

Remarks by World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim in Press Conference with President of Guinea Alpha Condé

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**World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim
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As Prepared for Delivery

First, I'd like to give my condolences to the victims of the Ebola epidemic. We're focused so much on stopping this outbreak but it's important to acknowledge the biggest tragedy – the cost of so many lives.

Turning to the response, I would like to praise the Guinea government and the leadership of President Alpha Conde in handling the emergency response to Ebola. But the fight against the epidemic is far from being over. The virus is expanding in terms of both geography and case numbers – the new spread from Guinea into Mali highlights the escalating risk to regional security, stability and economic growth. I encouraged President Conde to continue working with Guinea's neighbors to strengthen the regional response and promote greater regional integration.

In our meeting today, we discussed the importance of finishing the job on Ebola, getting to zero cases, and beginning to work on economic recovery. The World Bank Group, together with other partners, is committed to support the Guinean authorities in their emergency response as well as the longer-term economic recovery. We're accelerating our support to Guinea and we plan to deliver a comprehensive economic recovery package in just two years – instead of three, as initially projected before the crisis. Our support will cover five areas:

First, we have provided \$153 million dollars to Guinea for the Ebola crisis, and we will continue to support the objective of getting to zero cases as soon as possible. Additional treatment capacity is needed in areas on key border routes such as Sigueri, and newly infected areas such as Kerouane. This involves empowering the national Ebola Emergency Operations Center but also district-level teams and sub-national emergency operations centers in order to break chains of transmission and identify all contacts of those infected. This will also contribute to building trust from local populations in the response efforts. We're doing this with an expectation that every community will be free from Ebola and that health systems will be strengthened so that all Guineans have access to the health care they deserve.

We don't need to wait until we get to zero cases to start working on the economic recovery, so our second area of support is agriculture. We are concerned that agricultural production has dropped significantly as a result of this Ebola epidemic. We will help farmers recover from this crisis by boosting agriculture productivity, enhancing the skills of workers, as well as by promoting regional trade integration. We must make sure that the Ebola epidemic is not followed by a food security crisis.

Third, we will help improve basic infrastructure such as access to electricity that will improve people's lives. We need to help Guineans create jobs to help people recover from incomes losses as a result of the economic slowdown caused by the epidemic.

Fourth, because financing for projects has been so scarce, we will continue to work through our private sector arm, the IFC, to provide liquidity to local banks to support small and medium-sized enterprises and local entrepreneurs and farmers.

And fifth, we will work on promoting good governance with the government in terms of strengthening public finance management. We are working closely with the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Bank and we are preparing several tranches of budget support.

Again, thank you President Conde for your leadership in battling this crisis. I pledge that the World Bank Group will stand with you to the end of this crisis and to the beginning of the country's economic recovery.

Thank you.