

EU calls for 5,000 doctors to fight Ebola

November 26 2014

The European Commission called for 5,000 doctors to be sent from EU states to combat west Africa's Ebola epidemic, a European source with knowledge of the matter said on Wednesday.

"The situation is too serious and it needs an immediate response," the source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told AFP, adding that senior EU officials were in contact with national governments to mobilise the response.

"Thousands of other medical caregivers were also being called for," the source said.

In a tweet, EU Health Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis said he had so far reached 14 EU ministers, urging them to send more medical staff to Ebola-hit countries.

"Positive responses," he added, without providing more details.

The source said the EU's Ebola coordinator, Christos Stylianides, was also reaching out to ministers, with more funds and logistic materials on the list of demands.

European officials were casting a wide net, asking for medical staff directly from national authorities as well as volunteers operating through charities.

Asked to confirm the demand for doctors, Commission spokesman

Enrico Brivio said that while needs were urgent, "it wasn't for the Commission to recommend the number of Europeans engaged in the Ebola response."

Earlier this month, Andriukaitis and Stylianides took part in a joint trip to the three worst hit West African countries: Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea.

Upon their return, the officials made an immediate call for epidemiologists to do more to diagnose and track the disease's progression.

The EU as a whole has so far mobilised more than one billion euros (\$1.3 billion) for the fight against Ebola, including 373 million euros from the Commission, the EU's executive arm in Brussels.

Ebola has killed nearly 5,500 people and infected 15,351, mainly in west Africa, according to the latest figures from the World Health Organization.

© 2014 AFP

Citation: EU calls for 5,000 doctors to fight Ebola (2014, November 26) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-11-eu-doctors-ebola.html>

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.