

**Statement of
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**Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy
United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**

**“Confronting Ebola – Addressing a 21st Century Global Health Crisis”
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Chairman Graham, Ranking Member Kaine, and distinguished members of the Committee, I want to thank you for inviting me to speak today. I am honored to appear as part of a team of officials who represent the whole-of-government approach that the United States brings to the Ebola response.

The ongoing Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is the second-largest in human history, with more than 2,500 cases and over 1,700 deaths since August 2018. For nearly a year, brave responders – with strong U.S. support – have been working to stop Ebola’s spread and treat those infected. Their efforts have saved countless lives, but new cases continue to emerge. We are now at a critical juncture. Ebola cases continue to rise, Ebola patients continue to die, and local communities and responders are not taking all necessary steps to end the outbreak. In some cases, local communities are actively, even violently, resisting Ebola response efforts. The risk of Ebola spreading to additional areas of the DRC

or neighboring countries remains high, as demonstrated by the three confirmed cases in Uganda in early June and the case in Goma last week.

At the same time, there is reason for hope. The DRC and neighboring governments are taking action to prevent Ebola cases, detect possible Ebola infections, and respond quickly to treat Ebola patients. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations are facilitating improved response coordination with nongovernmental organizations and local communities, taking security and humanitarian needs into account. And the United States – as it has since the first Ebola cases emerged in eastern DRC – continues to take a leading role to end the outbreak.

At the outset of my testimony, I would like to make one point clear. Ending this outbreak is not only a global health security priority – it is a U.S. national security priority. An infectious disease threat anywhere can be an infectious disease threat everywhere as we saw vividly in the 2014 West Africa Ebola outbreak. The U.S. government is firmly committed to stopping Ebola's transmission, supporting the treatment of those infected, and minimizing the loss of life in this outbreak. The United States is the largest single-country donor to response efforts, and we have deployed staff to the DRC and neighboring countries to enable a more effective response.

We have seen time and again how critical a whole of government approach is to stopping epidemics and pandemics. This is especially true for this Ebola outbreak, which is occurring in the midst of a complex humanitarian crisis and tremendous security challenges from local armed groups. Stopping Ebola transmission in this case also requires a multi-government approach. The Government of the DRC and the World Health Organization (WHO) have led the response in the DRC since the first cases emerged nearly a year ago. Government officials in Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and South Sudan have also demonstrated leadership by increasing preparedness efforts to prevent, detect, and respond to Ebola cases. The United Nations designated David Gressly as UN Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator on May 23 to enhance response coordination and address broader humanitarian and security conditions impacting the response. The World Bank has provided significant resources and helped ensure financial accountability of response efforts. Other core donors include the United Kingdom and the European Union. And NGO staff and Congolese citizens themselves are the backbone of on-the-ground response efforts to identify and treat Ebola patients and their contacts.

The State Department has championed efforts to raise international awareness of the DRC Ebola outbreak and encourage the international community to fully fund the response. My bureau convened a meeting of the DC diplomatic corps on June 14 where USAID, CDC, and State Department officials provided a briefing on the

outbreak's trajectory and underlined the urgent need to fund response activities. On July 14, the DRC government and World Health Organization released a partial new response plan requesting \$287 million over the next six months to fund the public health response. Additional appeals for support in other sectors beyond health are forthcoming, and it is imperative that we diversify the donor pool to meet resource needs. On July 17, WHO declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), which we hope will mobilize more resources. All countries must contribute to ensure global health security.

The State Department has also been regularly engaging foreign counterparts in the DRC, the United Nations, the WHO, and the DRC's neighboring countries to enhance response coordination. Our embassies and country teams are engaging foreign counterparts at the highest levels to make the Ebola response a priority – and to enhance coordination across government ministries and donors.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important issue, and I welcome the opportunity to answer any questions you may have.