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Page 1 of 6

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FROM: OULD CHEIKH AHMED, UNMEER, ACCRA

DATE: 16 February 2014

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SUBJECT: Mano River Union (MRU) Extraordinary Summit of  
Heads of State and Government on Ebola, Conakry,  
15 February 2015

1. At the invitation of President Alpha Condé of Guinea and the Secretary-General of the Mano River Union (MRU), Hajah Dr Saran Daraba Kaba, I participated in the Extraordinary Summit on Ebola of Heads of State and Government of the MRU which was held in Conakry, Republic of Guinea, on 15 February. The main objective was to establish a common MRU position in advance of the Conference on Ebola organized by the European Union on 3 March. Our invitation was extended in the context of the UN support to MRU Member States in their fight to overcome the broad challenges posed by the EVD to their societies, especially in relation to cross-border issues and the sub-regional dimension of the crisis.

2. President Alpha Condé of Guinea hosted the Summit as the current Chair of the MRU. In attendance were Presidents Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia and Ernest Bai Kormoa of Sierra Leone, as well the Minister of State, Minister for Foreign Affairs Charles Kiffy Diby who represented President Alassane Ouattara of Côte d'Ivoire. I was accompanied by the WHO Deputy Director General for Ebola, Mr. Bruce Aylward. Following the long-closed door meeting and their scheduled departure, the Heads of State did not address the plenary session. However, upon the request from President Condé among his peers, I made a statement on behalf of the United

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FEB 17 2015

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CGN-013 Page 2 of 6

Nations. This was the only statement made at the open session of the Summit, apart from the final Communique read by the MRU Secretary General.

3. The Summit adopted the attached Declaration of Heads of State presenting a harmonized approach towards the emergency fight against Ebola as well as for the post-Ebola socio-economic recovery. Key points emphasized in the Declaration include: (i) the adoption of a joint strategy to reach the target of 'Zero Ebola Infection' within 60 days, effective starting 15 February for the three countries; (ii) the request to international partners to 'plan/manage their exits responsibly', highlighting the concerns over donor fatigue; (iii) the common need for debt cancellation and budget support; (iv) the endorsement of the Post-Ebola Socio-Economic Frameworks adopted at Ministerial-level; and (v) welcoming the World Bank's proposal for a 'Post-Ebola Recovery Marshall Plan'.

4. In relation to the 'Marshall Plan', a consensus seems to have emerged in the closed-door discussions that favor from now on a sub-regional approach, by opposition to a country-by-country approach. The feeling was expressed that the divide of lead countries for Ebola-affected states according to historical lines had not facilitated enhanced solidarity across the three countries. Between the lines should therefore be read an unwritten agreement to favour a collective approach to the international support, with same treatment and donors working equally across all countries. This should be translated for example in the agreement to declare the crisis over only when all MRU affected countries have completed the required Ebola-free period.

5. In my statement, I commended the affected countries for the positive results achieved in the fight against Ebola and for the leadership of their leaders. I also recalled the UN continued commitment to assist in preserving the hard-won achievements and peace gains in the MRU Basin. I however underlined the need to maintain the momentum until the last case, since no country will be free until all are free of Ebola. To that end, I pleaded for reinforced cross-border cooperation and sub-regional approaches to fight Ebola as well as for preparing the post-Ebola recovery phase. I underlined the necessity of the engagement of local communities to reach long-lasting success in fighting against the epidemic and reiterated the UN readiness to support them through the post-Ebola recovery phase. In concluding, I highlighted the need, as the three countries are starting to show positive national-led results in their battle against Ebola and as we slowly move into the recovery phase, to start preparing for UNMEER transition plan with a progressive handover of capacities and resources to the UN agencies, funds and programs.



6. A two-day technical expert and ministerial meeting on 13-14 February organized by the MRU Secretariat had preceded the Summit. National delegations of experts from the Member States, with support by UN staff from the three countries, prepared two main documents for Ministerial endorsement in view of the Summit: (i) The "Getting to Zero Plan", an integrated and strategic Ebola response capability; and (ii) A Position Paper on a Sub-Regional Recovery Framework, to agree on top recovery priorities at sub-regional and national levels.

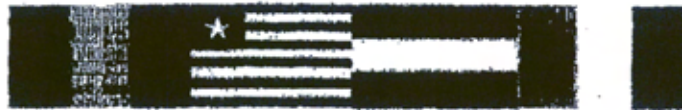
#### Observations

7. This Summit confirmed the strong will by the Heads of State of the MRU to show an enhanced solidarity and their determination to come up with a harmonized approach, especially in view of the 3 March Conference in Brussels. With the effective leadership of its current Chair, President Condé and under the key impulse of its Secretary General Ms. Daraba Kaba, the three countries are founding much hope on the "Marshall Plan" to be presented to the international partners. Illustrating this new sub-regional common resolve, President Johnson-Sirleaf was appointed by the Summit as Spokesperson for the MRU at the 3 March Conference in Brussels.

Best regards.

[Drafted by UNMEER/Guinea]

4 of 6



**DECLARATION OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE MANO  
RIVER UNION ON THE ERADICATION OF EBOLA AND POST EBOLA SOCIO  
ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

The Heads of State and Government of the Mano River Union (MRU), namely H.E. Professor Alpha CONDÉ, President of the Republic of Guinea, Chairman of the MRU and host of the Summit; H.E. Madam Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia; H.E. Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Minister Charles Koffi DIBY representing H.E. Alassane OUATTARA, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire met on 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2015 in Conakry, Republic of Guinea, to adopt common strategies to end the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) epidemic in the sub-region, and address the post Ebola socio-economic development recovery needs.

As a result of the one day working visit on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2015 to Liberia and Sierra Leone by H.E. Professor Alpha CONDE as Chairman of the MRU to discuss regional efforts to combat the EVD epidemic, they agreed to hold an Extraordinary Summit on 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2015 in Conakry, Republic of Guinea, to be preceded by a technical and ministerial meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2015 aimed at developing the sub-regional and country specific strategies.

The leaders expressed their deep condolences to the families of the victims across the three Countries especially those of the health personnel who were in the forefront of fighting the epidemic. Also, they expressed their concerns about the wellbeing of their populations and the risks associated with their development agendas.

Having reviewed the documents produced, the Heads of State and Government:

1. Recognized the efforts that have been made by the Member States and the international community, which have resulted in the decline of Ebola infections and death rates and



5 of 6

commit to achieving a "Zero Ebola Infection" within 60 days effective today 15 February 2015 and called upon the International Community to provide all necessary support to meet this objective;

2. Approved the strategy for reaching and sustaining zero Ebola infection in the sub-region with special emphasis on infection prevention control, social mobilization, community engagement, surveillance, cross border collaboration, instituting robust and sustainable social protection programmes, providing mental and psychosocial support and ensuring coordination;
3. Recognized that to get to and stay at zero will depend on their collective political will needed to provide the enabling environment to translate intervention strategies into actions;
4. Advocated that international partners should plan and manage their exits responsibly dictated by the epidemiology while ensuring that capacity is transferred adequately to national institutions; and achieve seamless flow of information amongst nations at all levels;
5. Endorsed the Post Ebola Socio-Economic Frameworks prepared by the Ministers in order to mobilize the required resources for implementation;
6. Noted the emphasis put on instituting sustainable healthcare delivery systems, reopening of educational institutions, revitalizing the agricultural sector, addressing the needs of women, children, youth, orphans, survivors and persons with disability, implementing the Mano River Union-African Development Bank Initiative on critical infrastructure needs and improving governance;
7. Directed the Ministers to harmonize and consolidate the regional and country specific documents, including the costs of interventions to be presented at the Brussels meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2015 with the aim of mobilizing the required support;
8. Welcomed planned meetings by bilateral and multilateral partners and urged them to adopt the MRU plan and country specific strategies and call upon them to go beyond bilateral ties and relationships in supporting the affected countries;
9. Welcomed the World Bank's proposal to establish a Post-Ebola Recovery Marshall Plan with dedicated resources. They agreed that this is the best way forward and urged the development partners to utilize country systems for disbursements and implementation of Post-Ebola Recovery activities;

6 of 6

10. Called strongly on the International Community to provide direct budget support and debt cancellation for the affected countries;
11. Called upon all partners to renew their commitment to mutual accountability and ensure full disclosure of all resources committed to the fight against Ebola;
12. Called on Development Partners to renew their commitments to the New Deal Principles and country-specific Mutual Accountability Frameworks as the main levers to guide post Ebola recovery interventions;
13. Agreed that in support of Post- Ebola Recovery Members States will allocate a proportion of their public investment to local Small and Medium Scale Enterprises. This decision will improve the resilience of their economies by supporting national production and creating employment opportunities; and
14. Appointed H.E. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf as Spokesperson for the MRU at the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2015 European Union Ebola Conference in Brussels.

The Heads of State and Government commended the MRU Secretariat for organizing and facilitating the Summit. They appreciated the solidarity manifested by Côte d'Ivoire through the ECOWAS Initiative in deploying healthcare workers to the affected Member States.

The Heads of States and Government thanked all airline carriers that have maintained flights to the affected countries and particularly commended Member State Côte d'Ivoire for the early resumption of Air Côte d'Ivoire flights and called on other regional carriers to emulate this good example.

President Madam Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia, President Dr Ernest Bai Koroma of Sierra Leone and Minister Charles Koffi DIBY representing President Alassane OUATTARA of Côte d'Ivoire, renewed to President Alpha CONDE of Guinea their friendship and solidarity and thanked him for hosting the Summit.

His Excellency Professor Alpha CONDE thanked his colleagues for the honour vested on his country to host the extraordinary Summit as a cornerstone in strengthening the friendship and kinship that unite their peoples and enable them to stand together.