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Press Release

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On August 1, 2018, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) Ministry of Health declared an outbreak of Ebola. One year later, the outbreak continues in North Kivu and Ituri provinces, areas where there are outbreaks of violence, armed conflict, and other unprecedented problems that complicate public health response activities and increase the risk of disease spread both within DRC and to neighboring countries. As of July 31, a total of 2,713 cases, including 148 in healthcare workers, and 1,813 deaths have been reported.

As cases of Ebola continued to increase in the eastern region of DRC, and travel-associated cases were reported in neighboring Uganda, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization (WHO) on July 17 declared the outbreak a “public health emergency of international concern” (PHEIC).

Despite the continuing challenges, DRC and international partners including the U.S. government continue to mount a robust response in an effort to end the outbreak. More than 171,000 people have been vaccinated using an investigational Ebola vaccine, including frontline healthcare workers and other people who are at risk for Ebola, such as contacts of known Ebola cases. Border health officials have screened an estimated 79 million people at regional airports and at busy land borders between DRC and neighboring countries. Aside from the isolated cluster of three travel-related cases in Uganda with no further transmission in that country, and one travel-related incident with a fish trader who crossed into Uganda and then returned to DRC, no additional cases have been reported outside of DRC, and the risk of global spread of Ebola remains low.

On June 13, 2019, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) activated its Emergency Operations Center to support the US government response to the outbreak. CDC subject matter experts are working with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

partners, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) on the ground in the DRC, and the American Embassy in Kinshasa to support the Congolese and international response. CDC has sent more than 200 experts in epidemiology, case management, infection prevention and control, laboratory science, border health measures, risk communication, community engagement, information technology, emergency management, and logistics to DRC, countries bordering the outbreak area, and WHO headquarters. A total of 294 more CDC staff have supported the response from the agency's Atlanta headquarters and CDC country offices in DRC and neighboring countries.

"As the WHO PHEIC declaration makes clear, this Ebola outbreak continues to be a complex and serious public health threat," said CDC Director Robert R. Redfield, MD. "CDC remains prepared for the prolonged journey ahead and remains committed to working with our U.S. government and international partners to support the response and end this outbreak."

One year into the fight against Ebola, CDC and the U.S. government remain committed to working with and empowering the ministries of health of DRC and neighboring countries, in collaboration with other international partners, to ensure the outbreak response is well coordinated to stop the spread of disease and end the outbreak. CDC is committed to strengthening the healthcare system in DRC to help reduce the risk of future outbreaks, not only of Ebola, but of other diseases such as HIV, measles, tuberculosis, and malaria. CDC's commitment to global health goes hand in hand with CDC's commitment to the safety and security of the American public.

For more information about the current outbreak in DRC:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/drc/2018-august.html>

For more information about Ebola: <https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/>

For travel health information: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/alert/ebola-democratic-republic-of-the-congo>; <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/democratic-republic-of-congo>

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