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Provisional agenda item 11.2

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Geneva, May 2019

Public health emergencies: preparedness and response

WHO’s work in health emergencies

Annual Report on the implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005)

Statement by

International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Honourable Chair, Director General, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is pleased to be involved in the ongoing global discussion regarding public health preparedness and response through active membership in various networks such as the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network and the Global Health Cluster. As outlined in the Annual Report, continued support to Member States for strengthening and maintaining IHR core capacities, as essential public health functions of national health systems, including those capacities related to points of entry, is critical. IOM is pleased to be among the partners working closely with WHO on developing technical guidance on IHR capacity building at ground crossings and cross border collaboration.

Understanding population mobility is at the heart of the current Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the cross border preparedness efforts in neighboring states. In partnership with the Congolese Ministry of Health and WHO, IOM has utilized relevant data on mobility trends to target efforts to minimize disease transmission to new areas and across borders. IOM has supported more than 48 million screenings of travellers at 80 screening points since the beginning of the outbreak.

Yet, the link between migration within countries and across borders as it is addressed within the implementation of the IHR still remains an area for further investment and understanding. Core capacities need to be equally strengthened at primary health care systems located in and around mobility corridors, as well as with broader community engagement in surveillance through initiatives such as the Community Event Based Surveillance (CEBS).

IOM remains committed to supporting WHO, Member States and partners in strengthening collective IHR capacities and to continue advocating for mobility-competent public health emergency preparedness and response plans.