

Avoid Ebola panic and fear: UN chief

August 12 2014

Urging governments to avoid panic and fear, UN chief Ban Ki-moon announced plans on Tuesday to step up the global response to the Ebola outbreak and bring it under control.

Ban appointed British physician David Nabarro to be the UN coordinator for Ebola, tasked with overseeing the world body's strategy as the death toll from the outbreak topped 1,000.

"We need to avoid panic and fear. Ebola can be prevented," Ban told reporters at UN headquarters in New York.

"With resources, knowledge, early action and will, people can survive the disease.

"Ebola has been successfully brought under control elsewhere and we can do it here too."

Nabarro brings much experience to the challenge of stamping out Ebola, having led the UN response to the avian flu and SARS health crises in 2006 and 2003.

The epidemic that began in Guinea, and spread to Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria, has been described as the worst since Ebola was first discovered four decades ago.

It has killed 1,013 people, including a Spanish priest who on Tuesday became the first European to succumb to the outbreak that began earlier

this year. An American woman infected in Liberia is recovering in a US hospital.

"In the days ahead, the UN system will further strengthen the way we are dealing with the outbreak," the UN secretary-general said.

He cited the urgent need to address the shortage of doctors, nurses and equipment, including protective clothing and isolation tents, especially in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

"We need all hands on deck," said Ban.

The World Health Organization has authorized the use of experimental drugs to fight Ebola including a serum used to treat Spanish priest Miguel Pajares, who died in a Madrid hospital on Tuesday after contracting the disease in Liberia.

The WHO has declared the outbreak a "[public health emergency](#) of international concern."

© 2014 AFP

Citation: Avoid Ebola panic and fear: UN chief (2014, August 12) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-08-ebola-panic-chief.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--