

Germany, France plan air lifts to help fight Ebola

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Germany and France will send military transport planes to West Africa to help efforts to contain the Ebola epidemic, Chancellor Angela Merkel and military officials said on Friday.

Merkel said Germany "will establish airlifts from Dakar (Senegal) from where deliveries can be made to all three countries, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea".

She said Berlin would also supply a mobile clinic and could train medical personnel.

Government ministries were still discussing the details of the mission, she said, adding that "it's currently not a question of money, but of capacity and logistics".

A Bundeswehr spokesman told AFP that Germany, in cooperation with France, plans to send up to 100 troops and four Transall C-160 planes to a base in Dakar, or alternatively Bamako, Mali.

"Germany and France have agreed to establish a joint airlift," he said, following a Paris meeting of defence ministers Ursula von der Leyen of Germany and France's Jean-Yves Le Drian.

"The objective is to build a logistics chain from Germany," he said, explaining that the airlift could move about 100 tonnes of medical and aid supplies per week.

Merkel expressed concern at the "dramatic course" Ebola has taken and said bilateral aid was needed because the multilateral organisations can not contain the rapid spread of the disease on their own.

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