



## Letter to the Editor

**Crisis of Ebola virus disease in Democratic Republic of the Congo, A call to action**

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Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) is currently a major and serious public health problem but also a heavy burden for the health system of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo), a health system which has already observed more than a dozen EVD outbreak since 1976. EVD is the rarest and usually fatal hemorrhagic fever in humans if left untreated [1]. It is a hemorrhagic fever of viral origin and caused by the Ebola virus, the virus is transmitted to humans by close contact with the organic secretions (blood, saliva) of infected animals (e.g. bats which are considered the natural hosts). The virus takes its name from a river that runs alongside the village of Yambuku where it was first discovered in 1976 [1,2]. EVD is a very dangerous disease because it is spread by human-to-human transmission by simple direct contact with blood or body fluids but also by objects of a person infected or even deceased from EVD [2]. Since 1976, the DR Congo has been confronted and hit by more than ten epidemics of EVD. The last outbreak of the epidemic took place in the province of Equateur and where it was declared over on July 4, 2022 [2,3]. But unfortunately, in the same year around August 21, 2022, the Ministry of Public Health of DR Congo announced that a new case (a 46-year-old woman living in the town of Beni, in the province of North Kivu), which was confirmed in the EVD laboratory [3]. The average case fatality rate for EVD is estimated at around 50 % and has varied from 25 % to 90 % during certain epidemic outbreaks [2]. This disease is at the origin or the cause of hundreds of deaths since its appearance on the soil of the DR Congo, its epidemics (very complicated and very difficult) are characterized by a very high contagiousness but a serious deterioration of the socio situation. -economic of the population, these epidemics often spread in regions where there are active conflicts between different armed groups [1,4]. These epidemics, thanks to the expertise of the DR Congo in the epidemiological surveillance of EVD, are still under control despite the fact that the health system is poorly equipped to completely eradicate this disease within its population.

The Ministry of Health of the DR Congo must take and promote measures to reduce the risks of human-to-human transmission of EVD but also to reduce the risks of transmission from wildlife to humans through contact with certain animals such as fruit bats or infected monkeys. With this, the consumption and handling of products including the blood and raw meat of these animals' vectors of the Ebola virus must be banned by the Congolese government.

The Ministry of Health must train and set up teams of health personnel specializing in special care in the country, these teams which will provide emergency supportive care such as oral or intravenous rehydration as well as the treatment of certain specific symptoms to thus improve patient survival.

Around August 1, 2018, the DR Congo's Ministry of Health had made a declaration of an outbreak of EVD in the eastern province of North Kivu, a province with approximately one population estimated at 8 million inhabitants and which borders and shares borders with two countries (Uganda and Rwanda) [5]. Despite the fact that this epidemic which appeared during the year 2018 was well mastered and controlled, we recommend collaboration in the surveillance, care and control of EVD between the three ministries of health (of the DR Congo, Uganda and Rwanda) to reduce cases of human-to-human transmission and infections in their regions. The Congolese government and its Ministry of Health must create and strengthen multinational collaboration with its neighboring countries and create partnerships with non-governmental organizations working in public health with the aim of controlling as well as taking surveillance measures. EVD with the aim of containing the disease and completely eradicating it from the surface of Africa.

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Not applicable.

**Consent for publication**

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**Declaration of competing interest**

The authors declare that there no conflict of interest.

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