompréhension au niveau scolaire à cause de ce trouble de langage.

Au niveau de la justice, ces personnes ne peuvent pas se défendre aisément à cause du bégaiement, a-t-il indiqué, ajoutant que les bègues n'accèdent pas facilement à l'emploi au même titre que les personnes bien portantes.

M. Mahoro a souhaité que l'Etat burundais puisse intervenir pour remédier à cette situation en appuyant les bègues pour accéder aux traitements du bégaiement tout en les considérant avec respect et dignité comme les autres citoyens.

Le Burundi met en place une unité anti-terroriste à l'aéroport

(Source: Xinhua)/17.10.2014

Le Burundi met en place une unité anti-terroriste dénommée "Brigade de Recherche et d'Intervention Judiciaire (BRIJ) qui doit intervenir en cas de prise d'otages dans avion ou dans un aéroport.

48 membres de cette unité viennent de recevoir une formation dispensée par le Groupe d'Intervention de la Gendarmerie Nationale (GIGN) et de la Police Nationale Française (RAID).

Ces policiers formés seront capables d'intervenir dans une situation de crise en milieu clos et confiné, et ce, que ce soit dans des locaux fermés de l'aéroport ou que ce soit dans un aéronef, a expliqué le directeur général de l'Aviation Civile Internationale, Albert Maniratunga, lors d'une cérémonie de remise de certificats tenue mercredi à l'Aéroport International de Bujumbura.

Depuis les attentats du 11 septembre 2001 aux Etats-Unis, "le monde entier reste mobilisé pour une politique de prévention contre le terrorisme au niveau international en général et au niveau de notre sous-région en particulier", a indiqué M. Maniratunga.

Il a indiqué que dans tous les aéroports du monde entier, l'on vit depuis cette époque une psychose suite à cette pratique de terrorisme international.

Au niveau de la Communauté Est-Africaine (EAC) qui regroupe le Burundi, le Rwanda, le Kenya, l'Ouganda et la Tanzanie, des mesures de prévention sont en train de se mettre en route de manière coordonnée pour lutter contre ce genre de terrorisme, a révélé M. Maniratunga.

Il a écarté tout lien quelconque entre la mise en place de cette unité anti-terroriste en milieu aérien au Burundi et une quelconque menace qui planerait présentement sur le pays.

"Toutefois, nous sommes toujours à l'avant-garde pour lutter contre le terrorisme. Par là il faut rappeler que nous sommes en gestation pour lutter contre les terroristes Al-Shebaab, qui travaillent de connivence au niveau international avec le groupe Al-Qaïda. Le Burundi ne s'endort pas et est très bien éveillé pour parer à toute éventualité relative à une quelconque agression terroriste", a-t-il déclaré.

RWANDA :

RDC CONGO :

UGANDA :

WA mine worker dies in Uganda

AAP/October 17, 2014,

A West Australian believed to be travelling home from the Congo has died in a Ugandan hotel.

The man was identified by local police as Christopher David Kirkman, 30.

"The information we have so far gathered is that Kirkman was working in a goldmine in Democratic Republic of Congo," Uganda police Metropolitan spokesman Patrick Onyango told AAP.

"He was on transit from Congo to Australia."

Mr Onyango said Mr Kirkman arrived at Entebbe airport in Uganda, booked into the hotel and later collapsed in his room.

A post-mortem will be conducted to determine the cause of death.

Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said it was providing consular assistance to the family of a 30-year-old WA man who died in Uganda.

Mr Kirkman was a fitter for Byrncut Offshore and had worked at Kibali Mine site in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

South Sudan-Uganda border post "closed" over tax disputes

Friday 17 October 2014/sudantribune.com

October 16, 2014 (JUBA) – South Sudan temporarily closed its main border post with Uganda on Thursday over disputes that arose among its clearing and forwarding companies.

Customs and migration officials told Sudan Tribune on Thursday that an impromptu decision by authorities to allow only 10 of the 163 registered companies in Nimule operate prompted angry employees to block the border crossing point in protest.

“The clearance agents blocked the road. Police and armed soldiers had to intervene and closed the customs and migrations offices this [Thursday] morning,” said a custom officer who preferred anonymity.

“No single truck or passenger vehicle was able to cross from Uganda into South Sudan,” he added.

The deputy minister for internal affairs and his finance counterpart are currently in Nimule as part of ongoing efforts to implement a government directive to reduce numbers of clearance agents at the border.

Officials say only 100 of the over 160 registered companies currently operate.

A recent cabinet resolution demanded that only five companies be allowed to operate in clearing and forwarding business met stiff resistance from hundreds of people involved in it.

About a million South Sudanese pounds is collected daily in customs duties and migration fees, with Nimule border accounting for up to 80% of all imports, officials say.

The government has over the years accused border agents of facilitating fraud between customs officers and wealthy businessmen, causing several losses to its national treasury.

Concerned about Ebola: Parents fearful Ugandan visitors are dangerous

October 16, 2014,/ by Rachelle Baillon,/fox6now.com

PEWAUKEE (WITI) — While world leaders continue the Ebola situation, visitors from Africa to a local school district have some parents concerned.

When you’re a kid, having someone from a far away place come visit can be both an exotic and exciting experience.

“Meant to promote cultural awareness and understanding,” said JoAnn Sternke, Pewaukee Public Schools Superintendent.

That’s why Pewaukee Public schools have had visitors from Uganda several times during the last few years. Two guests from the country are set to be stopping in on both Thursday and Friday this week. But given the constant coverage of the Ebola outbreak on that continent, a trip that might normally be a highlight is instead of sparking fear among some of the school community.

It all started when the district sent out a note to parents on Wednesday, detailing the Ugandans’ visit.

“What it would look like a little bit more about the Ebola crisis and really trying to educate parents about why we’re moving forward with this event,” said Sternke.

A handful of those parents then turned around and contacted FOX6 News, questioning the district’s decision to welcome visitors from Africa as fear swirls around the spreading Ebola virus.

Superintendent Doctor JoAnn Sternke says the district covered all its bases before making the decision, and also points out that Uganda is a long way from the countries at the crux of the current outbreak.

“It’s 3,000 miles away from areas that are currently under outbreak, and from what our understanding is both from our medical advisor, as well as the World Health Organization and the CDC, we felt that this was an activity that was deemed safe,” said Sternke.

Sternke says for parents who still expressed fear, they had the option to keep their child at home and not have the child be penalized.

“In a class of 2,800 students, I believe we’ve heard from roughly 25-30 parents. Some expressing support about moving forward, and some with questions and concerns,” Sternke said.

As Sternke said, Uganda is about 3,000 miles away from Liberia and the heart of the Ebola outbreak. Imagine it as the same distance from San Diego to Boston.

The Superintendent said she didn’t know if any parents had chosen to keep their children out of class.

Amnesty: Repression on Rise in Uganda

Selah Hennessy/[voanews.com/October 16, 2014](http://voanews.com/October%2016)

LONDON—

State repression is on the rise in Uganda, according to the rights group Amnesty International, as it documents legislation that has been enacted during the past year and half. Analysts say fundamental human rights are being violated.

The Amnesty International report published on Thursday put the spotlight on three laws that have been enacted in the past 18 months: The Public Order Management Act, the anti-Pornography Act and the now nullified Anti-Homosexuality Act.

Amnesty said that while the Anti-Homosexuality Act was in force, people who identified as, or were perceived to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex, or LGBTI, were arbitrarily arrested. It said some were beaten and groped by police.

The law was declared invalid by Uganda’s Constitutional Court in August, but Amnesty’s Sarah Jackson said repercussions remained.

“There is still quite deep-seated homophobia in Uganda, there is still discrimination. And in addition to that there are organizations whose work are still restricted by this,” she said.

Uganda’s Refugee Law Project, which supports asylum seekers and refugees, had its activities

suspended after it was investigated for “promoting homosexuality” - a suspension that Amnesty says still stands, despite the change in law.

The Anti-Pornography Act was, according to its supporters, brought into law in order to tackle the rise of pornographic material in Uganda.

Jackson said in the days after the Act was signed, women were harassed by police, and one lawyer was threatened with arrest because of her clothing.

Jackson said the problems with the law were exacerbated because its vague wording was widely misreported and misinterpreted by the public.

“This led to a public perception that the government had banned mini skirts. And in the days after it was passed there were a number of physical attacks and harassment of women in the street. Though these cases have tailed off, the law continues to send the wrong message: It reinforces societal discrimination against women,” she said.

The report also criticized the Public Order Management Act, which imposes restrictions on public meetings, and Amnesty said has led to police suppression of political gatherings and a crackdown on activists. Supporters of the bill said it enabled Uganda’s security agencies to prevent violence associated with protests and demonstrations.

Rahul Rao from London’s School of Oriental and African Studies said Uganda’s Anti-Homosexuality Act has received a lot of global attention, but it’s important to view that law within a broader political context.

“It’s very important in the Ugandan case to locate what is happening with respect to homosexuals against a broader landscape of cracking down on dissent. The anti-pornography, anti-civil society measures in general, have to be seen as package of repressive measures against any kind of opposition, both within ruling party circles, but also outside them,” said Rao.

He said the Anti-Homosexuality Act may in part have been repealed earlier this year as a response to international pressure.

But he said the international community should be wary of viewing this as a single-issue cause.

“Whatever international pressure there is has to locate the homosexuals’ issues in the context of these broader issues. Don’t isolate the sexuality issue because it really is about a broader crackdown across the board, which is why I think linking the three laws is very important - it is the same kinds of people that tend to be targeted by all of them, but not one particular group,” said Rao.

Amnesty’s report was based on research conducted in Uganda during March, April, and August of this year.

FAO Report: 9.7 million Ugandans cannot access enough food.
ntvuganda.co.ug/17/oct/2014

A report by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) shows that 9.7 million people in Uganda are unable to eat the right food in the right quantities.

A new report by the Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO) shows that 9.7

million people in Uganda are unable to eat the right food in the right quantities. Concerns are mounting that the rising number of undernourished people means that they cannot contribute much to the development of the country.

FAO says lack of sensitization and poor accessibility of food are the main causes of undernourishment. But Vice president Edward Sekandi said government is tackling the problem.

Heritage Students Return From Uganda Mission Trip

wdef.com/16/10/2014

RINGGOLD, GA (WDEF-TV) - Two Catoosa county students will return next week from a mission trip to Africa.

Although they were nowhere near the countries now struggling to control the ebola outbreak, it was enough to set social media on fire yesterday and today.

The outcry from parents continues, although the school district and health agencies are now assuring them there is no danger.

PASTOR MICHAEL KIRBY, MT. PISGAH BAPTIST CHURCH "You know we would never intentionally put any of our people or anybody else in harm's way. "

Mount Pisgah church has been sending young people on mission trips to Africa for more than 10 years. Next week two young church members---a 13 year old girl student at Heritage Middle and a 15 year old girl who attends Heritage High School will return from Uganda.

They are planning to return to school immediately.

DENIA REECE, SUPERINTENDENT, CATOOSA COUNTY SCHOOLS "We immediately contacted the CDC in Atlanta for guidance..also contacted Dr.Wade Sellers from public health..they have both assured me there are no current cases of ebola in Uganda."

But, despite assurances, some parents of Heritage students are not ready to take the word of the CDC, or the local health department.

SUMMER HENNESSEE, HERITAGE PARENT "I don't want them to be susceptible to whenever they may pass through an airport and get ..Or other things like that is possible for them to bring home."

CHRYSTAL HEDRICK,HERITAGE PARENT "As a mom, you know its our job to protect our kids. And when we drop them off at school you want to feel like you can trust those people to keep your kids safe."

ASHLEY BRANDON, HERITAGE PARENT "Everybody has an opinion. And if they see it as no threat..fine! But as a mother I keep my guard up for my daughter..and I want my daughter safe as possible."

PASTOR MICHAEL KIRBY "...there's nothing from the state department, nothing from the CDC..and if you were to contact them, they don't have any concern about them being there."

DENIA REECE, SUPERINTENDENT "At this time there is no risk of students contracting ebola at Heritage high school...and any questions parents have, they can call here at central office."

The school girls were involved in food service work in Uganda, which is 3-thousand miles from the

ebola stricken countries in west Africa.

SOUTH AFRICA :

France to Build 8 Nuclear Reactors in South Africa

By Esther Tanquintic-Misa/au.ibtimes.com/October 17, 2014

France is set to construct eight nuclear reactors in South Africa after signing a \$US50 billion (\$A54.10 billion) agreement early this week.

The deal likewise stated skills development, localisation of nuclear technology as well as research and development in South Africa, according to World Nuclear News. South Africa currently has two operating nuclear power plants. Located at Koeberg, these were built by Areva, which will also build the same new eight nuclear reactors. The existing facilities have been operating since the mid-1980s.

South Africa's long-term plans, contained in its 2010 Integrated Electricity Resource Plan, heavily mentioned nuclear energy as its tool of choice as it works to achieve a sustainable energy mix. The country needs up to 9.6 GWe of new nuclear capacity by 2030 as it works towards modernization. South Africa has allocated at least \$81 million early this year to be spent on nuclear research and development.

South Africa is heavily dependent on coal for generating electricity, but it cannot keep up with demands. The lack of a stable energy supply has held back the economic growth of the continent's most industrialised nation. South African President Jacob Zuma, in his June 2014 State of the Nation Address, said his administration will prioritise laying down energy security and thus pursue an energy mix including coal, nuclear, shale gas and renewable energy.

Energy Minister Tina Joemat-Pettersson said the expansion of SA's nuclear programme will "yield tremendous benefit for the country from mining, beneficiation, manufacturing, industrialisation, skills development and power generation" but without exacerbating global warming because it only has less greenhouse gas emissions.

In September, the country also signed with Russia a US\$50 billion (A\$54.1 billion) deal for eight nuclear reactors by 2030. A deal with China of the same nature is also expected to be signed in November, according to Bloomberg. A plan with Japan is also being worked out.

South Africa had stipulated it will sign agreements with other global nuclear vendor countries in order to achieve its goal of 9.6 GWe of new nuclear capacity.

"South Africa today, as never before, is interested in the massive development of nuclear power, which is an important driver for the national economy growth," Joemat-Pettersson earlier said.

TANZANIA :

Tanzania May Increase Borrowing to Fund Budget After Aid Cut

By Alawi Masare/businessweek.com/October 17, 2014

Tanzania may borrow more to help finance its budget this year after foreign donors said they will withhold funding because of a corruption scandal, Finance Ministry Permanent Secretary Servacius Likwelile said.

The U.K., Japan, Germany and other development partners including the World Bank announced last week they will keep back about four-fifths of the \$558 million pledged for the country's 2014-15 budget. Foreign loans and grants account for about 15 percent of Tanzania's budget, and the withheld funds may derail major spending plans in an election year, said Ahmed Salim, senior analyst at Teneo Intelligence in Dubai.

"I cannot discuss more details of the alternative financing plans, but we have borrowing arrangements with the central bank," Likwelile said in a phone interview on Oct. 15 from the commercial capital, Dar es Salaam. "We can do more borrowing both internally and commercially."

Tanzanian Finance Minister Saada Mkuya Salum in June unveiled a 19.6 trillion-shilling (\$11.6 billion) budget with plans to borrow 2.96 trillion shillings from the domestic market and about \$800 million from external markets to help finance development projects. The country is expanding and building new ports, constructing power plants and laying roads under a 42.9 trillion-shilling five-year development plan to help it become a middle-income economy by 2025.

Payments Questioned

Donors are withholding aid pending an investigation into how payments were made to Pan Africa Power Solutions Tanzania Ltd., a closely held company that acquired Independent Power Tanzania Ltd., an electricity producer, the Dar es Salaam-based Citizen newspaper reported on Oct. 8.

The decision by donors to withhold the pledged funds was a surprise to the government, which had already earmarked the money for development expenditure, Likwelile said. The Controller and Auditor-General has been assigned by parliament to investigate the issue, he said.

Donors had been expected to release about 90 percent of the pledged funds in the first quarter of the current fiscal year, which began on July 1, though so far they've only disbursed about \$71 million, Likwelile said.

"We are learning one thing that we need to have strong local revenue collection to cover our budget and avoid unnecessary pressure like this," he said. "The donor money was supposed to help in many development activities like health and the preparation for the next general elections."

The East African nation is scheduled to hold general elections next year.

Tanzania still expects to be assigned a sovereign credit rating by the end of the year as it works toward offering its debut Eurobond, he said. The government, which had planned to offer \$700 million of debt in the financial year that ended on June 30, postponed the sale after a delay in getting a risk assessment slowed the issuing of the rating.

By December, the country "will have achieved something" on the rating, said Likwelile.

Tanzania's government expects the size of the economy to increase by a fifth after rebasing the country's gross domestic product data to factor in expanding industries such as mining and natural gas. The revised data will probably be released by the end of this month, according to the government.

KENYA :

Tourist arrivals to Kenya tumble over security concerns

Date: Oct 16, 2014/newvision

INTERNATIONAL tourist arrivals to Kenya fell 13.6 percent in the first half of this year, following a string of attacks blamed on Somali Islamist insurgents, official figures showed Thursday.

Official data from Kenya Tourism Board said arrivals totalled 428,585 in the six months to June compared to 495,978 visitors over the corresponding period last year.

Compared to 2012, the total arrivals for the January-June period fell 24 percent.

"The numbers have spoken; we performed very badly due to the insecurity experienced, especially at the Kenyan Coast," Sam Ikwaye, executive officer of the Kenya Association of Hotelkeepers and Caterers, told AFP.

"We have lost the whole year", he said, explaining that the forecasts for the remainder of 2014 "are not looking good".

On the Kenyan coast, the scene of recent killings, hoteliers said business is "even worse than the figures show."

"We are operating at 60 to 70 percent down compared to last year," said Harald Kampa of the Diani Sea Lodge and Diani Sea Resort.

Tourism is critical to East Africa's largest economy, generating some 11 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) and accounting between 9 to 10 percent of employment, according to Kenya Tourism Board.

Kenya has suffered a spate of brutal attacks, especially on the coast, since last year's Nairobi Westgate mall siege, where 67 people were killed.

Somalia's Al-Qaeda linked Shebab insurgents claimed responsibility for the attacks, including the assault on the Westgate mall.

Following the attacks several Western nations urged their nationals to avoid the port city of Mombasa. One British travel firm evacuated hundreds of package tourists.

AFP

Kenyan doctors demand safeguards over Ebola

By JANE GOIN/capitalfm.co.ke/October 16, 2014

NAIROBI, Kenya, Oct 16 – Kenyan doctors have stated that more needs to be done to minimise the growing risk of transmission of the Ebola disease.

Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentists Union (KMPDU) Secretary General Sultani Matendehero regretted that despite the government forming a task force to handle the issue, none of their representatives have been included thus leaving them 'in the dark' over the goings on.

"In order to assure our members of their safety and minimised risk, the union demands to be centrally involved through immediate inclusion in the task force handling this issue. Much as we appreciate the substantial risk naturally associated with our work, we shall not allow our members to be exposed to preventable risk," stated the Secretary General.

Matendehero says their members have time and again sought to find out the efforts being made to ensure their safety but they have not had any information since they are not involved and hence the reason why they are demanding to be enjoined in the task force formed by the Health Ministry.

"We have to start preparing our healthcare system to be able to handle in case the first case arises. The healthcare workers are the front line soldiers in this war against Ebola and we are not going wait until this situation worsens for us to begin developing the frame work," added Matendehero.

The doctors while lauding the government's efforts insisted that a lot more needed to be done to sensitize Kenyans on the symptoms and ways of managing the disease and who to contact in a suspected case.

"The protocols have not been disseminated to every single health worker. The personal protective equipment are only present in a few hospitals. The first step in treating Ebola is to ensure you have standard precautions – basics are missing from our hospitals," added Victor Ngani, KMPDU Chairman.

The doctors went on to say that stringent measures had to be taken to curtail importation of the disease with the transport, hotel and hospitality industry.

"There are efforts ongoing... the problem is that they may have translated on the ground to effectiveness – how many points of entry do we have into this country, our first isolated case in this country, was turned away from JKIA on landing from Liberia, this person went to Burundi and entered Kenya by road. Two weeks later we isolated him, so how safe are we?" posed Nelly Bosire, KMPDU Nairobi branch Chairperson.

Last Saturday, there was an Ebola scare after a 33-year old woman died at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport after flying from South Sudan, exposing the county's unpreparedness since those handling her body were not wearing any protective gear.

Owing to this, the doctors urged the government to increase public awareness on ways of preventing re-infection, symptoms displayed by the virus and how to handle a person suspected to have contracted the virus.

The doctors intimated that the Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) was in the process of constructing an isolation unit which would be completed in the next two months, all in the efforts of countering the Ebola menace which has now resulted in 4,447 deaths with the majority of victims coming from West Africa.

The World Health Organization (WHO) notes that there could be up to 10,000 new cases a week in the coming two months if efforts are not stepped up, adding that the rate of new infections in some areas is slowing down.

Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea have been hardest hit by the outbreak.

Kenya: Interpol Wants Kenyan Arrested Over Illegal Ivory Trade

By Joseph Muraya/allafrica.com/20141017

Nairobi — Interpol on Thursday issued an international arrest warrant for Kenyan national Feisal Mohamed, on suspicion of involvement in the illegal ivory trade.

According to Interpol, Mohamed is said to be behind three tonnes of ivory confiscated in Mombasa on July 9 last year, when the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) impounded a consignment weighing 3.2 tonnes at the Port of Mombasa.

The consignment was intercepted in a 20-foot container awaiting shipment to Malaysia. At the time, KRA Public Relations and Corporate Affairs officer Fatuma Yussuf said the ivory tusks were packed in Kenya.

Yussuf had also said documents indicated that the ivory was disguised as groundnuts, wrapped and some stashed in sacks.

Arthur Tudor, the director Kenya Wildlife Service's Coastal region, said the kind of ivory originated from elephants from the savannah that include Kenyan national parks and neighbouring countries .

Following the seizure, police initiated investigations on the exporter in Nairobi, the consignee in Malaysia and the clearing based in Mombasa.

Two alleged smugglers were on July 12 charged over the consignment but denied the charges.

Abdul Halim Sadiq and Ghalib Sadiq Kara were charged in the port city Mombasa for being in possession of the stash of elephant tusks. An arrest warrant was also issued for businessman Mohamed.

In the warrant issued on Thursday, the international police organisation called on member states to arrest Mohamed if he sets foot on their territories.

On Wednesday, Inspector General of Police David Kimaiyo said tight measures were set to be put in place to assist in the fight against the poaching menace in the country.

Kimaiyo said he had already met key stakeholders in the sector to strategise on the way forward as the threat continues to persist despite various efforts by the government and other stakeholders.

"We are giving a very strong warning to the poachers... their days are numbered," he warned. "They will face the full force of the law. We are not going to relent on the issue of poaching and we are going to deal with it firmly."

He said the current trend threatens to bring down the tourism sector which remains a major income earner but warned that police will not relent in the war.

"Even if they are armed with any kind of sophisticated weapon, we shall deal with them. We have more sophisticated weapons than they have," he stated.

ANGOLA :

Venezuela, Malaysia, Angola, N.Z., Spain win U.N. Council seats

By Michelle Nichols and Louis Charbonneau/Reuters/Thu Oct 16, 2014

UNITED NATIONS

(Reuters) - Venezuela, Malaysia, Angola, New Zealand and Spain won seats on the United Nations Security Council on Thursday for two years from Jan. 1, 2015.

The 193-member U.N. General Assembly elected Venezuela with 181 votes, Malaysia with 187 votes, Angola with 190 votes.

All three countries campaigned unopposed for their seats after being chosen as the candidates for their respective regional groups, but still needed to win the votes of two-thirds of the General Assembly to secure their spots.

The only contest was between New Zealand, Spain and Turkey for two seats given to the Western European and others group. New Zealand won a seat during the first round of voting with 145 votes. Spain beat Turkey in a third round of run-off voting.

Venezuela last tried to join the 15-member council in 2006, but failed to win the required two-thirds support of the General Assembly during dozens of rounds of voting after the United States campaigned against its bid. Washington did not stand in the way of Venezuela's bid this time.

"This is the victory of Hugo Chavez Frias. Chavez keeps winning battles in the world ... It's a day in which the world has supported our fatherland," Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro said minutes after the vote in a nationally televised address.

The U.S. campaign in 2006 was in response to then socialist leader Chavez who compared then U.S. President George W. Bush to the devil, saying on the U.N. General Assembly podium that he could still "smell sulfur" a day after Bush's address.

Venezuela will likely use the council seat as a platform to aggressively back allies such as Syria and Russia in their diplomatic wrangling with the United States, part of its broader effort to continue the anti-Washington foreign policy of the late Chavez. It has even named Chavez's daughter, Maria Gabriela Chavez, as its deputy ambassador to the United Nations.

The OPEC nation of 29 million has consistently opposed U.S. diplomatic initiatives. It backed Russia's annexation of the Crimean Peninsula, which was formerly part of Ukraine, and it provided fuel to Syria amid its battle against insurgents. Venezuela has also built up cooperative ties with Iran despite strict sanctions imposed by Western nations.

Ten countries abstained in the secret General Assembly ballot to elect Venezuela.

"The Latin American and Caribbean countries have done a great disservice to the cause of international peace as well as helping a rogue military-civilian dictatorship gain a world stage," said Venezuelan opposition figure Diego Aria, who was the country's U.N. ambassador in the early 1990s.

AU/AFRICA :

Ebola outbreak: Famine approaches – bringing a fresh nightmare to West Africa

independent.co.uk/Friday 17 October 2014

Sierra Leone's fields are without farmers. Its crops go un-reaped. In the quarantine areas, feeding is patchy – some get food, others don't. People then leave the enforced isolation in search of a meal, so Ebola spreads. In three West African countries where many already live a hand-to-mouth existence, the act of eating is increasingly rare.

Ebola, the virus that has ravaged Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea at an unprecedented rate, continues its devastating spread. The number of dead doubles with each passing month; the bodies unburied. More lives are devastated with each passing day.

And in the absence of a mass-produced vaccine, its treatment – enforced isolation, mass quarantines – now threatens to bring a new crisis: starvation.

Earlier this month, two children who were among the thousands orphaned by the virus, were visited by aid workers in Liberia's capital, Monrovia. At the time, the workers did not have the resources to take the children away. When they returned days later, the children were dead. They died not from Ebola, but starvation.

Yesterday, as the World Health Organisation warned that more than 4,500 people would be dead before the end of the week, a new threat to West Africa's stability emerged: three quarters of a million people may die from malnutrition, as an unprecedented modern famine follows the disease – if urgent action is not taken.

While Ebola's direct consequences prompt terror, its indirect results are equally disturbing – food prices spiral, farms are abandoned, meals are scarce and those most in need, the estimated 4,000 orphans of the virus, go hungry.

Speaking on the eve of World Food Day, Denise Brown, the United Nations World Food Programme's regional director for West Africa, said: "The world is mobilising and we need to reach the smallest villages in the most remote locations.

"Indications are that things will get worse before they improve. How much worse depends on us all."

The UN agency estimates that it has provided food to a little over half a million people in the three worst-hit countries. It is aiming to feed at least another 600,000 before the end of October.

But for Tom Dannatt, founder and chief executive of Street Child, a specialist West Africa children's charity, the food crisis in West Africa is not unexpected.

If current projections are correct, there could be up to 10,000 Ebola cases a week in West Africa before Christmas. That would, if mortality projections of 70 per cent remain correct, result in 7,000 deaths every week and thousands more orphans.

Speaking to The Independent yesterday, Mr Dannatt described the "very patchy" feeding

programmes in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

“Some get food, others don’t,” he said. “They go unfed and they don’t have the right nutrients and they are then susceptible to disease. They break the quarantine and go out in town to eat [so] the infection spreads.”

Some districts in Sierra Leone have been under quarantine for 10 weeks.

“Life in those districts – it’s like holding your breath: you can do it for a while, but you can’t do it for huge periods,” said Mr Dannatt. “It’s the most vulnerable that reach the sharp end first.”

Yesterday, Koinadugu in the country’s far north – the last district where Ebola had not previously reached – recorded its first two cases.

Mr Dannatt said food prices in quarantined districts had increased by up to 100 per cent for certain goods, while opportunities to earn money were greatly reduced.

“Villagers and agricultural workers are frightened to go out to the field to do their normal work. They are frightened to go market as well,” he said.

On Monday, Kanayo Nwanze, president of the UN International Fund for Agricultural Development, said that up to 40 per cent of farms have been abandoned in the worst-affected areas of Sierra Leone. There are already food shortages in Senegal and other countries in West Africa, because regional trade has been disrupted.

According to the World Food Programme’s survey of people in the Kailahun and Kenema districts of Sierra Leone – where most Ebola cases have been reported – many are resorting to desperate measures to cope – often making do with scraps.

In Lofa County, the worst affected rural area in Liberia, the price of food and other commodities increased from 30 to 75 per cent, just in August. The NGO Action Against Hunger said the price of cassava – a key staple – increased by almost 150 per cent in the Liberian capital, Monrovia, during the first week in August.

It is not just food that is scarce in Liberia. The country and its overwhelmed government also faces a projected shortage of 80,000 body bags to bury the dead and 100,000kg of chlorine powder to disinfect quarantine zones.

“Everyone from the governments of Liberia and Sierra Leone, through to the international donor community, has been slow on the medical response and on the food response,” said Mr Dannatt.

“This has been coming as obviously and clearly as light at the end of the night.” He added: “The excuse is, ‘We’re focused on just stopping Ebola’. It finds it frustrating when people say the hungry will get through it. I wonder whether that division is an accurate one. If we made sure every quarantined family was fed a proper ration they wouldn’t break out and infect others.”

An Oxfam spokesperson said yesterday: “The priority for Oxfam and other aid agencies at this stage is to bring the Ebola outbreak under control by scaling up our response.

“Nevertheless, the wider impact of this crisis is already tangible. People are losing their income as fields, markets and goods are inaccessible, and [are] thus being pushed further into poverty.

“There is less local food in markets and what is there is becoming more expensive. In some areas, this already means that people do not have enough food to eat. This crisis has wiped away years of development gains, hard-won after brutal civil wars, which is likely to increase the fragility of the countries and stability of the region.”

Mr Dannatt added: “The saving Grace of West Africa in terms of Ebola may be in this miniscule, overblown link to the West; that it might come and get you – it’s bewildering and extraordinary.”

AU asks African leaders to send doctors to Ebola-stricken states

Fri Oct 17, 2014/Reuters

ADDIS ABABA (Reuters) - The African Union has appealed to all leaders in the continent to contribute health workers and specialists to staff new Ebola clinics and hospitals being built in West Africa, its chairperson said on Thursday.

Global health authorities are struggling to contain the world's worst Ebola epidemic since the haemorrhagic disease was identified in 1976.

The virus - still spreading in West Africa - has killed nearly 4,500 people, with confirmed, probable and suspected cases reported in seven countries, including the United States.

Though hundreds of millions of dollars have been committed and new Ebola clinics and hospitals are being built, aid agencies say there too few volunteers.

The Addis Ababa-based bloc has already deployed around 100 volunteers in Liberia, where -- as in Sierra Leone and Guinea -- healthcare systems are collapsing.

"We have written to our members' heads of state to see if each country can give us maybe up to 10 or 20 each," Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, told reporters.

"Even if some give us one or others give us 20, if everyone gave, we can get some hundreds of health workers," she added.

The United States already has more than 350 troops on the ground in West Africa, part of a planned mission of up to 4,000.

They have set up headquarters in Liberia's capital, Monrovia, and hope to have a 25-bed field hospital ready this month. The U.S. military also aims to quickly build up to 17 Ebola treatment units.

Britain is setting up a 200-bed hospital in Sierra Leone and the United Nations has formed a special mission to lead efforts.

But aid agencies say hospitals for Ebola infections, which the World Health Organisation says are doubling every 10 to 21 days, may not be built and staffed fast enough to meet demand.

"It is not just a fight for these three countries," Zuma said. "If we don't help them the disease will also come to everyone ... each member state cannot say it is immune.

UN/AFRICA :

Ebola neglected because it started in Africa: ex-UN chief

dailytimes.com.pk/17-Oct-2014

LONDON - Wealthy countries were slow to tackle the Ebola epidemic as it began in Africa, former United Nations secretary general Kofi Annan said in tough criticism of the response to the crisis on Thursday.

"I am bitterly disappointed by the response. I am disappointed in the international community for not moving faster," Annan told the flagship BBC programme Newsnight.

"If the crisis had hit some other region it probably would have been handled very differently. In fact when you look at the evolution of the crisis, the international community really woke up when the disease got to America and Europe."

The Ghanaian diplomat, who led the United Nations for a decade until 2006, said that it should have been clear that the spread of the virus from its epicentre in western Africa to countries overseas was only a matter of time.

It has since been transmitted to a nurse in Spain and two nurses in the United States who were treating patients who had contracted the disease in Africa.

"I point the finger of blame at the governments with capacity. I think there's enough blame to go around," Annan said. "The African countries in the region could have done a bit more they could have asked for help much faster and the international community could have organised ourselves in a much better way to offer assistance."

"We didn't need to take months to do what we are doing today." Annan defended the World Health Organization (WHO) which has been criticised for not responding quickly enough to the worst ever epidemic of the disease, which began in Guinea before spreading to Liberia and Sierra Leone.

The Nobel peace prize laureate said that the WHO, which predicts that the infection rate could reach 10,000 a week by December, was aware of the risk of the disease but relied on governments to give them the resources to act.

"Countries are saturated with demands and they are not always able to prioritise as effectively as they should. I think we took our eyes off the ball," Annan said.

The WHO on Thursday said that it was ramping up efforts to help 15 African countries stop the spread of the virus, as Europe prepares to coordinate screening of passengers from affected countries.

It is pertinent to mention here that the outbreak has killed 4,493 people from a total of 8,997 cases as of Sunday, according to WHO.

Africa: On World Food Day, UN Lauds Role of Family Farmers in Ending Global Hunger

[UN News Service/16 October 2014](http://unnews.org/16-October-2014)

With over 800 million people worldwide still lacking access to healthy, nutritious food, family farmers must play an increasingly vital role in the global war on hunger, United Nations officials affirmed today, adding that the strong participation of the world's family farmers can help "turn the tide" in shaping a new agenda for a sustainable future.

"Family farmers are key to unlocking global progress," declared Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today in his message marking the annual observance of World Food Day.

"They run the vast majority of farms in the world. They preserve natural resources and agrobiodiversity. A world free from poverty and hunger where all people have realized their right to adequate food, is central to the future we want. They are the cornerstone of inclusive and sustainable agriculture and food systems."

The theme of this year's Day, which is celebrated on 16 October in honour of the date of the founding of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 1945, is Family Farming: Feeding the world, caring for the Earth, and has the stated goal of drawing attention to the world's 500 million smallholder farmers in an effort to help eradicate poverty and help safeguard the environment.

This year's World Day also coincides with the International Year of Family Farming, designated by the UN General Assembly in 2012, through a resolution that recognized the important contribution that family farming and smallholder farming can play "in providing food security and eradicating poverty in the attainment of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

For its part, FAO notes that other objectives of the World Day include encouraging attention to agricultural food production and stimulate national, bilateral, multilateral and non-governmental efforts to this end; encouraging economic and technical cooperation among developing countries; encouraging participation of rural people, particularly women and the least privileged categories; promoting the transfer of technologies to the developing world; and strengthening international and national solidarity in the struggle against hunger, malnutrition and poverty.

Amid continuing global efforts targeting the goal of "zero hunger," the Secretary-General observed in his message that there are 100 million fewer hungry people today than there were 10 years ago while 63 countries have managed to halve the portion of their population suffering from undernourishment.

Moreover, he pointed to the recent Climate Summit, held in New York ahead of the UN General Debate, during which more than a hundred organizations and governments pledged to work more closely with farmers, fishers and livestock keepers to improve food security while also focussing on addressing climate change.

But, Mr. Ban cautioned, much work remained to be done.

"More than 800 million people do not have enough healthy, nutritious food to lead active lives. One in three young children is malnourished," he warned, adding that in 2015, the international community finally had an opportunity to "turn the tide by achieving the Millennium Development Goals" and achieving a new agenda for sustainable development.

"A world free from poverty and hunger where all people have realized their right to adequate food, is central to the future we want," he said.

At the same time, in a statement urging Member States to show "a more meaningful commitment" to the development of policies benefitting small, family farms, UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Hilal Elver, emphasized that protecting the rights of family farmers was "paramount to the eradication of hunger and ensuring food security."

"With over 70 per cent of the world's food production reliant on family farmers, this type of farming represents the vast majority of agriculture worldwide, both in developed and developing countries," Ms. Elver said.

"Family farming is based on tradition, and forms the social fabric of many societies playing a key role in protecting the world's biodiversity and promoting the sustainable use of natural resources."

The UN expert also underlined the crucial role played by women in agricultural development, noting that some 43 per cent of the agricultural labour force in developing countries is female. Ms. Elver insisted that "every effort" be made by Member States to ensure that women in agriculture are afforded "the same rights and access to necessary resources as their male counterparts."

The majority of rural women depend on natural resources for their livelihoods. They produce, process and prepare many of society's meals, frequently taking primary responsibility for household food security, health status and education opportunities. As a result, a number of UN initiatives are geared towards enhancing their ability to work on farms and fisheries in a way that guarantees parity.

In China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, for instance, UN Women helped educate scores of women farmers about how to advanced irrigation systems while in Zimbabwe, the agency helped women from the Tonga ethnic group break into the male-dominated fishing industry. Instead of selling fish purchased from men's boats, they now market their own catch.

US/AFRICA :

Obama may call on reserves to deal with Ebola in Africa

Gregory Korte and Tom Vanden Brook, USA TODAY/October 16, 2014

WASHINGTON — President Obama issued an executive order Thursday allowing the Pentagon to call up reserve troops to combat the Ebola crisis in Africa.

Obama also opened the door to an Ebola "czar" to coordinate the response, saying that an additional official may be helpful as his advisers juggle threats of terrorism and the upcoming flu season.

And while he said he had no "philosophical objection" to barring west Africans from traveling to the U.S. from western Africa, he said he would continue to listen to experts who say "a flat-out travel ban is not the best way to go."

The Pentagon said it had no immediate plans to send reservists or National Guard troops to Africa, saying that the order simply allows the military to begin planning for those forces in its overall response.

It "doesn't mean that we are deploying these forces, but it gives us the option to do so if we need to," said Air Force Lt. Col. Thomas Crosson, a Pentagon spokesman.

The Pentagon is identifying gaps that active-duty troops cannot fill, said a Defense Department official who was not authorized to speak publicly about the issue. Among the specialists that might be tapped: technical engineering, communication systems, logisticians, comptrollers and religious specialists. .

At least eight engineers have already been identified as possible call-ups. All reservists called to duty will be given proper training and medical-threat briefings, the official said.

The president notified Congress of his order Thursday after phone calls with top congressional leaders of both parties, and to the governors of Ohio and Texas. He also met with top advisers in the Oval Office Thursday evening.

The order reads: "I hereby determine that it is necessary to augment the active Armed Forces of the United States for the effective conduct of Operation United Assistance, which is providing support to civilian-led humanitarian assistance and consequence management support related to the Ebola virus disease outbreak in West Africa.

Obama canceled a second day of political events Thursday in order to deal with the Ebola crisis from the White House, as the second Ebola patient to be diagnosed on American soil was transferred from a Dallas hospital to the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Md.

NIH Director Anthony Fauci said Pham will be treated in a special unit "designed to provide high-level isolation" with staff trained to handle infectious diseases and critical care. He said Pham "is stable, and she seems to be doing reasonably well."

Public health experts have been dispatched to Ohio after a second infected nurse traveled from Dallas to Cleveland and back last weekend, "It's very important to make sure we are monitoring and tracking anyone who was in close proximity to this second nurse," Obama said.

But Obama said his biggest priority was "dealing with this problem at the source" — the outbreak in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone.

The White House said it didn't know exactly how many reserve troops would eventually be required.

"The president has laid out very clearly what the mission is. The Department of Defense has told the president that it will require about 4,000 Department of Defense personnel to execute the mission the president has directed them to execute," White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest said earlier in the afternoon. "What I don't know is the composition of that force."

At the Pentagon, officials expect as many as 3,000 troops could be sent to Liberia to fight the disease. There are no plans for them to be involved in the direct treatment of victims. Instead, they will build treatment facilities and operate labs.

The Pentagon recently finished building a mobile, 25-bed hospital in Liberia for infected health-care workers, said Army Maj. Gen. Darryl Williams, who commands the Pentagon's task force responding to the Ebola crisis.

The hospital will be staffed by the U.S. Health Service Commission Corps, Williams told reporters on Thursday. Two laboratories are also operating, and troops are constructing 17 treatment centers. If troops are infected by Ebola, they would be quarantined, stabilized and transported out of Liberia

for treatment, Williams said. Troops are constantly monitored for signs of the virus, Williams said. On Wednesday, his temperature was checked eight times.

William M. Welch contributed from Los Angeles.

US deploys more troops to West Africa as Australia withholds Ebola personnel

AFP/October 17, 2014

The US National Guard will be deployed to Africa as the West scrambles to prevent Ebola from becoming a worldwide pandemic.

Engineers and logistical specialists will reportedly be included in the first deployment, and will help build Ebola treatment centres in stricken West African nations.

Another thousand US soldiers will also be deployed to Ebola-affected regions, upping the total to 4000.

Western countries scrambled to review safety measures at airports and borders amid a mounting wave of fear that West Africa's Ebola outbreak will spread worldwide.

However, it has been revealed that the UN trust fund for battling the virus holds just US\$100,000, a fraction of the US\$1 billion it needs.

As US lawmakers grilled officials over how an infected nurse was allowed to board a crowded flight, European officials promised a review of how passengers from Ebola-hit countries are screened.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) vowed to ramp up its efforts to help 15 African countries defend themselves against the virus, which has already killed about 4500 people.

Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott has defended accusations of delaying the country's response to the Ebola crisis.

The government has been unable to secure the agreement of another country to evacuate and treat military or health personnel sent into West Africa who contract the virus.

France and Spain placed several potential victims under observation and in Liberia, the worst hit country so far, the minister of transport placed herself in quarantine after her driver died.

EU health commissioner Tonio Borg said the bloc would review exit screening of travellers from Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone, in coordination with the WHO.

And EU health ministers, meeting in Brussels, agreed to coordinate measures at entry points to the 28-member Union, although any decision on screening for Ebola rests with individual European countries.

A string of health workers have been evacuated back to Europe from Africa with Ebola, but the only confirmed case of transmission on the continent so far is a Spanish nurse in Madrid.

Doctors in Spain have identified six more cases of possible infection, including a missionary priest who recently returned from Liberia and has shown signs of fever.

And in France, a nurse who had earlier helped treat a returning Ebola patient was taken to a military hospital with what an official called a "suspect fever" -- though initial tests for the virus came back negative.

In the United States, two nurses who treated a Liberian traveller have now fallen ill, to the embarrassment of health authorities, who faced questioning about how the disease had spread.

The first of them, Nina Pham, was transferred from Texas to the National Institutes of Health outside of Washington late Thursday. She wore a white protective suit as she stepped off a plane en route to one of the top US medical facilities.

In a brief video taken earlier while she was in Texas, Pham looked lucid and smiling as she spoke to her doctor.

"I love you guys," an emotional Pham says, as she wipes away tears.

Pham and the second infected US nurse were involved in the care of a Liberian man, Thomas Eric Duncan, who was the first Ebola case diagnosed in the United States.

He died of Ebola on October 8 at the Texas hospital

Nursing unions claim the Texas hospital where the caregivers work had been ill-prepared, and lawmakers are angry that one of the patients was allowed to take a domestic flight despite mild fever symptoms.

As of Sunday, 4,493 people had died out of a total of 8,997 cases in the outbreak, according to the WHO, which has warned that the infection rate could reach 10,000 a week by early December.

The vast majority of the cases have been in Liberia and its neighbours Sierra Leone and Guinea, which are also at the centre of WHO efforts to contain the disease.

Eleven other African countries had also been singled out for special assistance.

"We need to make sure it doesn't spread to other countries," Isabelle Nuttall, head of the WHO's alert and response arm, told reporters in Geneva.

Former UN secretary general Kofi Annan delivered stinging criticism of the world's response, charging that wealthy countries were slow to tackle the crisis because it began in Africa.

"If the crisis had hit some other region it probably would have been handled very differently," the Ghanaian diplomat told the flagship BBC programme Newsnight.

"In fact when you look at the evolution of the crisis, the international community really woke up when the disease got to America and Europe."

Airports in Britain, Canada and the United States have already introduced stepped-up screening of travellers arriving from West Africa.

Senior US lawmakers overseeing homeland security also joined calls Wednesday for a temporary ban on all travel from West Africa.

After convening the second Ebola crisis meeting in as many days at the White House, President Barack Obama said he had "no philosophical objection" to a ban, but added he did not think it would be that effective.

While WHO recommends exit screening of passengers from the badly affected countries, it does not recommend entry screening, although the organisation does not oppose it, Nuttall said.

She cautioned that such screening does not detect infected passengers who have not yet developed symptoms, warning they could "give a sense of false security".

But as the world scrambles to rein in the raging virus, UN rights chief Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein warned that respect for the rights of survivors and affected communities risked being sacrificed.

The Red Cross also urged the international community to focus less on dramatic actions like shutting airports and more on educating populations to use proper hygiene and avoid unsafe burials.

Nuttall also insisted the main focus needed to be on halting the epidemic where it was raging out of control.

"The problem of Ebola is in three countries in Africa," she said.

Since Ebola does not spread until symptoms appear, the WHO does not recommend isolating asymptomatic health workers who have had contact with Ebola patients, Nuttall said.

But they should monitor their temperatures and immediately isolate themselves if they spot symptoms.

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CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

Prime Minister Tony Abbott says sending Australians to Ebola zone would be irresponsible

Date:October 16, 2014/Dan Harrison, James Massola/smh.com.au

Prime Minister Tony Abbott has hit back at suggestions Australia is not doing enough to fight the growing threat of Ebola, declaring it would be "irresponsible" to send personnel to West Africa to combat the crisis until the government has an iron-clad guarantee that any health worker requiring treatment after becoming infected with the lethal virus would receive it from one of Australia's political allies.

As political bipartisanship over tackling the virus broke down, the federal government faced growing pressure from Labor, the Greens, health groups and aid organisations to bolster Australia's \$18 million financial contribution and provide medical and technical expertise.

But Mr Abbott hit back at criticism from the opposition on Thursday as he declared his reluctance to deploy Australians to tackle the deadly outbreak without a commitment from another nation close to the affected region that they would take evacuees who had become ill and needed treatment.

Health Minister Peter Dutton said an infected person would not survive the 30-hour flight to Australia if they were to contract the virus in West Africa. Government officials said it could take up to a week to evacuate an infected person to Australia.

Officials revealed diplomats have been seeking an agreement for weeks with counterparts in the US, Britain and Europe to take any Australians who may need to be evacuated after contracting the virus, or to provide treatment in the region. No nation has yet been willing to supply such a guarantee.

"I think it would be a little irresponsible of an Australian government to order Australian personnel into this dangerous situation if we didn't have effective risk mitigation strategies in place and at the moment there is no way of doing that," Mr Abbott said.

As the World Health Organisation warned the international community it had just 60 days to get the outbreak under control, authorities in the US scrambled to notify 131 passengers who shared a flight with a nurse who has come down with the virus in Dallas.

Labor's foreign affairs and health spokeswomen Tanya Plibersek and Catherine King on Thursday stepped up their criticism of the government's approach, saying Australia's financial contribution was "not nearly enough" and urging the deployment of skilled personnel such as medical assistance teams.

That call came despite the opposition having been briefed by government officials – including Australia's chief medical officer as well as senior defence and foreign affairs officials on October 1 – about the enormous logistical and medical challenges involved in retrieving an Australian team were one sent to West Africa and an infection occurred.

"Ms Plibersek needs to explain today what the evacuation plans would be, how it is that if a health worker contracted the Ebola virus they would receive medical treatment? Because if the advice is not available to government, I don't know how it is available to the opposition," Mr Dutton said.

Federal cabinet discussed the growing Ebola threat earlier this week. It has also been discussed at five national security committee meetings since August and it was discussed by the prime minister, state premiers and health ministers at the Council of Australian Governments meeting in Canberra on October 10, while passenger screening has also been stepped up at airports.

But Ms Plibersek said on Thursday she "simply could not believe" it was beyond Australia's capacity to strike a deal with a European partner or the US to provide treatment if an Australian health official were to become sick.

The US Ambassador to Australia, John Berry, said his country was working urgently to devise a system, through the WHO, to provide evacuation and treatment options for international workers who became infected with Ebola.

Britain, meanwhile, is preparing to deploy a naval hospital ship to Sierra Leone and is working with the US and France to construct facilities in West Africa to treat international personnel.

An estimated 30 Australian personnel are working in West Africa for organisations such as the Red

Cross and Medecins Sans Frontieres.

EU/AFRICA :

Ebola outbreak: EU calls for a review of screening in West African airports
independent.co.uk/17/10/2014

European Union health ministers have called for an immediate review of screening for Ebola at some West African airports, as the isolation of a plane in Madrid over a suspected case on board highlighted fears that the disease could spread to Europe.

Spanish authorities reported four new patients with suspected Ebola symptoms, including a Spanish priest who had recently been in Liberia and a passenger who became ill while on an Air France flight from Lagos via Paris.

The passengers were allowed to disembark at Madrid airport while the person was transferred to hospital for tests.

The drama unfolded as EU health ministers attended an extraordinary meeting in Brussels to forge a plan to tackle the disease, which has killed more than 4,500 people.

Tonio Borg, the EU's Health Commissioner, said they would coordinate with the World Health Organisation to ensure that protocol was being followed at airports in the worst-hit nations of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, as there had been reports of safety lapses.

The ministers also vowed to increase coordination between the 28 member states to raise awareness of Ebola at entry points into the EU, with information and questionnaires for passengers travelling from affected areas.

But they stopped short of ordering screening for the highly infectious disease in every country, leaving it up to individual nations. France became the second EU nation after the UK to announce screening, which will begin on Saturday at Paris's Charles de Gaulle airport.

"There was agreement that whilst the threat of Ebola to Europe remains low, it is sensible for states to take precautions to safeguard their own populations," said Britain's Health minister, Jane Ellison.

While there has only been one case of a person contracting Ebola within EU borders – a nurse in Madrid who treated two Spanish missionaries infected in West Africa – the ease with which people can move between EU countries is worrying some governments.

UN Ebola fund: The world falls short

A trust fund set up by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to raise \$1bn (£620m) to fight Ebola has only \$100,000 in the bank, he has said. Mr Ban said dozens of countries were "showing their solidarity", such as the UK, US and China, but other states with "the capacity" to help needed to do so.

Kofi Annan, the former UN Secretary-General, told the BBC's Newsnight he was "bitterly disappointed by the response" from developed countries. "If the crisis had hit some other region it

probably would have been handled very differently,” he said.

CHINA/AFRICA :

Kenya: China Pledges More Security Support for Kenya, Africa

By Kennedy Kangethe/Capital FM (Nairobi)/16 October 2014

Nairobi — The Chinese government has pledged continued support to Kenya and Africa on security issues, in a bid to promote peace and economic development on the continent.

Speaking on Thursday in Nairobi during the China-Africa Peace and Security Cooperation seminar, Chinese Ambassador to Kenya Liu Xianfa said a number of countries on the continent still face serious threats, such as escalating violence and armed conflicts, internal political turmoil, the spread of terrorism and extremism, interweaving of traditional and non-traditional security challenges and as a consequence, an alarming humanitarian crisis.

"Not a single country or continent can stay immune in the face of security problems. The achievement of long-term peace and security in Africa requires joint efforts of Africa and the international community," he said.

He however urged the international community to let African countries find their own solutions to their challenges.

He said that double standards and taking sides should be avoided, urging the international community not to pursue their own interests and political agenda by taking advantage of peace and security issues in Africa.

"It is the African people who understand the crux of the issues best. The international community should fully respect Africa's dignity and independence, support Africa to play the leading role and promote inclusive dialogue among relevant parties for seeking solutions acceptable by all parties concerned," he added.

With the theme "Peace and Security Cooperation: New Vista for Upgraded Version of China-Africa Cooperation," the seminar will hold an in-depth discussion on the current situation of peace and security in Africa, the opportunities and challenges facing China-Africa peace and security cooperation thus contributing to the long-term peace and stability and sustainable development of Africa.

This comes as Africa continues to face terror threats from various terror groups among them the Somalia based Al Shabaab.

Kenya has led in the war against terror within the East African region following numerous attacks in its capital city Nairobi and Mombasa County.

Kenya Defence Forces are under the Africa Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) fighting the militias in the Horn of Africa country.

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

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