

# UPDATE ON EBOLA

We are fully aware of the severity of the Ebola crisis and continue to monitor the situation as well as, WHO guidelines and measures taken by the South African government on a daily basis. Please see below the latest information regarding the status of Ebola in South Africa and the precautions taken to protect visitors. We will be keeping close watch and will update this site with any further information.

## Measures taken by the Government of South Africa

As South Africa does not share a border with any affected countries, and with (South Africa) being 4800 km away from any Ebola affected countries, the risk of Ebola spreading here is low. No case of Ebola has been reported so far in South Africa.

The South African government has taken measures to prevent it spreading to the country by implementing the following:

- All travellers and crew members arriving into South African Points of Entry must have completed a **Travel Health questionnaire upon arrival**. If found to have any of the symptoms or signs suggestive of Ebola, they will be referred to one of the designated hospitals for further investigations and management.
- Non-South African citizens arriving from Ebola-affected areas of West Africa will not be allowed into the country, **with borders closed to people from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone**; South African nationals will be allowed to re-enter the country when returning from high-risk countries, but will undergo strict screening.
- Passengers who travelled from or through Guinea, Liberia or Sierra Leone within the last month of arrival into South Africa must undergo additional screening at the Points of Entry.
- **All non-essential outgoing travel to the affected countries has been banned**; travellers wishing to go to the affected areas have to apply for authorisation with the South African government
- **Increased surveillance has been set up at ports of entry**: Tambo and Lanseria international airports in Johannesburg have had thermal scanners installed to monitor the temperatures of all people entering the country, and 270 health officials working at nine high-risk ports of entry have been trained; port health services, and public and private healthcare practitioners, have been put on high alert for any ill person who has travelled to Ebola risk areas.

- The government has set up **outbreak response teams in all provinces**, while 25 healthcare workers have been trained on the Ebola virus disease in each of the 51 municipal districts; the national department of health also holds teleconferences with provinces every week to discuss the situation on the ground.
- The cabinet has approved R32.5 million (US\$2.9million) to support South Africa's preparedness and response activities

For more information on the South African Government's response please read: <http://www.gov.za/speeches/view.php?sid=47819>

## Arriving in Johannesburg

All visitors arriving to OR Tambo airport will complete a Travel Health questionnaire upon arrival. If found to have any of the symptoms or signs suggestive of Ebola, they will be referred to Charlotte Maxeke or Steve Biko Hospital for further investigations and management. These two hospitals have been designated to manage Ebola cases: a quarantine ward has been set up and the hospital has been supplied with personal protective equipment comprising special overalls, overshoes, masks, gloves, aprons and goggles.

## Attendee advice

Ebola is very low risk for most travelers as it is spread through direct contact with the blood or other body fluids of a sick person. Travelers can protect themselves by avoiding affected people and hospitals in West Africa where patients with Ebola are being treated. Currently the Ebola epidemic affects Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia.

As is customary we recommend the following basic hygiene precautions when at an event attended by a large number of people: wash hands thoroughly and regularly with warm soapy water or using alcohol-based solutions. Hand sanitizing gel dispensers will be provided in the conference rooms and in the exhibition, in addition to the hand-washing facilities in the SCC bathrooms. Some people may prefer not to shake hands.

In the unlikely event of displaying symptoms of Ebola (sudden high fever, extreme tiredness, headache, body pain, loss of appetite, sore throat, diarrhoea, vomiting, stomach pain, rash, or red eyes) while at the event, avoid contact with other people and seek medical care immediately.

