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PRESS STATEMENT

HEALTH ALERT: EBOLA CASE IN NIGERIA AND THE URGENT NEED TO STRENGTHEN GHANA'S HEALTH PREPAREDNESS

26th October 2026.

1. The confirmation of an imported Ebola virus disease case in Nigeria raises serious public health concerns for Ghana and the wider West African subregion. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Nigeria confirmed a case involving the Bundibugyo Ebola virus on 20th October 2026. Subsequent genomic analysis indicates that the virus is closely related to the strain identified in Kenya. Although this does not establish direct transmission between the two countries, it reinforces concerns about the potential for cross-border disease spread.

2. Ghana must recognise that infectious diseases do not respect national boundaries. Our extensive regional travel networks, commercial activities and population movements create potential pathways for disease transmission. The lessons of previous Ebola outbreaks demonstrate that early detection, effective surveillance and rapid response remain our strongest safeguards against a public health emergency.

3. I acknowledge the Ministry of Health's announcement of intensified surveillance and preparedness measures, including enhanced monitoring at Kotoka International Airport. While these interventions are commendable, preparedness must extend beyond official announcements to demonstrable operational readiness across our health system.

4. I therefore call on the Government, through the Ministry of Health and Ghana Health Service, to urgently strengthen surveillance at all major points of entry, particularly land borders; activate regional and district rapid response teams; assess the readiness of designated isolation and treatment facilities; and ensure adequate supplies of personal protective equipment, diagnostic materials and infection prevention resources.

5. Equally important is the protection of frontline healthcare workers. Government must prioritise practical training, emergency simulation exercises, laboratory preparedness and clear referral protocols. Adequate financial resources must be released promptly to support these interventions rather than waiting until a confirmed case exposes weaknesses in our preparedness.

6. Public communication must also remain timely, transparent and evidence-based. Ghanaians should be educated on Ebola symptoms, preventive measures and appropriate reporting channels without creating unnecessary fear. Regional collaboration with WHO, the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention and

neighbouring countries must be strengthened to facilitate information sharing and coordinated responses.

7. It is particularly concerning that, since concerns were raised in my statement on 27th March 2026 regarding Ghana's public health emergency preparedness, there has been insufficient publicly demonstrated progress in addressing the issues highlighted. This raises legitimate questions about the Government's commitment to financing health emergency preparedness. **Is the Government unwilling to spend on preventive measures, or have the necessary resources simply not been prioritised?** The Minister for Health must provide Parliament and the Ghanaian public with a clear account of the funds allocated, released and utilised for emergency preparedness, together with evidence of the operational improvements achieved since March 2026. Public health security must be measured by concrete action, not assurances alone.

8. As of the latest official Ghanaian update, no Ebola case has been confirmed in Ghana. This should provide reassurance but not encourage complacency. I urge the Government to treat the developments in Nigeria as an opportunity to demonstrate genuine national readiness. Ghana must not wait for its first confirmed Ebola case before discovering gaps in its public health emergency response system. **Preparedness today is the surest protection against a public health emergency tomorrow.**

Hon. Dr. Kingsley Agyemang

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