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Embassy of the Republic of Liberia in the United States , Mon, Apr 20, 2015

(WASHINGTON, D.C., U.S.A. - Saturday, April 18, 2015) The World Bank Group (WBG) has announced that it will provide at least US\$650 million during the next 12 to 18 months to help Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone recover from the devastating social and economic impact of the Ebola crisis and advance their long-term development needs. The new WBG pledge brings the institution's total financing for Ebola response and recovery efforts to date to US \$1.6 billion. According to a Dispatch from Washington, D.C., the President of the WBG, Dr. Jim Yong Kim, announced the new funding from the International Development Association (IDA), the WBG's fund



for the poorest countries, at an Ebola Summit during the World Bank Group-International Monetary Fund Spring Meetings on Friday, April 17, 2015. During the summit, attended by an array of leaders of major international institutions, Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Guinea's President Alpha Conde, and Sierra Leone's President Ernest Bai Koroma presented a sub-regional plan to the global development leaders. Speaking on behalf of her colleagues worse affected by the virus disease, President Sirleaf informed the impressive audience at the World Bank headquarters in Washington, D.C. that at an Extraordinary Summit of the Mano River Union (MRU), held in Conakry, Guinea on February 15, 2015, the three countries resolved to take on the more important challenge of economic recovery through the sub-regional body.

"We have, therefore, formulated a sub-regional social-economic recovery program to ensure that our States return to stability and prosperity," she said. The Liberian leader said the plan is focused on nine key areas, which includes: Health (sanitation and hygiene); Gender; Youth Development; Social Protection; Agriculture (fisheries and food security); Trade and Private Sector Development; Infrastructure (roads, energy and water); Information Communication Technology (ICT) and Governance (peace and security and program management). The new funding is on top of the nearly US\$1 billion that the WBG previously committed for the Ebola emergency response and early recovery efforts from the IDA (US\$518 million) and International Finance Corporation (US\$450 million). It also comes on top of US\$2.17 billion in debt relief for the three worst Ebola affected countries. In line with the three countries' recovery plans, the five priority areas for the additional IDA fund include: strengthening health systems and frontline care; agriculture; education; cash transfer and other social protection programs; lifesaving infrastructure such as electricity, water, sanitation and roads. The fund will be used to develop a regional disease surveillance system across West Africa that will help prevent or contain future epidemics. Also speaking at the summit, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said, in order to avoid having to face such an emergency again like the Ebola, he has established a High-Level Panel on Lessons Learned chaired by the Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete. "As we look forward, I call on the international

community to support the recovery and peace-building efforts in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone,” Mr. Ban stressed, adding, “These efforts must also recognize the fragility of these countries’ transitions from past conflicts and instability to sustainable peace and development.” International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde also reaffirmed her institution’s full support for the three countries in the effort to contain Ebola and bring about economic recovery. Major development partners, including the United States, the European Union, Great Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, China, Japan, African Development Bank, pledged to fully back efforts to contain the Ebola virus, as well as promote sustainable economic recovery and reconstruction. Meanwhile, over US\$1 billion dollars was pledged by various institutions during the summit for the sub-regional social-economic recovery plan. Please hover to see description of photos below





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Source URL (modified on Apr 20 2015 - 8:43pm):<https://liberianembassyus.org/in-the-news/world-bank-group-international-monetary-fund-others-pledge-over-us1-billion-to-countries>