Ebola Kills 2,793, Outbreak 'Pretty Much Contained' in Senegal, Nigeria: WHO

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The UN health agency, which also published the results of the latest meeting of its Ebola emergency committee, said a total of 5,762 people had been infected in five west African countries as of September 18.

Guinea, where the outbreak began at the start of the year, and neighbouring Liberia and Sierra Leone by far account for most of the cases and continue to see ballooning numbers.

Liberia has been especially hard-hit, with 3,022 cases and 1,578 deaths alone.

At the same time "the outbreaks in Senegal and Nigeria are pretty much contained," WHO said in a statement.

Senegal has not reported any new cases of the deadly virus since it registered its first and only case on August 29 -- a Guinean student who has since recovered.

And Nigeria, where 21 people have been infected, eight of whom have died, has not reported any new cases since September 8, WHO pointed out.

The incubation period for Ebola is 21 days, and double that time must pass without any new cases arising before a country can be deemed transmission-free.

The WHO meanwhile said that a meeting of its Ebola emergency committee last week had determined that the outbreak remained a "public health emergency of international concern".

The committee had reiterated its opposition to general bans on international travel or trade, although people infected with Ebola or who had had contact with Ebola patients should not be permitted to travel, WHO said.

Blocking flights to or from affected areas and other travel restrictions only serve to "isolate affected countries, resulting in detrimental economic consequences, and hinder relief and response efforts risking further international spread," it warned.

The emergency committee also stressed that in cases where measures like quarantines are deemed necessary, countries must ensure that "they are proportionate and evidence-based, and that accurate information, essential services and commodities, including food and water are provided to the affected populations."

It also insisted that "adequate security measures" should be put in place to ensure the safety and protection of healthcare workers, who face high infection rates and sometimes violence from frustrated and frightened populations.

Last week, eight members of an Ebola education team said to include local health officials and journalists, were found dead after they were attacked by angry locals in southern Guinea.

The emergency committee urged the affected countries to ramp up their response to the outbreak and called on all countries to strengthen their preparedness through simulations and personnel training.