

# Secretary-General asks Member States to express intention on financing UN plan to tackle cholera in Haiti

24 February 2017 – United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has asked Member States to inform him by 6 March if they intend to make voluntary financial contributions to the implementation of the new UN plan to counter cholera in Haiti, his spokesman said today.

“Earlier this week the Secretary-General sent a letter to all Member States” in that regard, Stéphane Dujarric told reporters at the regular daily briefing at UN Headquarters in New York.

“As you are aware, under the new approach, the UN is intensifying support to the Haitian government in building sound water, sanitation and health systems – the best long-term defence against cholera and other water-borne diseases – and also developing a support package to provide material assistance and support to Haitians most directly affected by cholera,” the Spokesman said.

In his letter, the Secretary-General recalled that the UN bears a moral responsibility for ensuring that the new approach – launched in a report to UN Member States on 1 December 2016 – is implemented, Mr. Dujarric added.

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Costing around \$400 million over the next two years, the proposed UN package under the new approach will centre on two different elements, known as ‘Track One’ and ‘Track Two.’

## ***Track 1 – reducing incidence of cholera***

The former consists of a greatly intensified and better-resourced effort to respond to and reduce the incidence of cholera, through addressing Haiti’s short- and longer-term issues of water, sanitation and health systems and improved access to care and treatment.

This is expected to involve intensifying efforts to mobilize adequate funding for an increased number of rapid response teams; strengthened epidemiological surveillance; the rapid detection, reporting and treatment of cases; the combined use of cholera vaccinations with targeted water and sanitation interventions; more focused geographical targeting; improved communication and behavioural change strategies; and strengthened support to longer-term water and sanitation services.

## ***Track 2 – a community approach***

The second track of the UN response is the development of a package of material assistance and support to those Haitians most directly affected by cholera, centred on the victims and their families and communities. It is

expected that it will also involve affected individuals and communities in the development of the package.

Haiti has been dealing with a cholera outbreak since October 2010, some nine months after it suffered a devastating earthquake. The outbreak has affected an estimated 788,000 people and claimed the lives of more than 9,000. Concerted national and international efforts, backed by the United Nations, have resulted in a 90 per cent reduction in the number of suspected cases.

While the number of those affected remains high, and recent outbreaks – partly heightened by the impact of Hurricane Matthew – show the continued vulnerability of the population to the disease, UN officials have said the challenge is not insurmountable.