17 March 2016, Freetown—The World Health Organization joins the government of **Sierra Leone** in marking the end of the **recent flare-up of Ebola virus disease** in the country.Â As of today, 17 March, 42 days have passed, two incubation cycles of the virus, since the last person confirmed to have Ebola virus disease in the country tested negative for a 2nd time.

This latest flare-up of Ebola brings to 3,590 the number of lives lost in Sierra Leone to an epidemic that devastated families and communities across the country and disrupted every aspect of life.

Today marks another milestone in the country's effort to defeat Ebola.Â WHO commends Sierra Leone's government, partners and people on the effective and swift response to this latest outbreak.Â From nurses, vaccinators and social mobilizers to contact tracers, counsellors and community leaders, Sierra Leoneans in affected districts mobilized quickly and their involvement and dedication was instrumental and impactful.

The rapid containment of the flare-up was also a real-time demonstration of the increased capacity at the national, district and community level to respond to Ebola outbreaks and other health emergencies and mitigate their impact.Â Investments made in rapid response teams, surveillance, lab diagnostics, risk communication, infection prevention and control measures and other programmes were put to the test and clearly paid off.

However, WHO continues to stress that Sierra Leone, as well as Liberia and Guinea, are still at risk of Ebola flare-ups, largely due to virus persistence in some survivors, and must remain on high alert and ready to respond.

Strong surveillance and emergency response capacity need to be maintained, along with rigorous hygiene practices at home and in health facilities and active community participation. Care, screening and counselling also need to be provided for survivors as part of improved health services for all.

WHO will continue to work with the Government of Sierra Leone and partners to build a more resilient health system that can prevent, detect and respond to future outbreaks and to revive and strengthen essential health services across the country.