

African Union Holds Emergency Meeting on Ebola



Addis Ababa, September 9 (RHC)-- The African Union held an emergency meeting on the Ebola outbreak in West Africa on Monday in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital.

Officials at the meeting said that border closures, flight bans and mass quarantines are creating a sense of siege in the West African countries affected by Ebola, as Senegal agreed to allow humanitarian aid pass through its closed borders.

The largest Ebola outbreak ever has killed more than 2,000 people and public health officials say it is out of control. But they have criticized some of the more extreme efforts to slow the disease's spread, saying that border closures have hampered the response by holding up shipments of aid.

They have also noted that, in a highly mobile region like West Africa with several unofficial border crossings, closing frontiers is usually ineffective. Reports say that the current Ebola outbreak began in Guinea and quickly spread across the border into Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Some countries have also cordoned off entire towns or counties in an effort to slow the disease's spread, but those measures have kept farmers from their fields, slowed the delivery of food and forced markets to close down. The United Nations has said that around 1.3 million people in those isolated areas will need food

assistance in the coming months.

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