

## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONNAIRE OF THE CMI ON PANDEMIC RESPONSE

1. Yes.
2. Yes. By virtue of the fact that Nigeria and some other 190 States did not make reservations to it.
3. Yes
4. Regulations have been made awaiting Ministerial Approval
5. Yes Came into force in Nigeria on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 1967
6. Attempts to implement the Convention have been made. However the full implementation is slowed down by several bureaucratic hiccups.
7. Yes. In the wake of the outbreak of Ebola, mild checks were put in place at entry points before grant of entrance especially for people from the Countries that had outbreak of Ebola
8. Yes.
9. (a) Nigeria adopted four major steps which had great impact in curtailing the spread of the Ebola Pandemic. They were:
  - (i) **Trace, Isolate, and Treat:** Since it was confirmed that Ebola patients are not contagious until they exhibit symptoms such as fever, it was possible to adopt these strategies. Because, the source of Ebola into Nigeria was quickly traced to a Liberian American, **Patrick Sawyer**, who came to Nigeria in July 2014, Nigerian government/ health workers in charge could trace all the people that had contact, one way or the other, to **Patrick Sawyer** and the health personnel that had treated him or his contacts. In this wise, the victims' close contacts were identified, isolated and they were educated about the symptoms. After a few lapses, proper medical protocol kept health care workers from getting sick.

- (ii) **Early Detection before many people could be exposed:** It is generally believed that anyone with Ebola, typically, will infect about two more people, unless something is done to intervene.

In Nigeria the virus passed from Patrick Sawyer through the hospital that treated him. A scared patient who fled to Port-Harcourt seeking better medical care spread the virus to a well-known medical doctor. But, after tracking down hundreds of contacts in Lagos and in Port-Harcourt, officials brought the outbreak under control. The WHO confirmed that the few contacts who attempted to escape the monitoring system were all diligently tracked, using special intervention teams, and returned to medical observation to complete the requisite monitoring of 21 days.

The medical doctor who initially diagnosed **Sawyer, Stella Ameyo Adadevoh**, prevented Sawyer from leaving the hospital to attend a popular Pentecostal Church for cleansing/cure. Not even the pressure from the Liberian ambassador to Nigeria could get **Adadevoh** to yield. She later died of Ebola.

Notably, Ebola is really hard to cover up.

- (iii) **Strong Leadership:** In the wake of Ebola outbreak, Nigeria displayed strong Leadership with a top national priority.

In the summary report of the **World Health Organisation (WHO)**, it was said about Nigeria that “**the most critical factor is leadership and engagement from the head of state and the Minister of Health**”. Standing tall in the leadership position was the Lagos State Government under **Babatunde Raji Fashola, SAN**.

Nigerian government also received donations from state partners, international groups and non- governmental organizations to successfully launch attack on the Ebola outbreak.

- (iv) **Public awareness:** Gaining public trust was key to the control of Ebola in Nigeria.

The Government embarked on information campaigns, house-by-house leafleting, messages on local radio stations and enlisting entertainers, Nollywood actors/actresses and social mobilisers to deliver the health messages. Everyone in Nigeria became ardent user of hand sanitizers and they became hand washing compliant. Schools, hospitals, churches, mosques, restaurants, bars and such other public places install hand sanitizing machines and basins/taps for hand washing.

In particular, the Nigerian Ports Authority issued guidelines for prevention of the spread in all ports locations and terminals. The NPA put measures in place such as enlightenment campaign about the origin, symptoms, mode of spread, identifying people at high risk, diagnosis, containment and prevention of infection. The Authority also issued guidelines to all its personnel on protection and prevention measures to be adopted in the discharge of their duties.

- (b) The Ministries of Health (Federal and States) led the campaign.
- (c) No. Maritime Administrators were not specifically included. However, all the health related departments of the maritime administrators ensured the prevention strategies of hand washing and sanitising.

The relevant departments, particularly at Nigerian Ports Authority held series of Seminars with Ports Health, Terminal Operators, Port Managers and stakeholders in the various ports to brief them on measures to take in curbing the spread of the Ebola virus. They also provided palliative measures such as health kits.

Port Officers also went on board vessels to check the crew before issuing berthing certificates and where necessary drastic measures were taken to prevent ships from major Ebola countries or those that traverse such countries from calling at Nigerian Ports.

- (d) No. They were mainly concerned with the World Health Organization as the umbrella body.
- (e) No.