



**Telecommunication
Development Bureau (BDT)**

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Geneva, 17 July 2015

ITU Member States (African Region)
ITU-D Sector Members (Africa Region)

Subject: Invitation to the Regional Ministerial Consultative Meeting on Ebola: Leveraging Information and Communication Technology to Save Lives. Freetown, Sierra Leone, 26-27 August 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have the pleasure of inviting you to participate in the Regional Ministerial Consultative Meeting on Ebola: *Leveraging Information and Communication Technology to Save Lives*, which will be held in Freetown, Sierra Leone from 26 to 27 August 2015. The event is being held pursuant to ITU Plenipotentiary Conference Resolution 202 (Busan, 2014) on "*Using information and communication technologies (ICTs) to break the chain of health-related emergencies such as Ebola virus transmission*". The Meeting will build on the outcomes of the recently concluded

International Ebola Recovery Conference held at the United Nations Headquarters, New York.

The meeting which is co-organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Government of Sierra Leone in consultation with the Governments of Liberia and Guinea, will bring together ministers of information and communication technology, and ministers of health, directors-general of telecommunication regulatory authorities, representatives of international organizations, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the general public. The meeting will provide a unique opportunity for governments and other stakeholders to share experiences and map strategies.

Participants will also witness the launch of an ITU big data project aimed at enhancing response efforts to the Ebola outbreak which so far has claimed more than 11'000 lives in West Africa. In addition, the project will be used to support future epidemic outbreak response efforts. Furthermore, ITU will launch an upgrade of the Ebola-Info-Sharing Application which provides a platform for information sharing, awareness raising and field operation coordination.

The meeting will be held in both English and French with simultaneous interpretation. The agenda of the meeting and an information note are hereto attached for ease of reference. Registration can be done online by visiting: <http://www.itu.int/go/regitud>. Participants will have the option to register at the venue of the event.

The Government of Sierra Leone and the International Telecommunication Union kindly request that this invitation also be extended to the minister of health of your country. I look forward to your participation and invaluable contribution at this important meeting.

Yours faithfully,



Brahima Sanou
Director

Annexes: Information Note
 Draft programme



***Regional Ministerial Consultative Meeting on Ebola:
Leveraging Information and Communication Technology to Save Lives***

Freetown, Sierra Leone 26 - 27 August 2015)

(Bintumani Conference Centre, Aberdeen, Freetown)

Background

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the Ebola virus causes an acute, serious illness which is often fatal if untreated. Ebola virus disease (EVD) first appeared in 1976 in 2 simultaneous outbreaks, one in Nzara, Sudan, and the other in Yambuku, Democratic Republic of Congo. The latter occurred in a village near the Ebola River, from which the disease takes its name.

The current outbreak in West Africa, (first cases notified in March 2014), is the largest and most complex Ebola outbreak since the Ebola virus was first discovered in 1976. There have been more cases and deaths in this outbreak than all others combined. It has also spread between countries starting in Guinea then spreading across land borders to Sierra Leone and Liberia, by air (1 traveller) to Nigeria and USA (1 traveller), and by land to Senegal (1 traveller) and Mali (2 travellers).

The most severely affected countries, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, have very weak health systems, lack human and infrastructural resources, and have only recently emerged from long periods of conflict and instability. On 8 August 2014, the WHO Director-General declared the West Africa outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern under the International Health Regulations (2005).

The virus family Filoviridae includes three genera: Cuevavirus, Marburgvirus, and Ebolavirus. There are five species that have been identified: Zaire, Bundibugyo, Sudan, Reston and Taï Forest. The first three, Bundibugyo ebolavirus, Zaire ebolavirus, and Sudan ebolavirus have been associated with large outbreaks in Africa. The virus causing the 2014 West African outbreak belongs to the Zaire species.

DRAFT PROGRAMME

Day One, Wednesday 26 August 2015	
08:00-09:00	Registration
09:00-10:00	Opening Ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Momoh Konte, Chairman/Commissioner, National Telecommunications Commission, Sierra Leone • H.E. Dr Abu Bakar Fofanah, Minister of Health and Sanitation, Sierra Leone • H.E. Mr Alpha Kanu, Minister of Information and Communications, Sierra Leone • H.E. Mr Oyé Guilavogui, Minister of Posts, Telecommunications and New Information Technologies, Government of Guinea • H.E. Dr Frederick B. Norkeh, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications Government of Liberia • International Telecommunication Union (ITU) • H.E. Mr Ernest Bai Koroma, President of Sierra Leone
10:00-10:15	Group Photo
10:15-10:30	<i>Coffee break</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">MINISTERIAL ROUND TABLE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Country Cases – Past, Present and Future Plans</p> <p><i>This session will look at how affected countries have responded to the Ebola crisis and how they have, and plan to enhance preparedness, response and risk reduction</i></p>	
10:30-12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Dr Abu Bakar Fofanah, Minister of Health and Sanitation, Sierra Leone • H.E. Dr Bernice T. Dahn, Minister of Health, Liberia • H.E. Dr. Colonel Rémy Lamah, Minister of Health, Guinea • H.E. Prof Onyebuchi Chukwu, Minister of Health, Nigeria • H.E. Dr Raymonde Goudou Coffie, Minister of Health, Ivory Coast • H.E. Ms Awa Marie Coll Seck, Minister of Health, Senegal • H.E. Dr Félix Kabange Numbi Mukwampa, Minister of Health, Democratic Republic of Congo • H.E. Prof Dorothy Kinde Akoko-Gazard, Minister of Health, Benin • H.E. Dr Ousmane Koné, Minister of Health, Mali • Chief Executive Officer. National Ebola Response Centre, Sierra Leone • World Health Organization Representative (Sierra Leone) • Discussions
12:30-14:00	<i>Lunch break</i>

Country Cases – Past, Present and Future Plans

This session will focus on country experiences in the deployment of information and communication technology to respond to and prepare for the Ebola virus

14:00-15:45

- H.E. Mr Alpha Kanu, Minister of Information and Communications
Sierra Leone
 - H.E. Dr Frederick B. Norkeh, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, Liberia
 - H.E. Mr Oyé Guilavogui, Minister, Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and New Information Technologies, Guinea
 - H.E. Mrs Omobola Johnson, Minister of Communication Technology, Nigeria
 - H.E. Mr Bruno Nabagné Kone, Minister of Post and Information and Communication Technology, Ivory Coast
 - H.E. Mr Yaya Abdoul Kane, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, Senegal
 - H.E. Mr Thomas Luhaka Losenjola, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Posts, Telecommunications and NTIC, Democratic Republic of Congo
 - H.E. Mr Etienne Kossi Minister of Communication and Information and Communication Technologies (MCTIC), Benin
 - H.E. Dr Choguel Kokalla Maïga, Minister of Digital Economy, Information and Communication, Mali
 - International Telecommunication Union
- Discussions

15:45-16:00

Coffee break

Regional Perspectives

This session will provide International and Regional Organizations with an opportunity to discuss their role in dealing with the Ebola virus and highlight the need for coordination

16:00-17:30

- Representative of ECOWAS
 - Representative of UNICEF
 - Representative of World Bank
 - Ebola Czar, Liberia
 - Secretary-General – Mano River
 - Representative of CTO
 - Representative of WATRA
- Discussions

17:30-18:00

Wrap up by Chairman and closing

18:00

Day Two, Thursday 27 August 2015	
ICTs IN ACTION	
BIG DATA ANALYSIS AND ITS USE FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS <i>The session will focus on the role of Information and Communication Technology and how Big Data Analysis can help in awareness raising, and managing outbreaks during a disaster.</i>	
09:00- 10:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by ITU on the role of ICT for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Discussions
10:15-10:30	<i>Coffee break</i>
PARTNERSHIPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS <i>This session will discuss the importance of coordination by multi-stakeholders using ICT</i>	
10:30-12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives of Mobile Network Operators • Dr Tom Obale Kargbo, Chairman, National Telecommunications Commission (NATCOM), Sierra Leone • Regulatory Authority (Liberia) • M. Moustapha Mamy Diaby, Director General, Regulatory Authority for Post and Telecommunications (ARPT), Guinea • Dr Eugene Juwah, Executive Vice Chairman/CEO, Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Nigeria • M. Abdou Karim Sall, Director General, Regulatory Authority for Telecommunications and Post (ARTP), Senegal • Discussions
12:30-14:00	<i>Lunch break</i>
EBOLA INFORMATION SHARING APPLICATION AND CALL DATA RECORDS PROJECT During this session ITU will present a new project on big data based on Call Data Records (CDRs) and a Smartphone application that has been developed by ITU in cooperation with WHO. Its purpose is to share information on Ebola related issues, national and other contacts, news, locations of field and mobile health units, etc.	
14:00-15:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITU Presentation of Big Data use for preparedness, and response to Ebola virus and Epidemics • ITU Demonstration of the Ebola Information Sharing App
15:45-16:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
Open Discussions and Way Forward <i>This is an open discussion session that will provide comments on the ITU project and the ITU App. Discussions will also focus on the scaling of the project</i>	
16:00-16:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITU Summarizes the Way Forward on the big data/Call Data Records • Discussions • Presentation of Summary
16:30-17:00	Closing Ceremony