REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

OFFICE OF THE CABINET SECRETARY

PRESS STATEMENT BY THE CABINET SECRETARY FOR HEALTH HON. ADEN DUALE, EGH, ON THE DISCHARGE OF THE LAST EBOLA PATIENT, THE RELEASE OF THE LAST CONTACTS FROM QUARANTINE AND THE START OF THE 42-DAY COUNTDOWN

Afya House, Nairobi | Wednesday, 11th November 2026

Members of the Press,

Fellow Kenyans,

1. Good morning. Today marks **37 days** since Kenya confirmed its first case of Ebola, and I stand before you with a deep sense of gratitude and pride. On 6th November, the Director General for Health reported that the sixth patient had recovered and that only one patient remained under care. Today, **the last patient under treatment for Ebola (Bundibugyo Virus Disease) in Kenya has been discharged**, healthy and free of the virus. In addition, **the last 11 contacts in quarantine return home** to their families today, having completed their monitoring in good health. **For the first time since this outbreak began, Kenya has no patient under treatment and no contact in quarantine.**

2. This is not the victory of one person or one institution. It is a triumph of **collaboration, cooperation and partnership**: between the National and County Governments; Public and Private Hospitals; Government and the Development Partners, led by the **World Health Organization, the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, IGAD, Government of the United States of America and Government of India**; and, above all, between the Government and the people of Kenya.

3. Allow me to take you back to where this journey began. In early October, a Kenyan national travelled home from the Democratic Republic of the Congo through Uganda. He fell ill, sought care, but sadly passed on from Ebola. On **6th October 2026**, within 24 hours of laboratory confirmation, Kenya notified the World Health Organization of its **first imported case of Bundibugyo Virus Disease**, and told Kenyans the truth.

4. We knew then that the next 21 days would decide the course of this outbreak. Within hours, our Incident Management System was activated. Contact tracing began immediately, and **every one of the 135 contacts was traced**, in Kenya and abroad. Those at risk were quarantined and monitored daily. On 12th October, I declared Ebola a formidable epidemic disease, and the Public Health (Ebola Disease) Rules were gazetted to give the response its legal footing.

5. In the days that followed, **eight** more people tested positive for the virus: four family members of the first patient and four health workers who had cared for him before the disease was suspected. **Every one of them was already in quarantine when they fell ill. That single fact made the difference**. It meant that the virus had nowhere to go, and that **there was never any community transmission in Kenya.** The last case was confirmed **23 days ago** on **19th October 2026**, and no new case has been recorded since then.

6. We also experienced loss. Two of our patients did not survive the disease. We mourn them, and once again extend our heartfelt condolences to their families.

7. Since then, step-by-step, and day by day, the news has improved. On 26th October, the first contacts completed their 21 days and went home. On 3rd November, five patients were

discharged, the first Kenyans ever to **recover** from this disease. On 6th November, a sixth patient went home.

And today, with the discharge of our last patient, **seven patients have recovered**, and **all contacts have completed their follow-up.**

8. Throughout this journey, **the Ministry made a deliberate choice to keep the country informed**, through the Director General for Health, in a **systematic and strategic** manner, as events unfolded. Each statement was based on verified data, demonstrated key milestones achieved, and gave Kenyans both the facts and the guidance they needed to protect themselves. Bad news was shared as openly as good news. That consistency built public trust, kept misinformation at bay, and earned the confidence of our international partners. Today's briefing continues that practice, and **the Director General will continue to update the nation regularly throughout the countdown period.**

9. Fellow Kenyans, this outcome was earned. I wish to recognise, first and foremost, **our health workers**: the doctors, nurses, clinical officers, laboratory scientists, public health officers, mental health specialists, surveillance and contact-tracing teams, burial teams, cleaners and support staff, who went to work every day in the face of real danger. Four of their colleagues were infected in the line of duty. **Your courage carried this response, and the nation sincerely thanks you.**

10. I thank the **leadership and staff of Kenyatta National Hospital and The Nairobi Hospital**, who cared for our patients with skill, compassion and professionalism. I commend the cooperation between our public and private sectors. This shows what our health system can do when it works as one.

11. I acknowledge the **stewardship of the Ministry of Health**: the Principal Secretaries, the Director General for Health, the Kenya National Public Health Institute, the Incident Management

    Team, KEMRI and our laboratories, Port Health, and the National Taskforce, who have worked day and night to steer this response. I also thank the Kenya Defence Forces, the National Police Service and the entire multi-agency team.

12. I thank our **county governments and the Council of Governors**, especially Nairobi City County and our border counties, whose teams responded to every alert, investigated suspected cases and dispatched samples without delay. **Health is devolved, but this response proved that our two levels of government are stronger together.**

13. I thank, with special appreciation, **the families of the affected, the patients and the contacts.** You endured illness, loss, separation and, at times, stigma. Your cooperation, patience and sacrifice protected your neighbours and your country. And I thank our partners, including WHO, Africa CDC, UNICEF, IGAD, the Governments of the United States, India and Rwanda, and many others, for standing with Kenya.

14. Ladies and gentlemen, **tomorrow, Thursday, 12th November 2026, marks Day 1 of the 42-day countdown** to the end of this outbreak. Forty-two days is twice the longest incubation period of the virus. If no new case is recorded in that period, **Kenya will be declared free of Ebola on 23rd December 2026.**

15. Let me be clear: **the countdown is not the end of the response.** During these 42 days, **heightened vigilance will continue.** Our Rapid Response Teams remain on alert in every county. **Active surveillance** will continue in health facilities and communities, every alert will be investigated, and screening will continue at all points of entry. Our survivors will receive follow-up care and support.

16. Our Incident Management Teams will also undertake an **Intra-Action Review**, to examine honestly what worked, what did not, and what we must improve, so that we are even better prepared for the next emergency. A full After-Action Review will follow once the outbreak is declared over.

17. The outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains active, and the risk of importation is real. To Kenyans living or travelling in the DRC and other affected areas who wish to return home: **you are welcome home.** To ensure that you return safely and do not bring the virus with you, the Ministry will, **in the coming days, issue an advisory** on safe return. It will include health declaration through the UHAI Chatbot before travel, screening on arrival, and 21 days of quarantine with follow-up by our health teams. I urge everyone returning from affected areas to follow this guidance faithfully.

18. Fellow Kenyans, we chose transparency from the very first hour. We reported early, we published our figures, we shared our data, and we kept our borders open, as the International Health Regulations require. Regrettably, **some jurisdictions responded to that honesty with blanket travel and visa restrictions on Kenya.**

19. Today, I call on those jurisdictions to **review and lift these measures without delay.** Kenya has **no patient under treatment, no contact in quarantine and no community transmission.** There is no basis, either in the International Health Regulations or in basic public health principles, for restrictions on Kenyan travellers. **Transparency must be rewarded, not punished.** If honesty is penalised, the lesson others will learn is to stay silent, and the whole world will be less safe.

20. Let me also make this clear: **Kenya will not serve as a quarantine centre for any jurisdiction.** Travellers from other countries will not be held in Kenya to meet another country's entry

requirements, and **the Ministry of Health will not issue any certificate of quarantine or Ebola free certification for travel purposes.** Such certificates have no basis in the International Health Regulations.

21. Kenya remains **open for business, tourism, trade and travel**, and there are no restrictions on movement or public gatherings within the country.

22. Members of the press, you have been our partners throughout this response. You carried accurate information to every corner of the country and helped us counter misinformation. **I ask you to continue this work during the countdown:** remind Kenyans to stay alert and vigilant, and not to let their guard down. Anyone with fever, weakness, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhoea or unexplained bleeding, especially after travel to an affected area, should **seek care early** and call **719** free of charge.

23. My fellow Kenyans, we are not yet at the finish line, but we can see it. Let us walk these last 42 days together, with the same discipline and unity that brought us here, until Kenya is declared Ebola-free.

24. I now invite the Director General for Health and the technical team, to take your questions.

    I thank you, and God bless Kenya.