

UNITED ASSISTANCE INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

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(U) Executive Summary: *There has been no significant reporting in the last 24 hours and the security situation in Liberia will likely remain stable in the near term. Some Liberian press outlets continue to issue conspiracy theories on the spread of Ebola, which Western media have debunked, but which may gain traction among the fearful populace. In Sierra Leone, concerns over food insecurity are increasing as many farmers have stopped work, which could lead to increased calls for international food assistance in the coming weeks. The international community continues to ramp up aid, including specialized workers, but the pace of contributions has not yet kept up with the spread of the epidemic.*

**(U) Liberia**

**(U) Liberian President Issues Global Plea for Assistance:** On 19 October, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf released a letter to the world urging assistance from every nation to help with the fight against Ebola. The letter requests assistance with emergency funds, medical supplies, and clinical expertise. *President Sirleaf's plea for help is a continuation of her calls for assistance since the epidemic began. This suggests the situation is not yet under control and international assistance has not reached the levels needed to contain the epidemic.*

**(U) Australian Woman Volunteering to Help Fight Ebola:** On 19 October, *Northern Star* reported that an epidemiologist from Ballina, Australia named Barbara Telfer volunteered to help fight Ebola. Telfer is a part of Doctors Without Borders in Liberia and stated she was motivated to volunteer by humanitarian, ethical, and professional reasons. *Press coverage of Telfer's volunteering could influence other medical professionals to do the same. Ebola-affected countries remain understaffed; an influx of medical professionals would contribute to improving efforts to contain the epidemic.*

**(U) JOA**

**(U) Ebola Threatens Food Security:** On 19 October, press reporting alleged the Ebola epidemic in West Africa could complicate efforts to feed many of Africa's poor. An estimated 40% of farmers in Sierra Leone have abandoned their farms. This figure does not include farms inactive before the outbreak. According to Kanayo Nwanze, president of the UN's International Fund for Agricultural Development, this trend needs to reverse quickly before the next planting/harvesting season or it could lead to "a hunger crisis of epic scale in West Africa." *Food insecurity continues to pose a threat to West Africa, especially those countries hardest hit by Ebola. As the crisis persists, this could spark calls for international NGO and governmental aid, potentially including military aid, in assisting food assistance and distribution.*

**(U) Ebola-Stricken Countries Will Not Participate in International Telecommunications Union Conference:** On 18 October, South Korea's Technology Ministry announced that Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea will not send representatives to the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) conference in the coming days in an effort to prevent the spread of Ebola. *This case is representative of global concerns and discussions over how to best contain the epidemic, and which travel safety measures should be taken to prevent spread of the disease. Continuing concern about the potential for imported cases may lead to global transit restrictions, which would further isolate the heavily affected countries and complicate transportation in the region, including repatriation of international health workers and others involved in the EVD response effort.*

(U) **British Nurse Who Contracted Ebola to Return to Sierra Leone:** William Pooley, the British nurse who contracted Ebola and was given the experimental drug Z-Mapp, is set to return to Freetown, Sierra Leone as soon as his new passport is ready. Pooley was treated at a specialist isolation unit at London's Royal Free Hospital, and was fortunate to receive treatment before the disease caused internal or external bleeding. Pooley plans to return to Freetown's Connaught Hospital, where he will train staff and set up new isolation units. *While only a single individual, this story is getting global media attention and provides another example of how Ebola survivors, believed to now be immune to this EVD strain, are contributing to the counter-Ebola campaign. As the UK continues to provide significant support to Sierra Leone, other countries may be influenced to help or to provide additional support in the global fight against the disease.*

(U) **Worldwide**

(U) **WHO Declares Senegal “Ebola Free;” Nigeria is Next:** The WHO uses the generally accepted period of 42 days--twice the incubation period of the virus--to determine the end of an outbreak in a country. This declaration is only made 42 days after the last known high-risk exposure individual has tested negative and no new cases have been reported. The WHO declared Senegal virus-free on 17 October. If no additional cases are reported in Nigeria, the WHO is set to declare Nigeria virus-free on 20 October. According to WHO statistics, Senegal had 1 confirmed case of Ebola, who survived; Nigeria had 20 cases (19 confirmed, 1 probable) with 8 deaths.

(U) **China Increases Response:** On 17 October, China announced an aid package worth \$16.3 million, which includes experts traveling to Ebola-affected countries to train 10,000 medical personnel and community workers. China has already sent 200 Chinese medical staff to West Africa and provided \$49 million this year. *China stepping up its contributions is a positive sign which may encourage other donations, and also probably stems in part from Beijing's desire to protect its economic relationship with Liberia.*

(U) **Weather**

(U) Liberia will again see heavy rains during the afternoon on the 20<sup>th</sup> and through the evening; up to an inch can be expected in Monrovia. *This return to heavy rain will bring periods of unfavorable conditions of travel for “all-weather” roads and make unimproved roads difficult to traverse.* After the 21<sup>st</sup> at around 18Z weather in Liberia will turn more favorable. As we continue to move toward the dry season, rain will come in waves instead of the nearly constant rain seen earlier in the month.

(U) Conakry and Freetown will also see increased rain and thunderstorms during the afternoon of the 20<sup>th</sup> and into the 21<sup>st</sup>.

