

**Question for written answer E-002832/2024**

**to the Commission**

Rule 144

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Subject: Outbreak of a mysterious infectious disease in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 5 December 2024, Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) confirmed that, since 24 October 2024, Kwango Province in the Democratic Republic of the Congo had seen 376 cases of a mysterious infectious disease, including 79 fatalities<sup>1</sup>. The flu-like symptoms, which are particularly severe in children, include fever, headaches, coughing, difficulty breathing and anaemia.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the grave threat that disease outbreaks pose to Europe and to the world as a whole. Robust and sustainable approaches to prevention, preparedness and response that include coordinated action to be taken before, during and after a crisis, both at EU level and in conjunction with third countries, are essential in the fight against cross-border health threats.

In view of this:

1. What steps is the Commission taking to confirm the above data and work with Africa CDC to carry out the necessary monitoring?
2. How does the Commission intend to strengthen third countries' health systems and their prevention, preparedness and response capacities to cope with health emergencies?
3. What action does the Commission intend to take to manage cross-border health threats, specifically in regard to infectious diseases, and what does the EU's preparedness plan look like?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://x.com/AfricaCDC/status/1864706577636131118>