

# Collective vigilance key to eliminating Ebola

The Government of Uganda deserves commendation for deploying over 150 specialised medics to DRC to combat the ongoing Ebola outbreak. This proactive regional intervention is an act of neighbourly solidarity and a strategic masterstroke. By establishing 50-bed treatment units and strengthening surveillance at the source, Uganda is effectively building a firewall, preventing further cross-border importation of the deadly virus into our communities.

As of Friday, we had not recorded any new cases for a week, having had 19 cases, including two deaths (all Congolese who crossed the border), in nearly a month. DRC has had 635 confirmed infections, including 127 deaths, since the outbreak was announced on May 15.

We also salute the volunteer health workers stepping into this breach. Choosing to

serve on the frontline of a highly contagious haemorrhagic fever is a decision only true heroes make. Their selfless sacrifice ensures that the rest of the country remains safer, actively shielding our families by neutralising the threat before it breaches our borders.

However, this external deployment will only be effective if we match it with strict domestic discipline. We, therefore, urge all Ugandans, especially clerics, healthcare workers, and residents in border districts, to abandon all carelessness.

Religious leaders can pray for their followers without physical contact, health workers should strictly adhere to infection prevention protocols and border communities must report suspicious illnesses immediately. Also, the rest of us must avoid consuming bush meat and participating in traditional burial practices that accelerate transmission.

When we rigorously follow healthy ministry-approved standard operating procedures, we will stop the virus in its tracks because the consequences of allowing it to gain a foothold on our soil are far-reaching.

Collective vigilance will defend us all from Ebola. However, this vigilance starts with you!



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