

Fog delays delivery of Ebola vaccines for Guinea

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A scanning electron micrograph of Ebola virus budding from a cell (African green monkey kidney epithelial cell line). Credit: NIAID

The delivery to Guinea of vaccines against the Ebola virus has been delayed because of fog disrupting flights to the capital Conakry, a health official said Sunday.

The World Health Organization (WHO) had announced that more than 11,000 doses of the Merck vaccine against the [deadly disease](#) were to arrive in Conakry on Sunday.

The plane left Geneva early Sunday but flew on to the Senegalese capital Dakar, according to the head of Guinea's health agency ANSS, Sakoba Keita, who said it would attempt to land in Conakry on Monday, conditions permitting.

The Guinean capital has been cloaked in fog for the past three days because of a strong Harmattan wind carrying dust from the Sahara Desert, and a Guinean official told AFP that all flights in and out of Conakry were cancelled "until further notice".

Health authorities said the batch was destined for Nzerekore, the capital of Guinea's southeastern forest region neighbouring Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ivory Coast where five people have died of Ebola.

The outbreak, announced last weekend, was the first in West Africa since a 2013-16 epidemic that left more than 11,300 dead mainly in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Keita said the jabs programme would likely be launched in Gouecke, near Nzerekore, as well as in Conakry on Tuesday.

In addition to the vaccines expected from the WHO, more than 8,500 doses will be delivered from the United States, bringing the total to around 20,000, the WHO said in a statement.

"We expect to have more than 100 national & international experts on the ground by the end of the month. 30 vaccination experts have already been mobilized locally are ready to deploy as soon as the Ebola vaccines arrive in the country," the WHO Africa Region's Tshidi Moeti said on Twitter last Thursday.

Ebola causes severe fever and, in the worst cases, unstoppable bleeding. It is transmitted through close contact with [bodily fluids](#), and people who live with or care for patients are most at risk.

A new outbreak of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo has claimed four lives, officials there said Sunday, warning that people are resisting measures to contain the highly contagious disease.

The United States last week said it would work with the affected governments and the WHO over the outbreaks.

"The world cannot afford to turn the other way. We

must do everything in our power to respond quickly, effectively," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said in a statement.

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