



3 March 2015 – "The international community must 'stay the course' on getting to and staying at zero, as well as on supporting those affected by the disease", stated [UNDP Administrator Helen Clark at today's high-level conference on Ebola in Brussels](#)

□
The conference, which is co-chaired by the United Nations, will focus on support for Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone to overcome and recover from the Ebola crisis.□

Ms Helen Clark started her opening speech by commending the leadership and the communities and people of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone who, with the support of regional and international partners, succeeded in turning the tide on Ebola.

"Without their efforts, we would be in no position to talk about a transition to recovery today", the UNDP Administrator added.

According to the latest numbers of the [World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](#) , the Ebola virus has

already infected around 23,729 people, and killed at least 9,604 of them. A staggering 99,8 per cent of those deaths were registered in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.

"These human tragedies are compounded by the destruction of livelihoods and damage to the economies of the three epicentre countries, which were growing at encouraging rates only a year ago", Ms Helen Clark continued, adding that "the response is working" and "the tide is turning".

"Infection rates have plummeted in Liberia and have declined since late last year in Guinea and Sierra Leone – although the road to zero is still bumpy. Guinea and Liberia have reopened schools, and Sierra Leone is preparing to move in that direction."

Building resilience

In addition, Ms Helen Clark underlined the need to support the three countries so that "the serious development setbacks they have experienced are as short lived as possible."

According to the UNDP Administrator, the necessary actions will for example include meeting the needs of Ebola survivors and other vulnerable groups most directly affected by the impact of the disease for social protection and psychosocial support.

Next to this, basic health services need to be restored and strengthened, water and sanitation provision extended, schools supported, and living conditions in informal settlements improved. Ms Clark also stressed that the wave of empowerment of local communities in the response to Ebola must be sustained in the recovery phase.

"We also need to ensure that recovery efforts address the drivers of the fragility which produced the crisis, including by building resilient institutions and systems and improved services, and by prioritising human development and citizen empowerment."

Today's high-level conference on Ebola gathered numerous representatives and prominent speakers from all over the world in the Egmont Palace. More information will be released at the press conference held at 5.30pm.

Related Stories

[New Ebola Cases Reaching Record Low](#)

[Ebola kicked out from Kailahun, Sierra Leone](#)

Or check out the [UNRIC Library Backgrounder on Ebola](#) !