

EU offers extra 8mn euros, new mobile lab, to fight Ebola

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The European Union on Friday allocated an extra eight million euros (\$10 million) and a new mobile laboratory to help fight the Ebola outbreak spiralling out of control in West Africa.

The new funds bring total European Commission funding for the crisis to 11.9 million euros.

"We are determined to fight the further spread of the deadly epidemic. Many lives depend on our immediate assistance," said the EU's Humanitarian Aid Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva.

A second EU-provided mobile laboratory is to be deployed in the coming days, most likely to Sierra Leone, to help diagnostics and testing.

The additional funding, the fourth tranche of EU assistance for the crisis, was drawn from the European Development Fund, according to the bloc's Development Commissioner Andris Piebalgs.

The World Health Organization on Friday declared the killer epidemic ravaging parts of west Africa an international health emergency and appealed for global aid to help afflicted countries, where nearly 1,000 people have died.

States of emergency have been declared in the hardest hit countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, while two people have died in Nigeria and Benin is investigating a suspect patient.

In the first European case, Spain is treating an elderly priest who contracted the disease while helping patients in Liberia.

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