

Nigeria Ebola free, president tells UN

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President Goodluck Jonathan appeared to jump the gun on medical advice at home on Wednesday to tell an applauding UN General Assembly that Nigeria was free of the deadly Ebola virus.

"We can confidently say that today Nigeria is Ebola free," Jonathan told the largest diplomatic gathering in the world to a ripple of applause at UN headquarters in New York.

"Nigeria is Ebola free," he said a second time to further applause.

Nigeria has contributed \$3.5 million towards helping Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea countering Ebola, by providing training and capacity building, he said.

Doctors said earlier they would have to wait to declare the outbreak over despite the Nigerian federal health ministry saying all patients being monitored for the virus had been cleared.

The World Health Organization says eight people have died out of 20 confirmed cases in Nigeria since July.

The Nigerian government has given a lower figure of seven deaths in 19 cases.

"The outbreak in Nigeria can be declared officially over only if there are no more cases after 42 days," the head of the Emergency Operation Centre for Ebola in Lagos, Faisal Shuaib, said earlier in an email.

"Or two incubation periods from the last confirmed case," he added.

Nigeria has not reported any new cases since September 8, the WHO said. If there are no further cases, Nigeria could be declared Ebola-free on October 20.

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