31 October 2014 – Monrovia, Liberia. Today a new Ebola treatment unit opens at the former Ministry of Defence compound, on the outskirts of Monrovia. This new unit adds another 200 beds to the almost 500 currently available for Ebola patients in the Liberian capital, which remains the epicentre of the outbreak.

While new cases continue to be reported in the capital city, with a total of 6,535 cases across the country as of October 29, providing Ebola patients with access to the best possible quality of care is essential to stop the transmission of the Ebola virus and preventing its further spread. “We need to ensure that Ebola patients are well taken care of and receive treatment on time,” says Dr. Alex Gasasira, acting WHO representative for Liberia. “This new Ebola treatment unit will be able to take care of and treat 200 Ebola patients at a time. It really feels like we built a little village.”

For the past few weeks, around 150 local construction workers have been working three shifts a day to build this new Ebola treatment unit. The compound has 6 huge tents tents—capable of holding up to 50 patients each—that will house suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola patients.

The daily management of the treatment centre will be taken care of by the Liberian Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, with support from African Union and Cuban foreign medical teams.

The construction of this new Ebola treatment unit in Monrovia is a joint partnership between the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the World Health Organization, World Food Programme, United Nations Children’s Fund, United Nations for Project Services and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Bank.

With this new Ebola treatment centre, the total number of functional treatment centres located in Montserrado County, including the capital Monrovia, comes to four. Another four treatment centres are functional in three other counties across the country. Several more centres are close to completion in Liberia but there is still an urgent need for more foreign medical teams to help staff them.